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# Investigate the relationship between internal branding on organizational citizenship behavior in Kurdistan province food manufacturing companies

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between internal branding on organizational citizenship behavior in Kurdistan province food manufacturing companies. This Study is an applied research and correlation. The population consisted of all the employees of food industry companies that were classified by random sampling of the selected sample was 415 and finally 410 questionnaires (standard) was studied. Reliability with Cronbach's alpha was calculated and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality of the data and to determine the suitability of data for factor analysis of Kaiser Meyer olkin test was used. Results significant values and coefficients of factor analysis showed that the questionnaire have been able to concept and variables to be covered. The analysis also estimates based on the standard model and the structural model with LISREL software showed that internal branding is affected on OCB, sense of brand commitment and sense of brand belonging. But sense of brand commitment and sense of brand belonging are not affected to the organization citizenship behavior.

**Keywords:** Internal branding, organizational citizenship behavior, sense of brand commitment and sense of brand belonging, Kurdistan province food manufac.

## Introduction:

Huge political, social, cultural and economic changes have occurred in the world, implying that the old ways of business have lost their effectiveness. Companies have found that it is very difficult to gain reputation and very easy to lose it (Giddens, 2003). Mass markets have turned into smaller markets have become. Distribution channels have been changed, many consumers have substituted purchase via catalog and telephone for traditional methods, advertising, sales promotion and price break have broken down brand loyalty; therefore, the old methods should be revised and new tactics and tools should be used instead (Kotler, 1997).

Today, having a strong brand is a priority for many organizations. Therefore, researchers in this field have always investigated it from different aspects. Branding can be done in two internal and external ways. The branding approach outside organizations is an issue that has been the focus of numerous researchers and obviously targets customers. On the other hand, employees are considered an important factor of brand formation of organizations in the minds of customers and consumers of goods and services. However, internal branding occurs in order to improve brand within the organization, i.e. for the employees and individuals in the organization (Wilson et al., 2009).

To coordinate and adapt to these changes and to improve their performance, companies need scientific research and development of new concepts. Internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior have entered the management and marketing literature in recent years as two distinct concepts, but simultaneously influencing each other so that research on these two variables have been of great importance for companies. As an academic research, the present research is an attempt to investigate the relationship between these two variables. In this regard, few studies have been done, some of which are mentioned below.

Degroot (2001) carried out a study called the behavior and quality of organizational citizenship behavior as external effectiveness of contact employees, with the aim of understanding the very important roles about the behaviors of communication and service staff. The study revealed that job satisfaction in service employees and their trust in managers is significantly associated with citizenship behavior, and high activity on citizenship behavior can have a positive effect on service quality perception.

Bergstrom et al. (2002) concluded in their study that internal branding can create a sense of belonging to the brand in employees, showing the unity of employees due to the organization values.

Also, in a study conducted by "Bienstock et al. in 2003 about the relationship between OCB and service quality in 49 restaurants of the most popular fast-food restaurants, in which they focused on the point that employees are to be considered a critical factor in a service organization, especially those employees who are in direct contact with customers.

Burmann et al. (2009) investigated the effect of brand commitment on citizenship behavior and showed that there is a strong relationship between brand commitment and citizenship behavior and identified the factors influencing the success of internal branding. Commitment consists of a three-dimensional structure of citizenship, a sense of belonging and internalization.

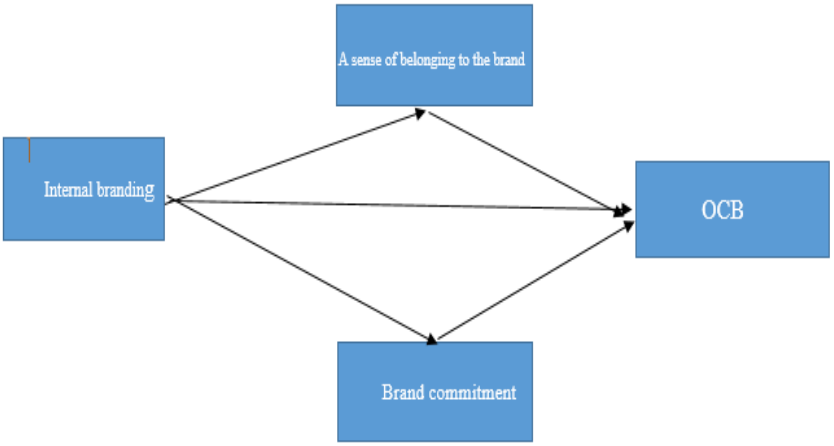
King and Grease (2010) introduced the activities of human and communication resources as important levers of brand commitment. The research shows the influence of internal branding communication on employees' commitment.

Ozcelik and Findikli (2014) investigated in their study the relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior with the mediating role of person-organization fit. The study

population consisted of 349 employees of the governmental employees of Turkey, and the data were collected by distributing questionnaires among them. The results suggest that internal branding influences organizational citizenship behavior, but person-organization fit did not have a significant effect on their relationship as a mediating role.

## Conceptual model

The conceptual model of the research has been adapted from the study conducted by Ozcelik and Findikli (2014). In their research, internal branding and OCB have a direct relationship. Furthermore, person-organization fit is directly associated with organizational citizenship behavior and internal branding. This conceptual model was first set forth by the aforementioned authors in Turkey and the model was shown to have a good fit by various studies. Based on the relationship between each variable and other variables, their indicators have been provided. The questionnaire designed based on this model was tested in their study for the first time and was shown to have a good reliability and validity. In this model, internal branding was the independent variable, and a sense of belonging to the brand and brand commitment were the mediating (intermediary) dependent variables and organizational citizenship behavior was the dependent variable.




**Source:** Ryan & Huimin (2011).

Table (1) includes operational definition of each one of research variable.

Table 1 research variable and operational definitions

| Professional ethics | | Market orientation | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Performing activates without hurting others | 1 | Creating value for customers |
| 2 | Never hide negative results of an action | 2 | Evaluating customer's satisfaction |
| 3 | conformity between ethical ideas with the | 3 | After sale service |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | best performance | | |
| 4 | Avoid disturbing other one's comfort | 4 | prompt response to competitors' activities |
| 5 | Corresponding increase between economic power and social responsibility | 5 | Understanding customer's demands |
| 6 | Compatibility between profitability and social responsibility | 6 | Prompt response to rice chance |
| 7 | Avoid committing wrong deeds | 7 | Prompt response to customers' demands |
| 8 | Social and ethical responsibility as the most important task in every organization | 8 | Prompt response to advertisement activities of competitors |
| **Environmental performance** | | 9 | Mechanism for improving method |
| 1 | People welfare as the main concern of every organization | 10 | Regularly-held meeting on sales |
| 2 | Environmental surveillance | **Human resource management** | |
| 3 | Protection of green space | 1 | Responsibility to staff |
| 4 | Participation in local green activities | 2 | Boosting staff's morale |
| 5 | Saving energy | 3 | Performance assessment |
| **Social participation** | | 4 | Unbiased employment decisions |
| | | 5 | Staff's security and health |

**Source**: Ryan and Huimin (2011) ; Linn et al (2008)

Based on this model, the following hypotheses are made:

- ✓ **The main hypothesis**

There is a significant relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior in food manufacturing companies in Kurdistan Province.

- ✓ **Sub-hypotheses**

There is a significant relationship between internal branding and a sense of belonging to the brand in food manufacturing companies in Kurdistan Province.

There is a significant relationship between internal branding and brand commitment in food manufacturing companies in Kurdistan Province.

There is a significant relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior in food manufacturing companies in Kurdistan Province.

There is a significant relationship between a sense of belonging to the brand and organizational citizenship behavior in food manufacturing companies in Kurdistan Province.

There is a significant relationship between brand commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in food manufacturing companies in Kurdistan Province.

**Methodology**

This is a correlational study, an applied research in terms of purpose and a survey - type correlational study in terms of data collection method. The study population consists of all of the employees of food industry companies in Kurdistan Province that were working when the study was being conducted. The population was classified using random sampling method and the sample size was determined 385 employees of food manufacturing companies of Kurdistan based on Cochran Formula. Data were collected using a questionnaire due to the nature of the subject under study. Regression coefficient and structural equation model were used to analyze the data and the research hypothesis respectively. This is a cross-sectional study in terms of time and was performed in the food manufacturing companies in Kurdistan Province. The questionnaires were distributed among the companies in Sanandaj city

**Results:**

**Reliability**

Cronbach's alpha was used in this study to determine the reliability of the test. The higher the alpha, the more reliable the scale will be.

Table 1: results of testing the reliability of the items

| variable | Number of questions | Cronbach's alpha |
|---|---|---|
| Internal branding | 6 | 0.711 |
| organizational citizenship behavior | 6 | 0.853 |
| a sense of belonging to the brand | 4 | 0.726 |
| brand commitment | 5 | 0.756 |
| total | 21 | 0.731 |

As presented in Table (1), Cronbach's alpha for all of the five constructs is greater than 0.7, which shows high reliability.

Data normality test

Data should first be tested in terms of normality before analysis. The most commonly-used test for this purpose is Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. This test has also been used in the present study for examining the normality or non-normality of the data used. The results presented in the following table indicates that the data have a normal distribution because the Sig values are higher than 0.05.

Table 2: Data normality test

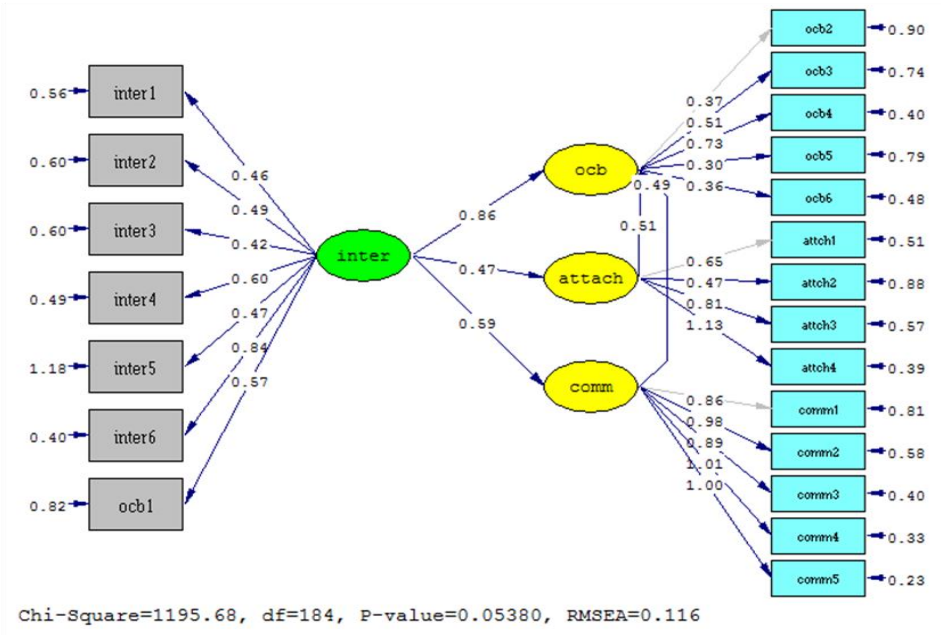
| variable | sig |
|---|---|
| Internal branding | 0.815 |
| organizational citizenship behavior | 0.746 |

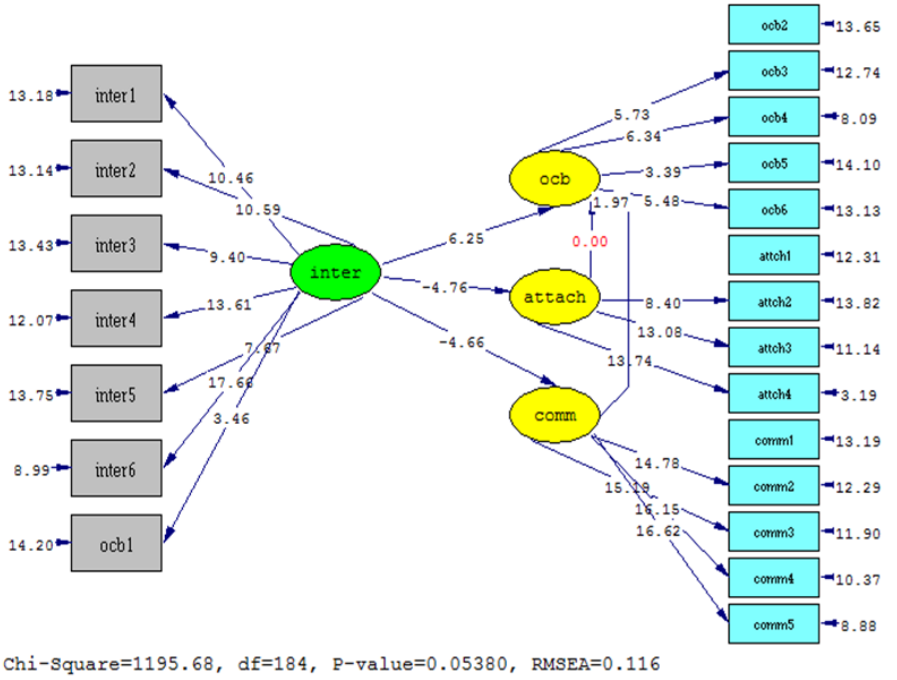
| | |
|---|---|
| a sense of belonging to the brand | 0.743 |
| brand commitment | 0.791 |

**Structural model and path analysis**

By structural model is meant the causal relationship between latent variables. The goal of this model is to discover both direct and indirect effects of latent exogenous variables on endogenous latent variables, or to provide the path analysis of the research model.

Figure (1). The estimation coefficients of structural model and internal branding, on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)






**Data analysis and hypotheses testing**

SPSS software is used to analyze the data. The software conducts data analysis at two levels, namely descriptive and inferential. The first level includes frequency, average, standard deviation and statistical tables and digram. The latter, first, makes use of Kolmogorov – Smirnov test to know that whether the distribution is normal or not, then if the first is the case, Pearson's correlation coefficient and Regression coefficient are employed to do hypotheses testing and assessing size and amount of effects respectively.

**First hypothesis: there is a significant relation between the professional ethics and market orientation of companies in the industrian parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj.**

To determine whether there is a correlation between the professional ethics and market orientation of companies in the industrial parks no.1 & 3, in Sanandaj the following hypothesis was made and the following results was obtained:

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \ \rho = 0 \\ H_1: \ \rho \neq 0 \end{cases}$$

The first hypothesis suggests that there is not a relationship between the above-mentioned variables.
The second one suggests that there is a relationship between the above-mentioned variables.

Table 2 correlation between professional ethics and market orientation of companies in the industrial parks 1 & 3, Sanandaj

| | Professional ethics | |
|---|---|---|
| Market orientation | Pearson's correlation coefficient | ρ=0.833 |
| | Probability | o.ooo |
| | N | 121 |

(Source: research data)

based on the results shown above the following conclusions are derived: the $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ (the primary hypothesis suggesting a relationship between the professional ethics and market orientation of companies in the idustrial parks of 1 & 3) is supported. There is a direct relationship between these two variables given the posite correlation obtained through calculation. That is an increase in professional ethics will contribute to an increase in the market orientation of companies in the industiral parks no. 1 & 3,Sanandaj and vice versa.

**Second hypothesis: there is a significant relation between the professional ethics and environmental perormance of companies in the industrian parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj.**

Pearson's correlation coefficient has been used to test the above-mentioned hypothesis and the following results are produced:

Table 7 correlation between professional ethics and environmental performance

| Professional ethics | Environmental performance |
|---|---|
| Pearson's correlation coefficient | ρ=0.769 |
| Level of significance | o.ooo |
| N | 121 |

(Source: research data)

based on the results shown above the following conclusions are derived: there is significant relationship between the professional ethics and environmental performance of companies in the industiral parks no. 1 & 3,Sanandaj. At 99% level of significance and correaltion coefficient of 0.769. therefore, the $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ (suggesting a relationship between the professional ethics and environmnetal performance of companies in the idustrial parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj) is supported.

**Third hypothesis: there is a significant relation between the professional ethics and human resource management of companies in the industrian parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj.**

Pearson's correlation coefficient has been used to test the above-mentioned hypothesis and the following results are produced:

Table 8 correlation between professional ethics and human resource management

| Professional ethics | Human resource management |
|---|---|
| Pearson's correlation coefficient | ρ=0.568 |
| Level of significance | o.ooo |
| N | 121 |

(Source: research data)

based on the results shown above the following conclusions are derived: the $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ (suggesting a relationship between the professional ethics and human resource mangement of companies in the idustrial parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj) is supported.

**Fourth hypothesis: there is a significant relation between the professional ethics and social participation of companies in the industrian parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj.**

Table 9 correlation between professional ethics and social participation

| Professional ethics | Social participation |
|---|---|
| Pearson's correlation coefficient | ρ=0.714 |
| Level of significance | o.ooo |
| N | 121 |

(Source: research data)

Similar to the previously-mentioned hypothesis, there is also a signifanct relationship between the variables given the positive value of correlation, that means the social participation of companies in the industrial parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj develops by an increase in professional ethics of people.

**Fifth hypothesis: there is a significant relation between the environmental performance and market orientation of companies in the industrian parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj.**

Table 10 correlation environmental performance and market orientation

| Environmental performance | Market orientation |
|---|---|
| Pearson's correlation coefficient | ρ=0.949 |
| Level of significance | o.ooo |
| N | 121 |

(Source: research data)

based on the results shown above the following conclusions are derived: the $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ (suggesting a relationship between the environmental performance and market orientation of companies in the idustrial parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj) is supported. In addition, given the positive value of correlation, An increase in the environmental performance will contribute to the improvement in the market orientation of companies in the industrial parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj and vice versa.

Sixth hypothesis: there is a significant relation between the human resource management and **market orientation of companies in the industrian parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj.**

Table 11 correlation between human resource management and market orientation

| Human resource management | Market orientation |
|---|---|
| Pearson's correlation coefficient | ρ=0.730 |
| Level of significance | o.ooo |
| N | 121 |

(Source: research data)

based on the results shown above the following conclusions are derived: the $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ (suggesting a relationship between the human resource mangement and market orientation of companies in the idustrial parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj) is supported.

**Seventh hypothesis: there is a significant relation between the social participation and market orientation of companies in the industrian parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj.**

Table 12 correlation between social participation and market orientation

| Social participation | Market orientation |
|---|---|
| Pearson's correlation coefficient | ρ=0.784 |
| Level of significance | o.ooo |
| N | 121 |

(Source: research data)

based on the results shown above the following conclusions are derived: the $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ (suggesting a relationship between the professional ethics and human resource mangement of companies in the idustrial parks no. 1 & 3, Sanandaj) is supported.

With regard to the values and coefficients obtained from figure (1), the structural model estimation shows the relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior. In fact, based on the LISREL software outputs, the hypothesis of the research can be examined. Considering what has been presented in Table 2 and Figure 1 and the t-values obtained, H1, H2 and H3 on the relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior and a sense of belonging to the brand are accepted, and H4 and H5 on the lack of the relationship between a sense of belonging to the brand and organizational citizenship behavior and brand commitment is accepted. In other words, H1, H2 and H3 are accepted, whereas H4 and h5 are rejected.

**Conclusion**

As shown by the analysis, internal branding affects organizational citizenship behavior and this is the answer to the main question of the research. Internal branding focuses on employees as the company's asset, which can in turn lead to positive organizational citizenship behaviors among the employees of manufacturing companies. Compared with the results of the previous studies, the findings of this study confirms the existence of a relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior, as did the most important research conducted in this regard in 2014 by Ozcelik and Findikli. The findings also show a positive relationship between internal branding and a sense of belonging to the brand and brand commitment, as did the findings of previous studies. However, the relationship shown between the sense of commitment to the brand and organizational citizenship behavior as well as between a sense of belonging to the brand and organizational citizenship behavior was inconsistent, because the present study reported no relationship between them, while the study conducted by Ozcelik and Findikli (2014) showed that there is a positive relationship between them. Therefore, further research should be done in this regard in order to help find an answer to the existence or non-existence of a relationship between the variables. It should be noted that to the best of our knowledge, no research has been conducted in this regard, on the relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior. However, some studies have focused on the relationship between internal branding and brand commitment and brand commitment.

Seyed Javadin et al (1387) reported in their study a positive relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior, which is consistent with the findings of this study. The findings of the study conducted by Moghaddam et al. (1391) show a strong relationship between internal branding and brand citizenship behavior as well as between internal branding and brand commitment and a sense of belonging to the brand, which is in line with the results of the present study. Therefore, by comparing the results of this study and the findings of previous studies, one may conclude that internal branding and OCB have a positive and effective correlation and that internal branding affects a sense of belonging to the brand and brand commitment, and there is a positive and direct relationship between them. On the other hand the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and the sense of commitment to the brand and a sense of belonging to the brand is unclear and needs further research.

**Suggestions**

- Holding regular meetings of strategic and executive committees by the managing directors,
- Providing the cultural backgrounds and training the colleagues by holding seminars
  - Holding workshops on internal branding and organizational citizenship behavior and training courses for representatives of companies associated with the transaction.
  - Making use of other motivational levers for extending the OCB behavior to the projects of the organizations and providing letters of appreciation, and appreciating the effective members of teams and so on.
  - The companies are recommended to use a participatory leadership style, away from orders and imperative behaviors. This means that best way and style of leadership for the emergence of organizational citizenship behavior is moving from words to actions.

Organizations should always try to provide new services for employees; that is, services which have not already been provided by their competitors.

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