THE IMPACT OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE ON INTERNAL BRANDING AND EMPLOYEES' JOB SATISFACTION: A STUDY OF HAINAN'S INTERNATIONAL BRANDED HOTELS

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

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Rose Xiaying Chen

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the concept of internal branding through a study of employees in international branded hotels in Hainan, China. This study sheds light on their perceptions of organisational culture and job satisfaction while engaged in an internal branding strategy. Amid a lack of previous research this study contributes a solid foundation for internal branding by arguing that the interaction between brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image form the basis of internal branding. In order to successfully implement internal branding in international branded hotels in Hainan, China, managers should consider the influence of organisational culture and the potential consequences for job satisfaction.

This study develops hypotheses about relationships between internal branding, organisational culture, brand knowledge, brand experience, brand image, and job satisfaction. A total of 496 hotel front-line employees completed a survey and structural equation modelling was used to analyse relationships between the discussed constructs. Of the 11 hypotheses, eight were supported, two were partially supported, and one was rejected. The results confirmed that internal branding consists of brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image. Organisational culture has a strong relationship with internal branding, and internal branding is positively related to employee job satisfaction.

The results offer suggestions for practitioners to improve their human resource approaches so that they are in line with their local employees' perceptions of brand

knowledge and brand experience. The findings also offer valuable insight into the future brand development of state-owned hotels. This study fills the identified research gaps and recommends that future studies develop specific measurement scales for the constructs to be used in service industries.

Keywords: internal branding, organisational culture, international branded hotels, SEM

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Lastly, I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my family for supporting me spiritually throughout past years.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

1.1.1 Overview of Hotel Development in China

China's rapidly growing economy and forthcoming position as the world's largest tourist destination have made it the centre for Asian and even international hotel industry. According to the statistics published by China National Tourism Administration (CNTA, 2000), a total of 10,481 hotels (all types) with 0.9 million rooms were operated in 2000. In 2008, the total number of hotels has reached 14,099 with 1.59 million rooms running for star-rated hotels only (CNTA, 2008). These figures show a rapid development of the hotel industry in China. Nonetheless, this growing trend has been faded out in recent years leaving only 11676 hotels (all types) still operating with approximately 1.47 million rooms (CNTA, 2011).

Domestic hotels, including state-owned and indigenous hotels, are providing what consumers need, but only a few are focusing on branding (Prystay, 2003). Alternatively, international hotel chains have competitive advantages in branding, marketing, reservation systems, professional management, and human resources. Heung, Zhang, and Jiang (2008, p.368) state that "with rapid economic growth, political and social stability, and the abundant supply of human and natural resources, China has attracted multinational hotels including the world's top hotel chains." The rapid expansion of these chains into China is making the competition fiercer than ever. However, they have been experiencing a variety of problems in China such as the inadequate legal system,

immature business environment, interference from local governments, and dependence on personal relationships and networking (Pine & Qi 2004; Heung, Zhang & Jiang 2008). Evidence indicates that there were merely 1.96% out of the total number of hotels invested by foreign hotel management companies in 2011, comparing to 4% achieved back in 2008 (CNTA, 2011; 2008). These issues have become the obstructions slowing down the brand extension process of those management companies. Moreover, business laws and regulations are hurdles to be overcome when international hotel operators seek joint ventures in China (Kivela & Leung, 2005).

Although research has urged both state-owned and budget hotels to pursue brand affiliation with international hotel operators (e.g. Cai, 2004), the aforementioned difficulties have prevented it from happening. Despite the interruptions, there are still investments seeking opportunities in China's hotel industry with reasons like fast growing economy, China becoming world's top tourism destination, and so forth (IFCHBD, 2009). The hotel industry as a rich source of investment has been making an enormous development for hotel supplies in China. Unfortunately, this fad did not last long as the economic downturn occurred in late 2008 causing a number of international hotel brands postponed or even withdrawn their franchising investments (IFCHBD, 2009). However, the Chinese government has at this critical point offered incentives in funding large scale infrastructure developments which have created new opportunities for niche market like promoting resort hotels. As a real-life example such as promoting Hainan as an international resort destination demonstrates, resort hotel development is expected to achieve a giant leap for hotel suppliers as well as for the owners.

1.1.2 Hainan – International Tourism Destination by 2020

In the year of 2000, Hainan had approximately 34,400 hotel rooms and ranked 8th in the top 10 regions with most operated numbers of hotel rooms (CNTA, 2000). Nonetheless, Hainan was left out of the same ranking for star-rated hotel rooms in the year of 2008 (CNTA, 2008), which reveals a lack of competitiveness on the development of local hotel sector comparing to other regions across China. Being the country's only tropical island, Little (2008) perceives that Hainan has become China's leading resort destination over the years. With 20.6 million tourist arrivals visited in 2008, 21% of them were international visitors (Chen, 2010), the Chinese government has realised Hainan's potential for international tourism development. The State Council recently announced national strategic plan to develop Hainan Island into a top international tourism destination by 2020 (CNTA, 2010).

The primary goal of this strategic plan for Hainan is to develop an international first-class recreation and holiday destination through the proposed spheres: visa-free entry for foreigners, increased access for airlines, duty-free shopping, and possibly gambling for attracting mainland Chinese tourists (ibid.). A public survey was conducted after the released announcement showing that domestic tourists already intend to make regular trips to Hainan for shopping and relaxation once the plan is realised (Wu, 2010). By organising the first Boao International Tourism Forum in Sanya, the Hainan Tourism Declaration 2010 was drafted and most importantly the Chinese government resolved to

develop tourism as a strategic pillar economy for the country (China.org.cn, 2010). More opportunities will be generated for Hainan's future destination development.

1.1.3 Resort Hotels in Hainan

Wei (2006, in Yang 2009) has noticed that a large number of resort hotels have been spread across China in recent years. Comparing to other leisure activities, taking holidays in resort hotels has become very popular in China (Yang, 2009). With a significant tourism development taking place in southern parts of Hainan, more international brands entered the local resort hotel market. By the end of 2009, 24 well-known international hotel management groups have expanded in Sanya with 37 hotel brands operating 48 hotels (Zhang, 2010). Among all, 25 of them are already opened whilst 23 are under construction. Table 1-1 displays the released brands of international hotel groups that have participated in the hotel sector in Hainan. Most of the hotel rooms under development in the market are expected to meet a five-star international standard. According to CNTA (2011), the occupancy rate of star-rated hotels in Hainan ranked fifth (64.95%) in the whole country in 2011, with the third highest average room rate (398.87 RMB/per night) charged in comparison with other regions.

Table 1-1 International Hotel Groups in Hainan by 2011.

International Hotel Groups (No. of brands engaged)	
Accor (2)	Mandarin Oriental (1)
Banyan Tree (1)	Marriott International (4)
Carlson (2)	
IHG (2)	MGM Grand (1)
Hilton (3)	Shangri-La (1)
Jumeirah (1)	Starwoods (4)
Kempinski (1)	Wyndham (3)
Langham Hotels (1)	

For international hotel brands to compete advantageously in this recently expanded market, it is essential that the Chinese local workforce subscribe to their operation systems. Concerns are raised from the fact that there is a general shortage of professional and skillful hotel employees in China (Li, 2008). The number of employees working in the hotel industry in Sanya (most popular tourist city) has reached around 28,000 people by the end of year 2008 ("『国际旅游岛』," 2010). Among these employees, only 9.04% of them are graduates with Bachelor degrees or above; the proportion of High Diploma graduates is about 13.78%; around 34.29% of them hold a high school or a vocational school certificate; and the rest takes up 42.89% of the total number ("『国际旅游岛』," 2010). In particular, Hainan is facing a serious issue of not able to recruit college students and attracting hotel employees from other regions in China due to its underdeveloped infrastructures and poor economic performance (Wang, 2010). Non-managerial employees count 70.58% of the total hotel employees in Sanya; and 60%-70% of these many people find their current career through job hopping from other hotels in the same area ("『国际旅游岛』," 2010). Statistics indicate that many hotels' employee turnover rate is between the range of 15% and 20%; and staff turnover mostly happens

among graduates from frontline positions (ibid.). On the other hand, middle managers and senior managers are normally hired from other hotel chains or promoted and transferred from other regions from the same hotel group. Thus, it would be a risky situation for international branded hotels to operate in Hainan with a lack of talents, and issues of managers and lower-level employees containing multiple hotel backgrounds.

Lacking talents and professionals may result difficulties for local employees to understand the ethos of those international branded hotels. If many local employees have working experiences with different hotel brands in the past, it would cost further trouble to the hotels' management when they promote their own brand values since the culture differences may exist between Chinese employees and non-Chinese management.

1.1.4 Context of Study

There are two motives behind the selection of international branded hotels operating in Hainan for this study. First, the design of a resort hotel is to meet visitors' needs in seeking relaxation and leisure. Therefore, different from business hotels, a resort hotel offers entertaining and leisure activities/services to the largest extent to match tourists' specific expectations. Consequently, more front-line employees will have a greater chance to interact with the customers than those who work in business hotels. Conducting this research on hotels in a resort destination would provide in-depth information on employees' perceptions of hotels' branding process towards delivering brand promise to customers. Second, with the promotion of Hainan as the international

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tourism resort destination, more hotels are developed for capturing the growing opportunities. An increasing number of domestic hotels have been aligned with international branded hotel companies for management and operation purposes. In most of the cases, these international branded hotel companies are managed by the Westerns. Hence, their management style and operation system would be more westernised. Once they bring out the westernised style and manner into a Chinese working environment, it would have enormous culture involvement for both the top level managers and their employees.

1.2 Proposed Theoretical Framework

1.2.1 Problem Statement

In recent years, the concept of internal branding has attracted popular attentions among corporate giants such as Southwest Airlines (Miles & Mangold, 2005); and simultaneously captured the interest of academics. This phenomenon can be explained within most service related industries, especially the hotel industry. According to Forgacs (2003), branded hotels tend to outperform non-branded hotels in most markets in the long run. Successfully branded hotels take brand as their strategic weapon and apply their resources to reinforce their brand advantages over their competitors (Damonte, Rompf, Bahl & Domke, 1997). International branded hotels in particular are highly dependent on their well-established corporate brands which are also seen as the centrepiece of the overall strategy.

Since inseparability is one of the core characteristics of the hotel industry, each front-line employee is producing service while the customer consumes (Lewis & Chambers, 2000). One of the impacts of this characteristic noted by Hartline, Maxham and McKee (2000) is that, in brand-driven industries employees need to be able to adapt and respond quickly to customers' needs with respect to the brand values of their companies. In light of this fact, it is vital to emphasise the role played by employees in developing the brand during their interactions with customers since they act as brand representatives. It is also believed that a strong hotel brand image can only be delivered to customers when employees' perceived values and actual behaviours are consistent with the brand's values (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Henkel et al., 2007; Ruekert, Walker & Roering, 1985). Hence, employees' roles in building the brand and making the brand 'come alive' is seen as essential (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009).

Subsequently, based on Miles and Mangold's (2004) employee branding model; the obtained strong brand image would have impacts on employees' job satisfaction and their performances as well as affecting customers' satisfaction and customers' preference for hotels. In order to verify these assumptions, the concept of internal branding has been specifically examined in this study.

Problems however exist when considering internal branding. Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson (2009) argue that internal branding could, to a certain extent, shape employees' behaviour due to the fact that employees understand the brand values and

they are committed to the brand promise. Nonetheless, "despite the importance of the consistent delivery of the brand promise, service brands involving human interactions pose the problem of unpredictability for the process of service branding" (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky & Wilson, 2009, p.209). Yet, research interest in the area of internal branding lies mainly on subjects such as the links between internal branding and employees' brand commitment (e.g. Burmann & Zeplin, 2005); employees' brand loyalty (e.g. Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006); corporate culture impact (e.g. de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2001; Hatch & Schultz, 2001; Wilson, 2001); and the influence of internal branding on employees' brand-supporting behaviours (e.g. Boone, 2000; de Chernatony & Cottam, 2006; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2001). Limited studies have explored human interactions associated with internal branding process.

By alluding to the less focused conception of human interaction, this study is specifically aimed to focus on culture effects as one of the human interactions on internal branding. Being one of the most influencing parts on people's behaviour at work, cultural factors can be produced through "historical processes [that] a society develops certain attitudes to work and ways of working, and these are passed on to children in the course of education and other kinds of socialisation" (Argyle, 1989, p.1). These other kinds of socialisation indeed comprise organisational contexts such as organisational culture which have been verified by Heaphy and Dutton (2008) for shaping employees' attitudes and behaviours. Even though several literature examined the joint notions of branding and culture in the past, most of them emphasised on customers' perceptions rather than on employees' (e.g. Shao, Bao & Gray, 2004; Thompson, 2004). Moreover,

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studies draw much attention on corporate culture impacts (e.g. Flamholtz, 2001; McDonald et al., 2001; Mosley, 2007) but overlooked the influences brought forth by organisational culture (the emergent or practiced values and practices of employees at work) on internal branding. It hence forms the groundwork for this study to carry out and test the cultural impacts on internal branding process.

A poor fit between organisational culture and internal branding process would affect employee job satisfaction. Taking the Shangri-La Hotel, Sydney as an example, their management was shocked about how difficult it was for their service approach and organisational culture developed within an Asian context to be transported to a new social and cultural environment prior to the opening of the Sydney hotel (Heffernan & Droulers, 2008). With a serious investment in training the local staff, senior managers still experienced a stereotypical Australian way of service which was indicative of what Heffernan and Droulers (2008) depicted as "the gulf in attitudes between the status quo and the Shangri-La ideal" (p.301). Knowing what brand they are serving for and what brand promises they are supposed to deliver to the hotel guests of Shangri-La Sydney would not adjust the local employees' attitudes to work and their ways of working based on Argyle (1989). Heffeman and Droulers argue that the most obvious and important focal point of such distinct attitudes was what the good service embodied within the belief system. In other words, can the core values of Shangri-La brand which represent true Asian hospitality be embedded in an egalitarian country such as Australia? Schneider and Barsoux (2003) raise the challenge of inappropriate imposed human resource policies which can direct to low morale if they are misfit to the local culture;

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and simultaneously cause unexpected behaviour when delivering brand messages and promises. The referred low morale would potentially turn into low job satisfaction which will result in further managerial problems like high employee turnover rate, poor service performance, and most likely negative influence on word-of-mouth strategy.

1.2.2 Conceptual Framework

With the connections identified between internal branding, organisational culture and job satisfaction, this study aims to examine the following proposed model in the context of Hainan hotel industry (Figure1-1).
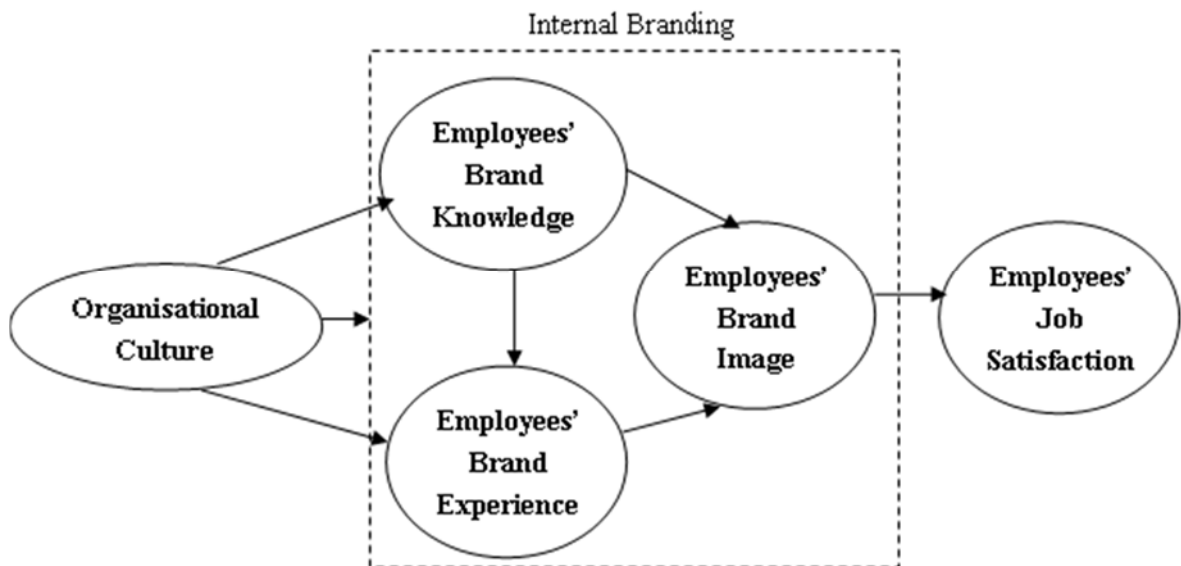
Figure 1-1 The Conceptual Framework.

1.3 Research Objectives

For the purpose of understanding how internal branding plays an essential role in order to assist employees delivering the brand, this research initiates its connection with organisational culture, an element of interaction which may constitute unpredictable obstacles for the branding process; as well as job satisfaction, an essential consequence of internal branding implementation. This study fills the research gaps by investigating the impacts organisational culture would have on internal branding; and assessing the process from implementing internal branding to achieving employee job satisfaction from the employees' perspectives. Most importantly, an understanding of what elements compose the idea of internal branding is greatly addressed. In particular, this research necessitates the empirical evidence for some of the assumptions discussed by other scholars in this field. The objectives of this research are:

- to explore the components and measurements of internal branding applied in the international branded hotels;

- to explore the measurements of organisational culture applied in the international branded hotels;

- to examine the relationship between organisational culture and internal branding;

- to examine the relationship between internal branding and employees' job satisfaction; and

- to examine if internal branding mediates the relationship between organisational culture and employees' job satisfaction.

1.4 Key Concepts of Study

1.4.1 Internal branding

According to Khan (2009, p. 26), internal branding aims to ensure that "employees transform espoused brand messages into brand reality for customers and other stakeholders". The internal branding process engages three dimensions: promoting the brand values effectively to the employees (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003; Bergstrom, Blumenthal & Crothers, 2002); ensuring the brand messages are consistently transformed by employees into reality so that brand promise reflect the customers' expected brand experience (Boone, 2000); and applying the process at all organisational levels to align management and their subordinates' behaviour and values (Mahnert & Torres, 2007). As this study intends to examine employees' perception on their recognition of the brands they work for, the second dimension of which the performance of employees' brand message delivery is excluded. The exclusion also includes the third dimension－application of internal branding at all levels－since it concerns managerial perception as well.

Three individual dimensions are deemed to be closely related to internal branding: brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image. Studies have found that internal branding often fails in organisations for three major reasons which are employees' insufficient brand knowledge (King & Grace, 2008); employees' lack of brand experience (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009); and employees' inadequate brand image

(Miles & Mangold, 2004). This study has taken these three concepts into consideration for understanding to what extent these concepts affect internal branding. After reviewing the literature, it has been presumed that employees' brand knowledge, employees' brand experience, and employees' brand image form the foundation of internal branding concept in this study.

1.4.2 Organisational culture

In Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv and Sanders' (1990, p. 286) work, they confirm that there is no consensus on how organisational culture is defined; rather, they suggest that most scholars would agree on the characteristics of organisational culture construct. Based on their views, organisational culture is "holistic, historically determined, related to anthropological concepts, socially constructed, soft and difficult to change". This is supported by Wilson (2001) after reviewing a collection of different definitions on organisational culture. He attempts to apply the elements observed to define organisational culture as

> the visible and less visible norms, values and behaviour that are
> shared by a group of employees which shape the group's sense of
> what is acceptable and valid; these are generally slow to change
> and new group members learn them through both an informal and
> formal socialisation (p. 356).

This study adopts the characteristics of organisational culture that is universally recognised and hence Hofstede's definition for the foundation of organisational culture concept is used in this study.

1.4.3 Employee Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been one of the most frequently studied subjects across disciplines (Kim, Tavitiyaman & Kim, 2009). The commonly accepted definition refers to the attitudes held by individuals about their jobs (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). The academic definitions of job satisfaction can be divided into three categories: integral definition (attitude toward environment), differential definition (attitude toward differences between the received and the expected reward), and reference structure theory (attitude toward the satisfaction intension of individual's job position) (Robbins & Judge, 2010). In this research, employees' attitude which is influenced by their interpretation of job characteristics, personal factors and job content is deemed to be more relevant to the proposed framework. The reason is that employee job satisfaction as affected by job positions is closely related to customer satisfaction due to the unique nature of inseparability in the hospitality industry (Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser Jr. & Schlesinger, 1994). That means only when employees are satisfied with their jobs first, and they can then ensure quality service performance and further enhance customers' satisfaction with the service. Thus, reference structure theory satisfaction is adopted for this study.

1.5 Significance of Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study argues that the three dimensions (brand knowledge, brand experience and brand image) form the concept of internal branding; the concept of internal branding is empirically redefined. It embraces not only the concept of internal branding but also culture in a broader perspective including organisational culture linking with internal branding process. It explicitly addresses the extent to which employees perceive the relationship between organisational cultural practices and the process of internal branding, specifically examined in the context of Hainan's international branded resort hotels. Furthermore, this study provides empirical proof on verifying internal branding's impact on employee job satisfaction. Above all, internal branding concept is thoroughly investigated.

1.5.2 Practical Contribution

By examining international hotel brands operated in Hainan's resort hotel market, this research will provide significant and empirical evidence to support the implementation of effective internal branding programmes. In practice, the results of this study sheds light on what can be improved to help international branded hotels reshape human resources training approaches to be able to help internalise desired brand images into Chinese local employees' minds. As a result, it helps these branded hotels effectively deliver their tailored brand promises to their local Chinese employees. At the same time, their employees may experience satisfaction at work if positive brand image is obtained. Moreover, the examined international branded hotels can be pioneer examples in light of

their experiences in internal branding strategy for the state-owned hotels operating in Hainan and/or may be throughout China. This study offers a valuable insight for the state-owned hotels in respect of their brand development position for competing with their international counterparts. In addition, they can utilise internal branding in association with their future expansion strategy.

Both theoretical and practical contributions help to fill in the gaps in the literature which have not yet been discovered, or explored in depth.

1.6 Structure of Study

Chapter 2 explores the fundamental concepts of internal branding and its interlinked components – brand knowledge, employer brand as experienced by employees and brand image. A broad collection of literature is reviewed for determining research gaps on the three major constructs (internal branding, organisational culture and employee job satisfaction). Chapter 3 considers a synthesis of the identified key concepts. This chapter points out the proposed vital connections between individual constructs and develops a hypothesis for each connection. The conceptual framework is carefully analysed. The most suitable methodology for this research is chosen and illustrated in Chapter 4 based on the review and discussion in previous chapters. The process of conducting screen test, pilot test and the main survey is explained. Chapter 5 interprets the findings produced from exploratory factor analysis, and structural equation modelling. Discussions of the results are followed in the same chapter of findings to compare and contrast the

similarity and difference from previous studies; also to identify potential new phenomenon. This study is concluded with an overview of the entire study approach and ended with future research directions in chapter 6. Figure 1-2 illustrates the thesis organisation of this study.

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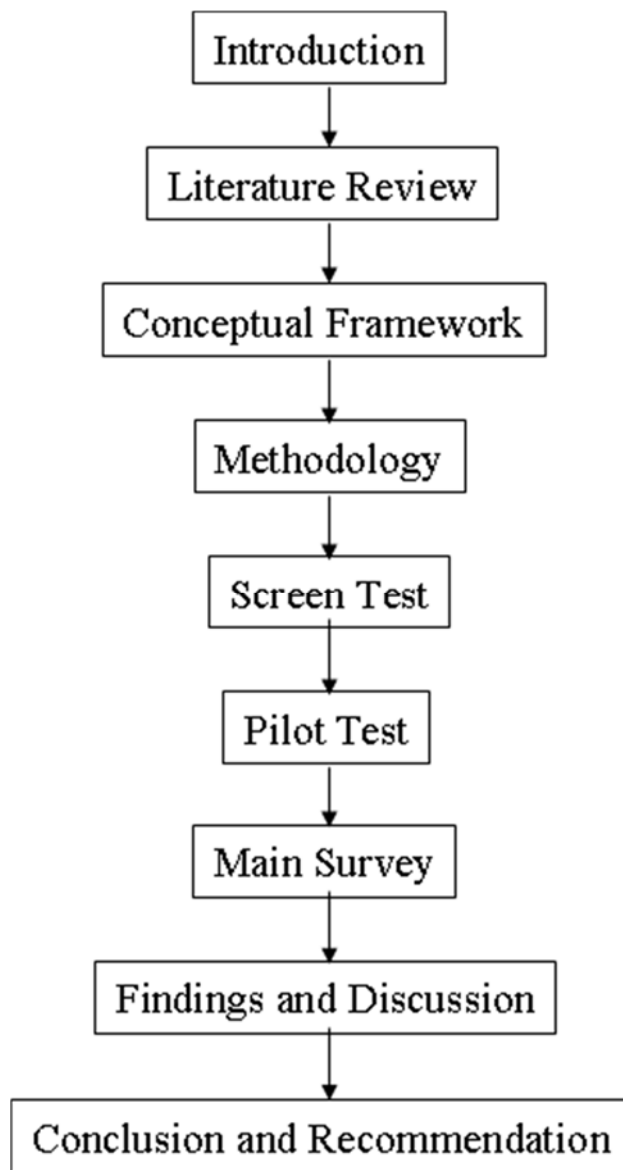
Figure 1-2 Organisation of the Study.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature for the major research constructs of this study: internal branding, organisational culture, and job satisfaction. This chapter identifies the research gaps in each construct and links these constructs together for an integrated study.

2.2 Service Branding and Corporate Branding

The American Marketing Association (2011) defines brand as a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature where goods (tangible) and service (intangible) with unique characteristics can be distinguished from the products of other sellers. A brand helps companies stand out with their exclusive trademark. For service organisations, marketing a brand of a service organisation requires that customers develop a brand association with the actual service, instead of with any tangible goods (Goldstein, Johnston, Duffy, & Rao, 2002). Hence, in service organisations, interactions between customers and employees are critical in determining how customers experience the brand (Harris, 2007). The delivery of the corporate brand often depends on employees delivering the core values of the company to customers effectively (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011).

Service staff is therefore seen as the embodiment of the corporate brand through their behaviours that support a predetermined and common set of brand values (de

Chernatony, 2002). Corporate branding is defined as a systematic planned process of managing behaviour, communication, and symbolism in order to attain a favourable and positive reputation for all stakeholders of an organisation (Einwiller & Will, 2002). While trying to build corporate brands, corporations have increasingly emphasised the issue of eliminating any 'corporate dissonance'－meaning alignment between what is communicated to external and internal parties (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). Thus internal branding activities may be as important as external branding activities in communicating and delivering the brand promise and image to internal employees and external customers. Furthermore, employees' behaviour is seen as having a major influence on how customers perceive the corporate brand, identity, and image (Hatch & Schultz, 2001; Mitchell, 2002). Nonetheless, ensuring positive interactions between customers and employees is rather challenging; it is sometimes difficult for employees to fulfil the promises of the brand because human nature is variable and hard to control (Punjaisri, Wilson, & Evanschitzky, 2008). As such, there is a vital need for a close alignment between the employees and the organisations' brand promises and values in order to narrow the perceived communication and behaviour gaps between internal and external parties (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011).

Corporate branding requires organisation-wide practices and it has been frequently investigated along with roles of corporate identity, corporate personality, values and corporate culture, leadership, and internal branding, among others in the corporate branding process (Melewar, Gotsi, & Andriopoulos, 2012). Studies have begun to examine and explore individuals' and groups' expectations of corporate brands (e.g. Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003). Since

understanding how individuals'－such as employees, customers, and managers－experience, interpret, and influence corporate brands is critical in managing corporate brands, this study focuses on employees and factors that could motivate them to 'live the brand'. In this way, the concept of internal branding management has been introduced to reduce the negative impacts caused by the sometimes negative and hard-to-control human interactions and to help fitting employee behaviour into management's expectations.

2.3 Internal branding

2.3.1 Definition of Internal Branding

Although internal branding has not been studied for long, it has received much attention from academia from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Definitions of internal branding vary between different scholars and the diverse contexts they describe. Nonetheless, the fundamental content within the developed theories shares a similar basic understanding.

Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson (2009, p. 210) describe internal branding as "an enabler of an organisation's success in delivering the brand promise to meet customers' brand expectations set by various communication activities". Researchers argue that internal branding is a creation of the internal marketing process; and it functions as a means to align the internal marketing process with the brand (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). This statement is supported by many scholars who have argued that the objectives of

internal branding can be successfully achieved by implementing internal marketing as the major instrument － coordination between human resources and internal communication disciplines (e.g., Aurand, Gorchels, & Bishop, 2005; Mitchell, 2002). The internal marketing mentioned here refers to a marketing-like approach to motivate, satisfy, and integrate employees who are expected to implement corporate strategies to satisfy customers, as defined by Rafiq and Ahmed (2000).

However, Khan (2009) believes that (1) internal marketing is not the only method needed to ensure the delivery of brand promise to customers and (2) internal branding is more than just communicating brand messages inside organisations. Additionally, Machtiger (2004) has pointed out the pitfalls of internal branding; for example, relying solely on internal communications can kill branding efforts. Miles and Mangold (2004, p. 68) assert that internal branding "goes beyond attaining customer satisfaction through internal marketing". This assertion is supported by Joshi's (2007) study, which finds that internal branding is an integration of all the organisational systems and business processes－while remaining consistent with brand values－to create a distinct brand image of each point of customer interaction. Thus, it not only requires input from marketing personnel, but also from those in the human resources (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). With many organisations communicating their mission and long-term plans to employees via effective human resource management, another study refers to internal branding as the involvement of employees in the brand-building process that communicates the brand qualities positively to all stakeholders (Ashraf, Khalid, Maqsood, Kaship, Ahmad, & Akber, 2011).

Despite the argument over whether internal branding belongs to marketing or human resources, studies have looked at the concept as a corporate strategy (Khan, 2009). For instance, Ashraf et al. (2011) argue that internal branding is a set of strategic processes that empowers employees to deliver the appropriate customer experience in a consistent and reliable manner. Tosti and Stotz (2001) believe that the core aim of internal branding is to align individual behaviours with the brand's espoused values. Employees' affiliation and ownership with the organisation are likely to make them more personally involved in their routine work activities. This would be an advantage for organisations over their competitors, particularly in the service industry.

Researchers have argued that internal branding requires a broader integrative framework across marketing, management, and human resources (Ashraf et al., 2011). Once an organisation integrates its internal branding framework to include human resource management, operations, and marketing, the organisation gains a sustainable competitive advantage (de Chernatony & Cottam, 2006). Although branding success can be largely impacted through a wide variety of human resource plans, processes, and actions, the literature has less often recognised the need for human resource management to be more comprehensive in its role to support branding efforts (Ashraf et al., 2011). Gotsi and Wilson (2001) point out that there has been limited research on the means by which organisations can use to direct and encourage employees to live the brand. Therefore, this study chooses to examine internal branding from human resource's perspective.

To narrow the concept down into more specific notions, Khan (2009) notes that internal branding plays a key role in ensuring that "employees transform espoused brand messages into brand reality for customers and other stakeholders" (p. 26). Various authors have also agreed that internal branding is about ensuring that employees transform the brand promise into reality, which helps meet customers' expectations through the reflection of espoused brand values (Boone, 2000; de Chernatony & Cottam, 2006; Mahnert & Torres, 2007). Similarly, Miles and Mangold's (2004) employee-branding concept shares more or less similar principles－that is "the process by which employees internalise the desired brand image and are motivated to project the image to customers and other organisational constituents" (p. 68). The latter definition derives from the authors' concern that there is a need for employees to effectively internalise the desired brand image before they can reflect it to others. They believe this brand internalisation process occurs when employees receive messages that are converted from the desired image from organisations' internal systems; and when the messages are consistent and credible, this process can enable employees to effectively deliver brand promises that are intrinsic to the values of the brand (Miles & Mangold, 2005). In contrast with Khan's definition, Miles and Mangold clearly specify what the brand messages encompass－that is, the desired brand image that the organisation wants its employees to represent.

Khan's (2009) recent study has identified five basic brand principles as essential components of the companies who possess a strong internal brand (Figure 2-1). Based on these principles, together with aforementioned definitions, it can be argued that internal branding is *a process through which key brand messages are converted from desired brand images and executed consistently through all communication channels and all functions to employees, who then transform the espoused messages into brand reality for customers.* A study by Mahnert and Torres (2007) supports this definition. Their study suggests that this process has three dimensions－a notion that many scholars from different research areas endorse:

- promoting the brand values/images effectively to employees (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003; Bergstrom, Blumenthal, & Crothers, 2002; Punjaisri, Evanschitzky, & Wilson, 2009);

- ensuring the brand messages are consistently transformed by employees into reality so that the brand promise reflects the customers' expected brand experience (Boone, 2000; Miles & Mangold, 2004); and

- applying the process at all organisational levels to align management and employee behaviour and values (Khan, 2009; Mahnert & Torres, 2007).

- **All communication channels reflect and deliver the brand messages.**

- **Consistent, prioritised internal branding messages reflect the company's brand image and promise to its customers and its employees.**

- **Key messages are planned and executed with as much attention to frequency as company's external communications.**

- **Internal branding approaches are carried across all functions and all functions speak to employees with a unified voice.**

- **All vehicles have a strong internal brand identity and image – compelling and easily identifiable to employees.**

Figure 2-1 Principles of companies with a strong internal brand (adopted from Khan 2009).

By extracting similar notions from various definitions, this study develops an integrated definition of internal branding, which helps establish a foundation of the concept of internal branding. This study uses this incorporated definition as the basis for understanding internal branding. The main focus is on the first dimension (promoting brand values to employees) for the reason that little research has evidently demonstrated the components of internal branding that are needed for delivering brand values to employees. It is essential to understand what helps internal branding promoting brand values to employees before examining the second stage of ensuring the brand values if employees consistently transformed to the reality. Furthermore, as this study intends to examine employees' perception on their recognition of the brands they work for, the second dimension of which the performance of employees' brand message delivery is excluded. The exclusion also includes the third dimension－application of internal branding at all levels－since it concerns managerial perception as well. Therefore, this study attempts to answer the question of how should hotels promote brand values/images to their employees effectively.

2.3.2 Research on Internal Branding

Prior studies on internal branding have focused on issues from the perspectives of both managers/consultants and employees. From the perspective of managers/consultants, some studies have investigated the influence of internal branding on employees' attitudes and behaviours towards supporting the brand. For example, Boone (2002) examines a case study of Ernst & Young to pioneer the argument of how important internal branding is for having employees transform brand messages into reality. In another industry setting, de Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2001) address employees' crucial role in understanding the brand's unique characteristics and also managers' role in aligning organisational culture with brand values. At a later stage, de Chernatony and Cottam (2006) discern a need for managers to build synergy between the brand and organisational culture to guide employees' behaviour at point of service. Burmann and Zeplin (2005) empirically demonstrate that employees' brand commitment can be evoked through an effective internal branding campaign because the campaign can generate a shared understanding of the brand. Internal branding is not just related to brand commitment; Papasolomou and Vrontis (2006) find that internal branding using internal communications and training can motivate employees to deliver high-quality customer service. More recently, King and Grace (2006) explore internal branding's impact on employees' realisation of the desired brand-driven behaviours for achieving organisational performance from a management perspective.

Some researchers have looked at internal branding's impact on organisations' operations and future success. For example, Aurand et al. (2005) have studied American firms and stress that it is important to increase human resource involvement in internal branding and marketing activities. Vallaster (2004) investigates the role of leadership in facilitating internal brand building in a multicultural environment. Leadership has also been studied as a catalyst for building internal branding leadership that has the power to change the structural properties of an organisation (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005, 2006).

There are not many internal branding studies from the perspective of employees. Most of the studies that have been studied from employees' perspective have only been conducted recently. For instance, Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009) examine the factors influencing employees' commitment to a company's brand by measuring the connection between employees' perceptions of the brand and their ability to support the brand. King and Grace (2008) investigate the different effects internal branding initiatives have on an organisation's employees and on the organisation's brand. One study finds that internal branding positively influences employees' brand loyalty (Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006), and another study finds that employees' perceptions of work environment－their relationships with peers and leaders, the level of perceived autonomy, and perceptions towards payment and reward schemes－can limit the effectiveness of internal branding (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011).

In one particular study, Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) point out that employees understand their role in bringing the brand alive by delivering the brand promise to customers. They confirm that internal branding should be carried out with collaboration among the corporate functions of marketing, management, and human resource management. In that way "if management can understand and orchestrate marketing and HR theories, it is argued that employees will better accept and internalise the brand values and align their attitudes and behaviour, accordingly" (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007, p. 60). Based on this assumption, they have developed a new measurement scale specifically for employees' perceptions of internal branding. Punjaisri, Evanschitzky, and Wilson (2009) have measured internal branding through employees' perceptions of orientations, training, group meetings, and daily briefings using the newly developed measurement. Their results have shown that internal branding has a positive impact on employees' brand identification, brand commitment, brand loyalty, and brand performance.

This measurement of internal branding is more execution-oriented in that it taps into the communications and meetings between managers, human resources, marketing, and employees. It seems to be suitable to measure the execution of internal branding through communication channels to employees across various organisation functions. However, according to the understanding of internal branding set forth earlier in this current study, Punjaisri and Wilson's measurement matches the needs of third dimension of the internal branding concept that is applying the process at all organisational levels to align employees' behaviour and values. It means that this measurement may be more appropriate for examining the internal branding implementation via various

communication means across the organisation; which is in contrast with the focus of this study. For this reason, this study chooses not to adopt Punjaisri and Wilson's measurement scale.

In contrast to Punjaisri et al. (2009), Khan (2009) perceives internal branding as a corporate strategy rather than a communication instrument. Since the interaction between employees and customers determines the success of internal branding, it is vital that employees not only understand the particular role they play in delivering the brand promise, but also understand the overall brand's promise of service. In order to make this happens, "successful internal branding cannot be forced on employees because such an exercise would render them powerless and organisationally peripheral in 'forwarding the message' to the public" (Khan, 2009, p. 30). Furthermore, the brand values must be authentic rather than superficial, and they should be driven towards a vision of the brand that employees can believe in. Employees should not 'pay lip service' to internal branding; instead they should advocate the brand vision (ibid.). In this sense, some researchers argue that internal branding is a strategic weapon, helping employees to self-actualise the brand values, rather than just a means for the organisation to communicate internally. This argument implies that execution-oriented internal branding may not guarantee successful results. Rather, the brand messages and images in employees' minds must fit with the branding that management is pushing. How to actualise that consonance is the question. This study attempts to move one step further from studying an execution-oriented internal branding to studying a conception-oriented internal branding. It strives to understand the concept of internal branding from 'behind scenes':

its fundamental constituent elements, the connection between those elements, and their level of impact on internal branding.

Although several scholars have attempted to design a conceptual model of the internal branding process, it appears that these studies lack empirical evidence. For instance, Miles and Mangold's (2004) comprehensive model for understanding the internal branding process encompasses received messages, influential factors on employees' perceptions, development of brand image, and likely accrued consequences. More examples can be found in Bergstrom et al.'s (2002) '5 Cs approach' (clarity, commitment, communications, culture, and compensation) and Mahnert and Torres' (2007) consolidated internal branding framework (CIBF), which consists of three stages: planning, executing, and evaluating. In addition to lacking empirical support, some of the models try to use concepts that were too broad. Particular models such as Tosti and Stotz's (2001) blend of marketing expertise and performance technology generate a seven-phase internal branding process. Other researchers create a holistic model of internal branding involving three central levers for generating brand commitment and four contextual factors for the evolution of brand commitment and brand citizenship behaviour (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). These models cover internal branding to a large extent, and tackle issues from many different angles such as Tosti and Stotz's (2001) study involving brand values and practices, perceptions of leaders, middle managers, and employees all together in one model. It would be difficult for these models to thoroughly investigate the underlying concept of internal branding.

Once the key dimensions of internal branding are fixed, it is best to examine each dimension one by one, instead of including them all in a single study. Since this study focuses on the first dimension (how to promote brand images to employees from the perspective of employees), problems in this one sphere are examined.

2.3.3 Identified Problems of Internal Branding

A review of the existing literature on internal branding raises a few critical issues. First, frontline employees can say that they know their essential role in brand delivery, but it does not necessarily prove that they will fulfil their role in reality. Even if management puts a lot of efforts into marketing the brand values inside organisation, it is not guaranteed that employees will truly understand what is expected of them.

Second, some authors argue that employees' understanding of the brand will be "constantly reinforced and in harmony with their colleagues" once they are in an environment with consistent brand messages (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007, p. 67). However, there is the possibility that employees do not always perceive brand messages in the same way as management. Uncertainty exists when employees disagree with the brand messages, when they do not correctly apprehend the underlying meaning of those messages, or even when messages are badly mismatched (Mitchell, 2002).

Third, many studies have focused merely on the implementation of how to communicate the brand messages to employees, such as conducting brand training and internal

communication. Those studies have neglected the fundamental facets of what should be included within the brand messages and how employees internalise those messages without physically experiencing them.

Fourth, Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) suggest organisations use probation periods to identify whether the employees' values fit with the organisations'. They propose training as a component of internal branding. This claim can be criticised for the possibility that employees can fake their values in order to keep their job. In the case of this study, most people in China choose to work in international branded hotels because those hotels offer relatively high salaries and pensions (China Hotel, 2008). Therefore, in some situations, it is unrealistic to consider only recruiting those employees who possess values similar to the organisation. Training should not be seen as the only means of ensuring employees' factual understanding of the brand messages.

There are three main reasons that could cause internal branding programmes to fail: employees' brand knowledge (King & Grace, 2008), their experience with the brand (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009), and their internalised brand image (Miles & Mangold, 2004). These elements will be discussed separately in the following sections.

2.3.4 Employees' Brand knowledge

One of the reasons for the failure of internal branding is that employees lack brand knowledge. Brand knowledge from consumers' perspective can be defined as "all the

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attributes, benefits, images, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and experiences that become associated to or evoked by the brand" (Keller, 2012, p. 187). Keller (1993, 2012) argues that any descriptive and evaluative brand-related information can become meaningful brand knowledge to consumers, and may directly or indirectly influence consumer-brand relationship. Once the brand knowledge is stored in consumers' memory, it may influence how brand information is recalled and ultimately influence one's behaviour and brand related decisions. King (2010) believes that Keller's notion of consumer brand knowledge is equally relevant to the employee. That is, brand knowledge can influence employees' behaviour in the manner desired by the organisation. Thus, brand knowledge becomes the key to employees when delivering the brand promise.

Research shows that brand knowledge plays a vital role in transforming brand image into brand reality (e.g., Berry, 2000; Khan, 2009; Miles & Mangold, 2004). Yet, some organisations still provide insufficient and inconsistent brand information to employees (King & Grace, 2008). King and Grace's (2008) argument emphasises employees' need for advanced knowledge to enable them to go beyond mere technical competency and become motivated to deliver brand promise. The results from their study illustrate that employees with low brand knowledge have lower job satisfaction and less ability to successfully deliver service up to management's expectations. Understanding brand meaning and its value to consumers is seen as a prerequisite for brand messages to be developed and delivered accordingly. In other words, "without such brand knowledge, employees are unable to transform the brand vision into the brand reality" (King &

Grace, 2008, p. 360). Hence, employees' brand knowledge forms a major part of internal branding.

Many studies in the past focused on customer-based brand equity. Brand knowledge was only mentioned as a part of Keller's (1993, 2003) theory that brand equity originates from and is affected by brand knowledge (e.g., Cai, 2002; Hyun, 2009; Kim & Kim, 2005; Lee & Back, 2010; Thomas & Kohli, 2009). This type of brand equity theory (and its conception of brand knowledge) has also received attention in the business-to-business sector (e.g., Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010; Mudambi, 2002). Yet, the majority of scholars in this field overlooked the idea that shaping employees' perceptions about the organisation's brand is just as important (Berry, 2000).

Few studies have included the concept of employees' brand knowledge. Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009) have studied whether employees' brand knowledge is a factor that influences commitment to the brand. They suggest that the brand knowledge may be comprised of three facets: "brand meaning; knowledge of customer needs and expectations; and employee understanding of their responsibility to deliver the brand promise" (p. 536). Others believe that brand values offer a framework for employees to share a common understanding of the brand to ensure a smooth flow of internal communication (de Chernatony, Cottam, & Segal-Horn, 2006; Thomson, de Chernatony, Arganbright, & Khan, 1999). Khan (2009) argues that it is rather important for employees to know the brand meaning, its provenance, the values associated with it, and

the visual symbols representing it. The more brand-related information they learn, the stronger devotion employees will have towards their companies. This is one of the many significant benefits derived from using effective internal branding processes (King & Grace, 2008, 2010).

As discussed, organisations cannot simply rely on their employees understanding their role of delivering brand promise. "Whether they actually do it hinges on how well they understand why they should" (Khan, 2009, p. 32). Nevertheless, Kimpakorn and Tocquer's (2009) empirical findings suggest that employees' brand knowledge may not necessarily affect employees' brand commitment. As they concluded, understanding brand values and meanings is not enough to make employees committing to the brand. This argument acknowledges the idea that knowledge cannot be easily transferred into action without employees experiencing the actual process. Therefore, employees' experience with their employer's brand should be just as crucial as brand knowledge.

2.3.5 Employees' Brand Experience

Some organisations may sometimes find it difficult to get internal branding to meet their expected goals, even with abundant information and support. This circumstance could be explained with the argument that employees need substantial contact with the brand values in their daily working environment. Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009) agree with this notion, arguing that only an integration of the brand knowledge and practicing that knowledge at the points of service can guarantee the 'true brand'.

Brand experience concept has been studied from consumers' perspective for years. Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009, p. 53) define brand experience as "subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioural responses evoked by brand related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments". In short terms, brand experiences are sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli. Iglesias, Singh, and Batista-Foguet (2011) argue brand experience to be the result of the encounter with the holistic brand formed in the mind of consumers. Since brand experiences occur whenever there is a direct or indirect interaction with the brand (Brakus et al., 2009), its definitions may also be applied to employees.

Employees' brand experiences are essential in the internal branding process. King and Grace (2008) emphasise that customers' brand perceptions all come from their actual experience with the brand, especially in service industries. Hence, service employees' role to present the brand well when interacting with customers cannot be underestimated. For that reason, it is necessary for organisations to create an environment in which employees can truly embed the brand knowledge in their service behaviour. If these employees do not appreciate or believe in the brand knowledge within their own work, it is highly unlikely that they will transfer such knowledge into real actions at the point of service (Miles & Mangold, 2004). When employees do not experience the brand in same way it is promoted, they would not show as much respect to the brand as the organisation expects. On the other hand, the more employees perceive that the brand knowledge is realistic and consistent with human resource practices, the more honoured

employees would be to show their trust in the organisation by delivering promises to customers.

Nonetheless, most studies have focused on brand experience from the perception of customers (e.g., Berry, 2000; Mitchell, 2002), such as casino hotels in Macau (Zhang, Dewald, & Neirynck, 2009); resort-hotel brands in Egypt (Ismail, Melewar, & Woodside, 2010); resort-hotel brands experienced by British guests (Ismail & Melewar, 2008). Research has also looked at the brand experience of destination brands and experience-centric strategies (Boo, Busser, & Baloglu, 2009; Voss, Roth, & Chase, 2008), and the impact of brand experience on consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009). In contrast to much of the previous research, Vallaster and de Chernatony (2005) remark on how important it is for managers to facilitate social interaction (including verbal communication, showing commitment, living the brand, and trusting employees) in the internal brand-building process. Zhang, Cai, and Kavanaugh (2008) look into hotel manager's understanding of the dimensions of creating and building a customer's hotel brand experience.

Very few prior studies have investigated the way that employees experience brands. Mosley (2007) emphasises that internal branding should not be exaggerated with marketing and communicating the brand promise; instead, the organisation should reinforce a mechanism for translating that into employees' everyday working experience. Miles and Mangold (2004) manage to come up with a concept that is very similar to how

the current study understands employees' brand experience. They have proposed it as the psychological contract that keeps the organisation and its employees making promises to each other. "The expectations are based on messages employees receive about the organisation beginning with the recruitment process and lasting throughout their tenure with the firm" (Miles & Mangold, 2004, p. 79). This statement is corroborated by Moroko and Uncles's (2008) finding that employees monitor the perceived promise and their brand experience at all times, looking for a tight alignment between the two. At any point in the entire employment process, if the organisation does not live up to what they have promised to their employees, the organisation has broken this so-called psychological contract. Consequently, employees will be less enthusiastic about communicating the desired brand messages to customers. At this point in their discussion, Miles and Mangold (2004) argue that the psychological contract is equivalent to employees' brand experience.

Although consumer brand experience can be categorised into four dimensions: sensory, affective, behavioural, and intellectual (Brakus et al., 2009), employees' brand experience is thought to be influenced by other elements which are the company management style, human resource management practices, and cross-functional coordination (King & Grace, 2008). This experience helps shape employees' perception of the brand, behaviour towards the brand, and brand commitment. With a consistent brand knowledge and employees' experience, employees should exhibit the desired brand image, according to Miles and Mangold (2004).

2.3.6 Employees' Brand image

Generally speaking, brand image has been attracting much attention in the service business world, including the study of destination image in the tourism industry (Kneesel, Baloglu, & Millar, 2010; Prebensen, 2007; Qu, Kim, & Im, 2010; Tasci, Gartner, & Cavusgil, 2007); airline service (Brodie, Whittome, & Brush, 2009); lodging (Back, 2005; Han & Back, 2008; Kayaman & Arasli, 2007; Kwun & Oh, 2007;), and e-tourism (Chiang & Jang, 2007; Huang & Cai, 2009).

The majority of these studies emphasise consumers' perception of the brand associations. That perception, which is held in consumer memory, is described as brand image. Brand image is thus the overall impression made on the minds of consumer about a brand (Xu, Zhang, & Tang, 2011). Brand associations are categorised into three major groups: attributes, benefits, and attitudes. Keller (1993) describes attributes to be descriptive features of a product or service; benefits are the personal values that consumers attach to the product or service attributes; and attitudes are referred to as consumers' overall evaluations of a brand. These types of brand associations make up the brand image and can be used as the measurement instrument.

Most prior research in tourism and hospitality has focused on customers' brand image of a destination, a hotel brand, an airline company, etc. Not many of these studies considered the notion that customers can obtain the brand image directly from employees when employees reflect that desired image in their service behaviour. Miles

and Mangold (2004) suggest that internal branding should consider creating and instilling the desired brand images in employees' minds in order to project them onto customers. By combining Hsieh, Pan, and Setiono's (2004) definition of brand image with Low and Lamb's (2000), it can be argued that employees who have a holistic brand image are able to integrate what they have perceived mentally (knowledge) and physically (experience) into one picture. This assumption has also been illustrated in de Chernatony and Segal-Horn's (2003) service branding model. As a foundation for Knox and Freeman's (2006) understanding of brand image, Ind (1990, p. 21) describes it as "simply the picture that an audience has of an organisation through the accumulation of all received messages". Based on these definitions of brand image, this study considers the concept of employees' brand image as the picture that employees have of their organisations through the accumulation of all mental and physical messages. Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009) have found evidence that this acquired brand image has a significant influence on employees' behaviour.

2.3.7 Summary of the Internal Branding Literature

Considering the fact that the concept of internal branding has only existed for less than 10 years, the theory around it has not yet been fully developed. This study focuses on the literature on hotel industry employees' perceptions. It is, however, not surprising to see that there are few hospitality/hotel studies on employees' perception of internal branding. In fact, the few studies that did meet the prerequisite conditions have been published recently and are not able to provide an adequate knowledge base for this study.

As an alternative option, internal branding can be understood from a wider range of disciplines, yielding fundamental knowledge on internal branding. Table 2-1 illustrates a list of reviewed literature on internal branding, brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image. Studies of each of the identified construct have been divided into different categories for simple examination. By reviewing these pieces of work, it is evident to conclude that very few studies have attempted to link brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image all together with internal branding. This is the research gap that this study addresses, testing whether these three elements are, as hypothesised, the chief constituents of the internal branding process.

Table 2-1 List of reviewed literature on internal branding and related concepts between 1999-2011.

Concepts	Categories	Authors (Years)
Internal Branding	Manager/Consultant's Perspective	Aurand, Gorchels & Bishop (2005); Boone (2002); Burmann & Zeplin (2005); de Chernatony & Segal-Horn (2001); de Chernatony & Cottam (2006); King & Grace (2006); Miles & Mangold (2007); Papasolomou & Vrontis (2006); Vallaster & de Chernatony (2005, 2006);
	Employees' Perspective	Kimpakorn & Tocquer (2009); King & Grace (2008); Punjaisri, Evanschitzky, & Wilson (2009); Punjaisri & Wilson (2007, 2011);
	Internal Branding Process	Bergstrom, Blumenthal, & Crothers (2002); Burmann & Zeplin (2005); Mahnert & Torres (2007); Miles & Mangold (2004); Punjaisri & Wilson (2007); Tosti & Stotz (2001);
Brand Knowledge	Customer-based Brand Equity	Cai (2002); Hyun (2009); Kim & Kim (2005); Lee & Back (2010); Thomas & Kohli (2009);
	B2B sector	Baumgarth & Schmidt (2010); Mudambi (2002);
	Employees' Perception	Berry (2000); de Chernatony, Cottam, & Segal-Horn (2006); Kimpakorn & Tocquer (2009); Thomson, de Chernatony, Arganbright, & Khan (1999);
Brand Experience	Customers' Perspective	Berry (2000); Boo, Busser, & Baloglu (2009); Ismail & Melewar (2008); Ismail, Melewar, & Woodside (2010); Mitchell (2002); Nralis, Schmitt, & Zarantonello (2009); Voss, Roth, & Chase (2008); Zhang, Dewald, & Neirynck

		(2009);
	Managers' Perspective	Vallaster & de Chernatony (2005); Zhang, Cai, & Kavanaugh (2008);
	Employees' Perspective	Miles & Mangold (2004); Moroko & Uncles (2008); Mosley (2007);
Brand Image	Tourism Sector	Back (2005); Brodie, Whittome, & Brush (2009); Chiang & Jang (2007); Han & Back (2005); Huang & Cai (2009); Kayaman & Arasli (2007); Kneesel, Baloglu, & Millar (2010); Kwun & Oh (2007); Prebensen (2007); Qu, Kim, & Im (2010); Tasci, Gartner, & Cavusgil (2007);

2.4 Review of Studies on Culture

Culture is a highly complex term. It has long been a popular concept in academic research, and it has been studied across many different fields. Kroeber and Kluckhohn find a total of 164 definitions that had been developed by 1952 (Chen, Cheung, & Law, 2012). However, the lack of clarity among researchers on the different terms used to describe culture has led some to focus their attention on how it is defined by different disciplines. Definitions refer to various forms of culture, such as ideologies (beliefs, basic assumptions, and shared core values) and observable cultural artefacts (norms and practices). According to Groschl and Doherty (2000), not only has culture been perceived in different forms, but the term itself has also been used with different meanings in different disciplines. Pizam (1993) offers a hierarchy that describes existing cultures from various levels of society. He believes that "culture exists everywhere and everyone belongs to at least one" (Pizam, 1993, p. 206). For instance, culture can exist at the national level (e.g. Chinese, Australian, or British), industrial level (e.g. banking, IT, or hospitality and tourism), occupational level (e.g. lawyers, accountants, or researchers),

corporate level (e.g. IBM, Disney, or Hilton), and organizational level (e.g. organizational structure, managerial practices, or work attitudes). According to Groschl and Doherty (2000), Pizam's approach combines culture with levels of society to define cultural boundaries. They perceive national culture as differentiated and based on the physical boundaries of the nation state, whereas they see industrial, occupational, corporate, and organizational cultures as the distinct patterns of behaviour of a social unit.

The hospitality industry is particularly diverse and complex (Jones, 1999), because it is a service industry that incorporates global business practices in a multicultural environment (Sledge, Miles, & Coppage, 2008). In light of the growing mobility of the global labour market and the internationalisation of business, organisations are increasingly managing a workforce that has different values, attitudes, and behaviours (Groschl & Doherty, 2000). These culturally diverse groups have a strong influence on the way things are done in organisations such as hotels. Various studies have looked at cultural effects in hotels from different disciplinary perspectives. Hui, Au, and Fock (2004) examine the major moderating role of cross-cultural variations in management practices from the perspective of hotel employees. Saunders, Altinay, and Riordan (2009) test employees' reactions towards the management of post-merger cultural integration at the corporate level, and they emphasise the importance of human factors in a merger. Teare (1993) explores the importance of revolutionizing hotel service culture to develop services that meet different cultural needs.

Cultural issues can be identified at various levels of this unique industry. At the organizational level, people's behaviour has become more vital to success because of the continuous shift from delivering services to creating experiences for customers (Pizam, 1993). Thus, issues of cultural understanding inside organizations should be considered whenever there are human interactions. At the national level, there are significant structural differences (e.g. legal, financial, and economic) between the hospitality industries of different countries (Jones, 1999). A country's laws may determine the ownership structure, size, and means of operation of its hotel businesses; its financial systems may affect the availability of capital for investment; and the economic structure affects the scope of different types of hotel firms. As a result, problems such as local hotel owners' lack of knowledge of hotel operations or a country's restrained capability to invest in hotels may arise when individual hotel groups apply managerial practices to their operations in different countries. In an attempt to manage these emerging problems, the concept of culture has increasingly become the subject of research in recent decades.

2.5 Organisational culture

2.5.1 Differences between National Culture and Organisational Culture

Culture is a difficult concept to understand and measure, especially since it can be divided into many different types and presented at various levels. This study focuses on organisational culture—rather than national culture—as the human interaction is important for internal branding for three specific reasons. The first reason relates to the limitation of studies on organisational culture and its impact on cross cultural alliances. Research has shown that differences in national culture can disrupt collaboration and

learning between partners (Sirmon & Lane, 2004). Since globalisation and rapid change in global/social structure have spread across the world, there is no single unit that can avoid facing this phenomenon in any shape or form. Nevertheless, cultural differences are not limited to differences between nationalities, as Pothukuchi et al. suggested (2002, cited in Avny & Anderson 2008). Most studies have failed to consider or specify the influence of organisational cultural differences on the performance of international alliances, perhaps overstating national cultural differences. Avny and Anderson (2008) claim that significant differences in the organisations' own internal culture exist among organisations, even in the same country. Since less research has focused on organisational culture in the perspective of cross cultural alliance, this study emphasises it.

The second reason why this study does not include national culture is due to its ambiguous values and sometimes misleading outward practices. This conclusion is made by comparing the core components of national and organisational culture. Avny and Anderson (2008) believe that "national culture relates primarily to deep-seated values" (p. 134); whereas "organisational culture relates primarily to the shared beliefs in organisational practices and processes" (Sirmon & Lane, 2004). Interestingly, Hofstede (2001) believes that the two concepts are complementary, representing two different levels of aggregation. "Organisational cultures distinguish organisations while holding their national environments constant, whilst national cultures distinguish nations while holding organisational contexts constant or at least as constant as possible" (p. 391). In his study on the case of IBM, there exist great differences in national cultural values

among IBM's different national subsidiaries, even though all respondents were employees in similar jobs. This implies that cultural differences at the national level are big, but small in practices. From this study, it raises the concern that people sometimes mistakenly refer to the superficial manifestations of practices (e.g., people dress the same way, watch the same TV shows, and have the same leisure activities) as national cultures, rather than "the deeper/underlying levels of values which determines the meaning to people of their practices" (p. 393). That means the national cultural practices (superficial manifestations) do not fully stand for the national cultural values (underlying values).

Alternatively, the Institute for Research on Intercultural Cooperation (IRIC) project compared values and practices at the organisational level, showing considerable differences in practices but much smaller differences in values (comparing similar people in different organisations; Hofstede, 2001). As Hofstede illustrated (Figure 2-2), cultural differences reside mostly in values and less in practices when comparing otherwise similar people at the national level, and this pattern is exactly reversed at the organisational level. Hofstede argues that this can be explained by the different places of socialisation (e.g. learning) of values and practices, which are listed on the right side of Figure 2-2. According to this schema, people acquire values early in youth (e.g. from family, neighbourhood, and school), and these basic values are programmed into people's minds by age of 10. That means that the older people grow, the less their values will change.

In contrast, organisational practices are learned through socialisation at the workplace at a time when most people have "the bulk of their values firmly in place" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 394). What make organisations different are their cultural practices. This is the third reason why this study focuses on organisational culture instead of national culture: because it compares different organisational cultures in a particular nation, rather than comparing the differences for one organisation across various countries.
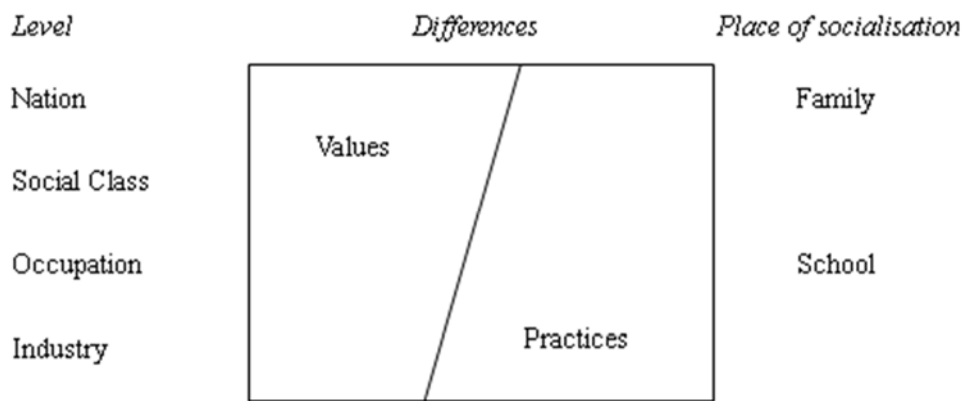
Figure 2-2 The balance of values versus practices at the national, occupational and organisational levels (adopted from Hofstede, 2001).

2.5.2 Differences between Corporate Culture and Organisational Culture

In theory, both organisational and corporate culture share similar principles and overlap in the literature most of the time (e.g., de Chernatony & Drury, 2008). However, differences still exist because researchers interpret culture within organisations differently in three ways.

First, the majority of authors follow Schein's (1984) theory on the three levels of organisational culture in an organisation. Schein believes that, at the visible level, there exist artefacts (i.e., the visible behaviour patterns, physical and social environment, written literature, and spoken language; Barley, 1983; Manning, 1979) and at the deeper (less visible) level there exist the espoused values and the further level of basic assumptions (Schein, 2004). Corporate culture most likely exists at the visible and less visible level, which would automatically encourage new employees to follow their fellow employees (Kotter & Heskett, 1992) by seeing, hearing, and feeling what is happening around them (Schein, 2004). At the deepest level in an organisation, organisational culture signifies the shared assumption that relates to a group's sense of what 'ought' to be (Wilson, 2001), and it does not necessarily have to be applied to the whole organisation (Kotter & Heskett, 1992).

Second, corporate culture is formed by management (founders and leaders) promoting certain beliefs and values and urging employees to learn and assimilate these beliefs and values at a less visible level in the organisation (Schein, 2004). These values are also considered espoused values because they "may be out of line with what employees will actually do in circumstances where those values should be operating" (Wilson, 2001, p. 356). Alternatively, the basic assumptions of organisational culture are formed from the solutions to problems that organisation face over and over again. McGregor (cited in Schein, 2004, p. 33) claims that "if people are treated consistently in terms of certain basic assumptions, they come eventually to behave according to those assumptions in order to make their world stable and predictable".

Third, corporate culture is amenable to change because it is driven in part by management (Redman & Wilkinson, 2009). However, "organisational culture tends to refer to a naturally occurring phenomenon which all organisations possess" (ibid., p. 243). To Pizam (1993), this basic assumption is the essence of organisational culture because organisational cultures are taken for granted and operate unconsciously, reflecting human nature and reality (Schein, 2004), persisting over time even when group membership changes (Wilson, 2001). Therefore the underlying assumptions of organisational culture are more than simply strategic priorities and goals, as corporate culture envisions them.

Previous research has suggested that corporate culture may affect the internal branding process (e.g., Flamholtz, 2001; McDonald et al., 2001; Mosley, 2007). In addition, because it would be inappropriate to simply look at the manifest level of culture in an organisation (corporate culture), this study tests whether organisational culture as a human factor affects the internal branding process.

2.5.3 Definition of Organisational Culture

Organisational culture became a fad cross the globe in the 1980s and early 1990s (Ogbonna & Harris, 2002). It has taken some decades for researchers to approach a universal and congruent definition. Even though academia has shifted its focus to more

incremental questions—such as how organisational culture affects other functions within an organisation—there is still no agreement on what organisational culture really is.

Among all attempted definitions, Deal and Kennedy (1982) describe organisational culture as the way things are done in an organisation. Peters and Waterman (1982) believe that organisational culture is made up of symbolic means such as stories, myths, and legends that are displayed as a dominant and coherent set of shared values. In Schein's (1983, p. 2) view, organisational culture is

> a pattern of basic assumptions which a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which have worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

Although Schein (1985) proposes different levels of organisational culture (visible, less visible, and invisible; Figure 2-3) and argues that culture should only relate to the invisible level (Dwyer, Teal, & Kemp, 1998), he only uses visible evidence to describe different cultures (as pointed out in Wilson, 2001). Organisational culture according to Wilson (2001, p. 356) is "the visible and less visible norms, values and behaviour that are shared by a group of employees which shape the group's sense of what is acceptable and valid".
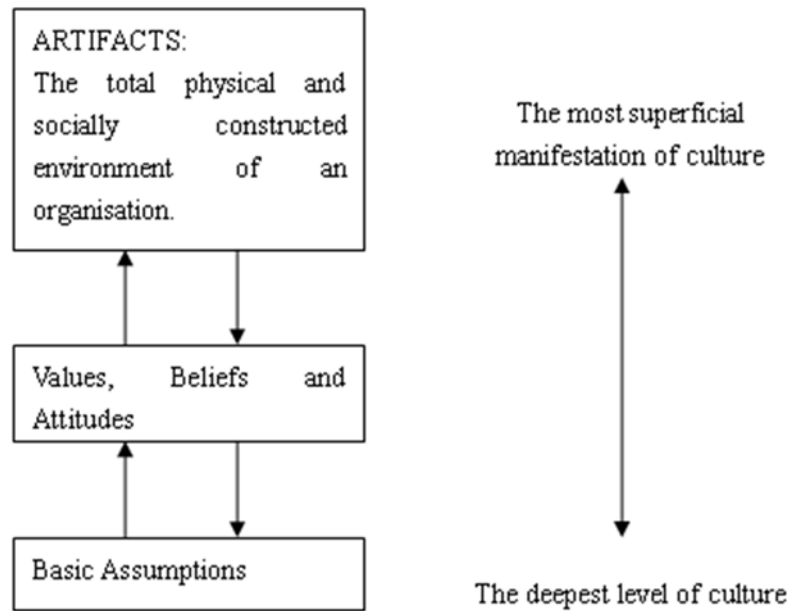
Figure 2-3 Levels of culture and their interaction (adopted from Schein, 2004).

Hofstede (2001) defines organisational culture as the "collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one organisation from another" (p. 393). He points out that while there is no consensus on the definition of organisational culture, there are some commonly mentioned characteristics that most scholars would agree with (e.g., Guldenmund, 2000). Those features are: holistic, historically influenced, related to anthropological concepts, socially constructed, soft, and relatively stable (difficult to change).

2.5.4 Dimensions of Organisational Culture

With such a broad definition of organisational culture, researchers have come up with many varieties of dimensions to portray what organisational culture really is. For the

three levels of culture in an organisation, the 'artefacts' and 'basic assumptions' have been typically studied using qualitative methods, while the 'values and norms' (the intermediate level of organisational culture according to Schein's culture levels) have usually been measured using quantitative approaches (Delobbe, Haccoun, & Vandenberghe, 2002). Table 2-2 exhibits some dimensions and instruments that can be used to identify organisational culture quantitatively. Among different authors, these dimensions and instruments can be put into two categories: 'value' and 'practice'.

Table 2-2 Identified Dimensions and Instruments for Measuring Organisational Culture.

Publication*	Dimensions and Instruments
Allen & Dyer (1980)	The Norms Diagnostic Index: Example – It's a norm around here: 1. to maintain the progress that is made 2. for people to regularly plan their work goals and review progress 3. for new people to be properly oriented and trained to the job 4. for leader to take time to follow up on the job they've assigned to people 5. for organizational policies and procedures to be helpful, well understood, and up-to-date
Ashkanasy, Broadfoot, & Falkus (2000)	The Organizational Culture Profile Dimensions (with total 47 items): 1. Leadership 2. Structure 3. Innovation 4. Job performance 5. Planning 6. Communication 7. Environment 8. Humanistic workplace 9. Development of the individual 10. Socialization and entry
Cooke & Lafferty (1987)	Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI; total of 96 items): - Constructive Cultural Styles Achievement Self-actualizing Humanistic-Encouraging Affiliative - Aggressive/Defensive Cultural Styles Oppositional Power

	Competitive
	Perfectionistic
	- Passive/Defensive Cultural Styles
	Approval
	Conventional
	Dependent
	Avoidance
Dorfman & Howell (1988)	Individualism (IND)
	e.g., Group welfare is more important than individual rewards;
	Masculinity (MAS)
	e.g., Meetings are usually run more effectively when they are chaired by a man;
	Power Distance (PD)
	e.g., Managers should make most decisions without consulting subordinates;
	Uncertainty Avoidance (UA)
	e.g., It is important to have job requirements and instructions spelled out in detail so that employees always know what they are expected to do;
Harrison & Stokes (1992)	Organizational Culture Scale
	Example –
	1. Members of the organization are expected to give first priority to
	a. meeting the needs and demands of their supervisors and other high-level people in the organization
	b. carrying out the duties of their own jobs; staying within the policies and procedures related to their jobs
	c. meeting the challenges of the task, finding a better way to do things
	d. cooperating with the people with whom they work, to solve work and personal problems
Hofstede (2001)	Individualism (IND)
	Masculinity (MAS)
	Power Distance (PD)
	Uncertainty Avoidance
	Long-Short Term Orientation – namely Confucian Work Dynamism
Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv et al. (1990)	Organizational Cultural Value Scale
	Need for Security
	Work Centrality
	Need for Authority
	Organizational Practices Scale
	Process-Oriented vs. Results-Oriented
	Employee-Oriented vs. Job-Oriented
	Parochial vs. Professional
	Open System vs. Closed System
	Loose Control vs. Tight Control
	Normative vs. Pragmatic
O'Reilly, Chatman, &	Organizational Culture Profile
	1. Innovation: stability, innovation, experimenting, risk taking, careful,

Caldwell (1991)	rule orientated, security, highly organized
	2. Attention to detail: analytical, attention to detail, precise
	3. Outcome orientation: calm, achievement oriented, demanding, high expectations, results oriented
	4. Aggressiveness: opportunities, aggressive, socially responsible, competitive
	5. Supportiveness: shares information, supportive, praises performance, long hours
	6. Emphasis on rewards: professional growth, high pay for performance, fitting in
	7. Team orientation: autonomy, team oriented, collaboration
	8. Decisiveness: predictability, decisiveness, low conflict
Robert & Wasti (2002)	Organizational Culture Scale
	Org. Individualism
	Org. Collectivism
Sarros, Gray, Densten, & Cooper (2005)	Organizational Culture Profile
	Performance Orientation
	Social Responsibility
	Supportiveness
	Emphasis on Rewards
	Stability
	Competitiveness
	Innovation
Srite & Karahanna (2006)	Masculinity/Femininity
	Individualism/Collectivism
	Power Distance
	Uncertainty Avoidance
Vitell, Paolillo, & Thomas (2003)	Individualism
	Confucian Work Dynamic
	Masculinity
	Power Distance
	Uncertainty Avoidance

*Note: i) * In alphabetical order; ii) Source: Taras (2009).*

Researchers who emphasise the importance of values argue that shared beliefs, values, and attitudes guide how group members interact and how they approach work in their organisations (Allen & Dyer, 1980; Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv, & Sanders, 1990; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Sarros, Gray, Densten, & Cooper, 2005). Some other researchers who concentrate on values as the core elements of organisational

culture have used the dimensions of culture with national influences, which are individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and long-short term orientation (Confucian work dynamism; Dorfman & Howell, 1988; Hofstede, 2001; Robert & Wasti, 2002; Srite & Karahanna, 2006; Vitell, Paolillo, & Thomas, 2003).

In contrast, Ashkanasy, Broadfoot, and Falkus (2000) derive 10 new dimensions to represent the major dimensions of patterns of behaviour and practices identified in the organisational culture literature. Others focus on the structure of behavioural norms, which are also known as day-to-day practices (Hofstede et al., 1990) using all sorts of scales (e.g., Cooke & Lafferty, 1987; Harrison & Stokes, 1992; Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayv & Sanders,1990).

Comparing beliefs and values, organisations have more differences in practices than in values. They could mean that values are not directly exposed to employees; rather they are expressed partially through organisational practices (Delobbe, Haccoun, & Vandenberghe, 2002; Hofstede, 2001; van den Berg & Wilderom, 2004). What Hofstede (2001) observes as the core feature of organisational culture ('the practice') is believed as 'basic assumptions' by Schein (2004). The difference lies in that Schein views 'the practice' as the artefact and espoused value, and are less acknowledged. Hofstede (op. cit., p. 394) argues that "the values of founders and key leaders undoubtedly shape organisational cultures, but the way these cultures affect ordinary members is through

shared practices". On the other hand, Schein (op. cit.) hesitates to count patterns of behaviour (practices) as expressions of culture because seen artefacts, heard artefacts, and espoused values are not always true expressions of culture. As a result, scholars have been engaged in major debates around these two significant ideas. This study takes Hofstede's research as its basis that the employees' shared perceptions of daily practices are the core of an organisation's organisational culture.

2.5.5 Organisational Culture and Branding

Since little research has taken the initiative to explore the interaction between organisational culture and internal branding, it is best to start by understanding current scholarly opinion on how organisational culture is connected with branding.

Kotter and Heskett (1992) stress that an appropriate organisational culture that changes when customers change greatly supports a service brand's success. This refers to the importance of an alignment between the organisational cultural values and the values of the service brand. In de Chernatony and Cottam's (2008) study, respondents acknowledge the fact that value inconsistency does exist inside organisations and has consequently caused some conflicts—for example, inappropriate brand behaviour. In other words, it would be a fantasy for employees to live the brand unless they have a supportive organisational culture that runs across the organisation (Schultz, 2003).

There has been little evidence of a direct connection between organisational culture and corporate brand performance. The link is discussed by de Chernatony and Cottam (2006),

Papasolomou and Vrontis (2006), and Hankinson and Hankinson (1999). de Chernatony and Cottam (2006) argue that organisational culture can only positively affect brand performance when employees' values are aligned with the brand's. Otherwise, if there is a discrepancy between the two, employees may experience confusion and tension. This scenario would result in inconsistent employee behaviour when delivering the brand.

It appears that most of the attention on the role of organisational culture in corporate brand management has been on cultural alignment. In particular, Gotsi, Andriopoulos, and Wilson (2008) investigate cultural alignment issues in the case of corporate re-branding. Along with others (e.g., Hatch & Schultz, 2003; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006), they confirm that the organisational culture—more specifically the values and practices embedded in employees' conscious and behaviour—does not often echo the espoused values of the brand. They claim that this is an essential cause of re-branding failure. If consensus cannot be established between organisational culture and new brand values within an organisation, it can be assumed that similar issues would occur when organisations operate well-established brands in a foreign country. In this scenario, it is the employees who must change in order to bring about a different organisational culture. It may be necessary for employees to accept and embed the brand values into their attitudes and behaviour norms.

2.5.6 Organisational Culture Studies in the Hotel Industry

The hotel industry is very diverse and complex (Jones, 1999) because it is a service business in a multicultural environment that incorporates global business practices (Sledge, Miles, & Coppage, 2008). As a consequence, there can be cultural issues at various levels. At the organisational level, the continual shift from delivering services towards creating experiences for customers has made people's behaviour in organisations more vital to success (Pizam, 1993). Thus, the matters of cultural understanding inside organisations should be strongly considered whenever human interaction occurs.

There have not been many studies on organisational culture in the hotel industry. It seems that only in the mid-90s did organisational culture begin to attract the attention of scholars. Table 2-3 lists some of the reviewed work, which is grouped into five subject areas for easy reference. Quite a few studies may not appear to be about organisational culture, but they were retained in the table because they, to some extent, aligned cultural elements with the broad dimensions of organisational culture. Under these dimensions, there were papers addressing marketing culture (e.g., Karatepe, Avci, & Tekinkus, 2005), yield culture (e.g., Jones & Hamilton, 1992), team culture (e.g., Hu, Horng, & Sun, 2009), quality culture (e.g., Heymann, 1992), learning and knowledge-sharing culture (e.g., Kumar, Kumar, & de Grosbois, 2008; Yang, 2010), and macro-culture (e.g., O'Neill, Beauvais, & Scholl, 2004).

Table 2-3 Summary of literature on organisational culture in the hotel industry.

Subject Area	Author/Year	Major Concepts/Variables
Administration and Strategy	Brownell and Jameson (1996)	Communication, service quality, and organisational culture;
	Hemmington and King (2000)	Outsourcing relationships, organisational culture, brand compatibility, operational tension, and evaluation and control;
	Cameron (2001)	Occupational culture, grid-group analysis, and chefs;
	Kemp and Dwyer (2001)	Organisational culture, strategy, organisational performance, and hotels;
	Brownell (2003)	Managerial communication, applied research, organisational culture, and organisational performance;
	O'Neill et al. (2004)	Organisational culture, macro-culture, strategic issues, and lodging industry;
	Yang (2007)	Collaboration, knowledge sharing, leadership roles, and organisational culture;
	Bellou and Andronikidis (2009)	Organisational culture, employee behaviour, and customer services quality;
	Sinclair and Sinslair (2009)	Project management, hotel operations, organisational change, and service orientation;
	Yang (2010)	Knowledge sharing, leadership, and organisational learning.
HRM	Watson and D'Annunzio-Green (1996)	Cultural change and human resource management;
	Deery and Shaw (1997)	Organisational culture, employee turnover, and hotel industry;
	Deery and Shaw (1999)	Organisational culture, employee turnover, and turnover culture;
	Maxwell and Steele (2003)	Organisational culture, commitment, hotel managers;
	Chiang and Jang (2008)	Psychological empowerment, trust, leadership, organisational culture, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment;
	Moncarz et al. (2009)	Employee turnover and retention.
Marketing	Davidson (2003)	Organisational climate, culture and service quality
	Karatepe et al. (2005)	Marketing culture and frontline employees.
Operation	Heymann (1992)	Quality management model and hospitality enterprises;
	Partlow (1996)	Total quality management and human resources practices;

	Lee-Ross and Johns (1997)	Yield management and SMEs;
	Pallet et al. (2003)	Quality management and hotel corporate culture.
Research and Development	Jones and Hamilton (1992)	Yield management and yield culture;
	Kumar et al. (2008)	Technological capability, innovation, and tourism;
	Hu et al. (2009)	Knowledge sharing, team culture, and service innovation performance.

In the strategy and administration field, Hemmington and King (2000) have noted the importance of matching organisational cultures to the cultures in close operational proximity of the hotel. In addition, Sinclair and Sinclair (2009) believe that incorporating a mix of service and project management cultures into a service-oriented hotel operation would improve hotel efficiency. Particularly, Yang (2007) explores organisational culture and its effect on knowledge sharing from the perspective of employees. Organisational culture also plays a significant role in employees' understanding of service concepts (Brownell & Jameson, 1996) through verbal communication (Brownell, 2003). Kemp and Dwyer (2001) use the example of The Regent Hotel (Sydney) to demonstrate that organisational culture is a driver of strategy that influenced employees' behaviour and eventually increased organisational performance.

The connection between human resources management and organisational culture in hotels has received less attention. The research areas fall into employee turnover (Deery & Shaw, 1997, 1999; Moncarz, Zhao, & Kay, 2009), commitment (Chiang & Jang, 2008; Maxwell & Steele, 2003), and HRM operation (Watson & D'Annunzio-Green, 1996).

Similarly, few studies have been done on the impact organisational culture may have on hotel operations; instead, most studies have focused on quality management (Heymann, 1992; Parllet, Taylor, & Jayawardena, 2003; Partlow, 1996). Surprisingly, Davidson (2003) and Karatepe et al. (2005) have been the only researchers to make significant statements about organisational culture on marketing concept in this specific industry.

The strong coverage of organisational culture in the field of strategy implies how important it is to organisations' success. The review suggests that organisational culture is seen as a significant factor affecting organisations' strategy formation. Moreover, it also plays a crucial role in terms of ensuring that an organisation's culture is consistent and compatible with its strategy which will allow it to achieve its goals.

2.5.7 Existing Problems in Organisational Culture in Hotels

By reviewing previous work on organisational culture and its connection to internal branding in hotels, there appear to be several issues that have only been sparsely investigated by researchers.

"At the organisational level, differentiated subcultures may co-exist in harmony, conflict or indifference to each other", as Wilson (2001, p. 357) argued. From the prior research, subcultures can be related to different levels of organisational status, and inconsistencies can be covered from management's rhetorical declarations of harmony. A mixture of sub-cultural differences within an organisation can create conflicts, ambiguities, and

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inconsistencies in many different ways and these results would eventually lead to dysfunction in the organisation. This is a universal problem for most companies, and yet little research has considered it (Wilson, 2001). In this sense, the hotel industry would have to take this matter seriously because of the unique nature of its business.

The human factor—the fact that people are heterogeneous—is one of the crucial problems that service organisations face (Khan, 2009). At any service point, customers are interacting with different service providers who may have very different attitudes and behaviours. These service providers are responsible for fulfilling the brand promise consistently to keep the desired image in the customer's mind (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). The situation could get worse when the organisation's culture is not the only influencing factor on employees' beliefs, values, and patterns of behaviour. Subconscious subcultures may intimately affect employees' consciousness and behaviour. Therefore, internal branding should be addressed at ensuring that employees behave as they are expected—to deliver the brand promise (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007).

There is another potential type of problem with organisational culture: communication channels. Since espoused values can be sent via formal and informal channels, it is difficult to maintain consistency between messages sent from informal channel and those stated from formal channel (Miles & Mangold, 2004). Discrepancy between messages confuses employees' understanding of the values and patterns of behaviours. Furthermore, the discrepancy may make them feel that the organisation lacks integrity.

As a consequence, they may act in a way that is inconsistent with the stated expectations. This implies the possibility that organisational culture can affect employees' delivery of the brand promise, whether directly or not.

2.6 Job Satisfaction

2.6.1 Definition of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been an important concept in the study of organisation and organisational behaviour since the 1930s, and it continues to be one of the most studied topics in this field (Agho, Mueller, & Price, 1993). The definition of job satisfaction varies among researchers from various viewpoints (Table 2-4).

Table 2-4 A list of selected definitions of job satisfaction.

Author and Year	Definition of Job Satisfaction	Type
Arnett, Laverie, & Mclane (2002); Bai, Brewer, Sammons, & Swerdlow (2006); O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell (1991).	An employees' general affective response toward his or her job.	Integral Definition
Karatepe, Uludag, Menevis, Hadzimehmedagic, & Baddar (2006); Kim, Tavitiyaman, & Kim (2009); Silva (2006); Yang (2010).	A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience.	Differential Definition
Chang & Lee (2007); Tsai (2008).	Employees' working attitude and behaviour are referred to as the objective characteristics of their jobs and organisations instead of their subjective sensibility.	Reference Structure Theory

Chang and Lee (2007) summarise the mix of definitions and categorise them into three types: integral definition, differential definition, and reference structure theory. They are also known as overall satisfaction, expectation discrepancy, and frame of reference

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respectively (Tsai, 2008). The integral definition focuses on employees' job attitude toward their work environment with a particular attention on the mental changes. For example, employees who receive a productive result after working hard will feel more joy, which may lead to higher satisfaction (Robbins & Judge, 2006). The differential definition emphasises job satisfaction based on "the difference between the actually deserved reward and the expected reward from employees" (Change & Lee, 2007, p. 159). In other words, employees will have low satisfaction when the discrepancy is high. Nonetheless, some researchers have pointed out that it is difficult to measure the discrepancy between employees' received and expected reward because that discrepancy is always subjective. Reference structure theory describes a phenomenon where employee job satisfaction is generated from interpreting and comparing job characteristics depending on factors like job content, personal factors, and job-related facets.

Job satisfaction seems to have an essential influence on employee behaviour (Arnett et al., 2002). Especially in the service industry, customer satisfaction largely depends on employee job satisfaction because their attitude directly affects the quality of services they provide (Gu & Siu, 2009). Many industry practitioners support this argument. For example, Rush (2007, p. 31) points out that "it's nearly impossible to forge emotional connections with customers if your own employees don't feel emotionally engaged with you, their employer". Therefore, the current study examines job satisfaction from employees' general attitude towards their job and from different areas of the job. These areas may include managerial style, career advancement, job content, direct supervisor,

salary, job environment, and colleague (Tsai, 2008). Many past studies have used reference structure theory as the definition of job satisfaction (e.g., Back, Lee, & Abbott, 2011; Chang & Lee, 2007; Tsai, 2008).

2.6.2 Overview of Studies on Job Satisfaction

Previous studies on job satisfaction can be generally divided into three perspectives: antecedents of job satisfaction, consequences of job satisfaction, and the effect of employees' 'temperament' on job satisfaction (Yang, 2010). Temperament offers a better explanation of why the impacts that job satisfaction differ among people.

As an outcome of organisational conditions, job satisfaction is positively affected by internal service quality (i.e., training, communication, and benefits; Bai et al., 2006; Lam & Zhang, 2003; Lee, Nam, Park, & Lee, 2006). On the negative side, job stress may lead to job dissatisfaction, which in turn lowers customer service quality (Gu & Siu, 2009). Other drivers that can be used to predict job satisfaction are pre-employment expectations, perceived job characteristics, leadership considerations, and age (demonstrated by Williams & Hazer, 1986; cited in Yang, 2010). In particular, salary has received a lot of attention over many years of studies of job satisfaction. Ghiselli, LaLopa, and Bai (2001) notice that employees' satisfaction intent to increase when their salary increases.

Subsequently, job satisfaction has been found to be an antecedent of organisational commitment, and the two are significantly related to one another (Back et al., 2010; Lo & Lam, 2002; Silva, 2006; Yang, 2010). At the same time, job satisfaction impacts employee absenteeism and turnover, as discovered by early empirical studies (e.g., Ghiselli et al., 2001). Many studies conclude that highly satisfied employees are less likely to seek new employment (e.g., Yang, 2010). Furthermore, research has also identified job satisfaction as a source of employee organisational citizenship behaviour (Gonzalez & Garazo, 2006). These relationships between job satisfaction and other concepts have received constant attention over the years, and its relation with job performance has initiated some controversial debates. While some researchers have found a strong relationship between job performance and job satisfaction (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992; Karl & Peluchette, 2006), others have found a weak relationship (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985).

The third perspective of job satisfaction deals with the effect of employees' individual traits. Examples include self-efficacy (Back et al., 2010; Karatepe et al., 2006) and self-esteem (Arnett et al., 2002; Back et al., 2010).

Based on the literature reviewed, it is argued that no previous research has discussed the link between job satisfaction and internal branding from any perspective. Therefore, in order to fill this research gap, this study focuses on job satisfaction as an outcome of the

internal branding. If employees have positive internal branding or associated brand image, they are likely to be satisfied with their jobs.

2.6.3 Job Satisfaction in the Hotel Industry

Job satisfaction is fundamental in the hotel industry because it is closely related to customer satisfaction and loyalty. This is because of the hotel industry's unique inseparability of customers and employees (Back et al., 2010). Since hotel employees play an important role in developing relationships with customers, employee job satisfaction has become a main concern for hotels (Arnett et al., 2002). Empirical research across various sectors of the hospitality industry has demonstrated how poor job satisfaction can result in managerial problems, such as turnover, absenteeism, poor work, and poor performance.

Sparrowe (1994) finds that turnover intention decreased when hospitality employee job satisfaction increased. This phenomenon has been confirmed by many other studies from the perspective of managers (e.g., Li & Tse, 1998) and employees (e.g., Lam, Zhang, & Baum, 2001). In their casino hotel case study, Arnett et al. (2002) suggest that both job satisfaction and pride significantly influence employee behaviour. Karatepe et al. (2006) test the relationship between individual characteristics, employee performance, and job satisfaction. Their results suggest that competitiveness, self-efficacy, and effort were positively related to hotel front-line employees' performance and job satisfaction. Similarly, Spinelli and Canavos (2000) look at the relation between employee job

satisfaction and customer satisfaction from a chain hotel, and Kim et al. (2009) examine the effect of management service initiatives (i.e. organisational support, rewards, empowerment, and training) on job satisfaction in Thai hotels. Frye and Mont (2007) investigate the impact of hotel size and service type on both employee and general manager job satisfaction. Yang (2010) has chosen to explore the effects of four antecedents (i.e., role conflict, burnout, socialisation, and work autonomy) on job satisfaction, as well as the relationship between job satisfaction, affective commitment, and employee turnover intentions in international hotels in Taiwan. The results show significant contribution of job satisfaction to organisational effectiveness such as lower employee turnover intentions. Despite the fact that very few studies have probed the impact internal branding may have on job satisfaction, it is worthwhile to examine this research gap in the hotel industry—an industry characterised by competitiveness and diversity.

2.6.4 Measurements of Job Satisfaction

Most studies of job satisfaction use the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), the Job Descriptive Index (JDI), the Jobs Satisfaction Survey (JSS), or the Faces Scale. Each can work for diverse purposes and can be used in various circumstances. For example, Chang and Lee (2007) use the MSQ to identify their job satisfaction dimensions, and they further separate employee job satisfaction into the external and internal satisfaction scales proposed by Chen (2002) for follow-up investigation. Liao, Hu, and Chung (2009) use a revised version of the JDI and only have used three dimensions (i.e. work, salary, and promotion). These three dimensions appear to be

reasonably reliable, with Cronbach's alphas above .70 for all three dimensions. There are also other measurement scales that have been tested many times in previous studies.

Back et al. (2010) use the three items below to measure job satisfaction and claimed that this measurement is reliable because it is consistent with previous studies (e.g., Arnett et al, 2002).

- I am satisfied with my job;

- I am satisfied with the career path within the company;

- I am happy with what I am doing with the current job.

Gonzalez and Garazo (2006) use the scale developed by Hackam and Oldham (1975), which is an overall measure of employee job satisfaction. Example items include:

- Generally speaking, I am satisfied with this job;

- I frequently think of quitting this job;

- I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do.

Many studies (e.g., Gounaris, 2008; Karatepe et al., 2006) have used the measurement scale developed by Hartline and Ferrell (1996). It considers eight facets of the overall job, and all measures are shown to be valid and reliable.

- Your overall job

- Your fellow workers

- Your supervisor(s)

- Your organisation's policies

- The support provided by your organisation

- Your salaries or wages

- Your opportunities for advancement with this organisation

- Your organisation's customers

Gu and Siu (2009) have asked the following questions in their survey to investigate casino employees' job satisfaction.

- How satisfied are you with your casino?

- How satisfied are you with your salary and benefits?

- How often do you receive support, encouragement, guidance and help from your superiors and co-workers?

- How sufficient is the job training provided by your casino?

- How do you feel about job-related stress?

- How do you intend to transfer to another casino?

- How do you intend to quit working in the casino industry?

The job satisfaction scale used by Kim et al. (2009) has been developed by Lucas, Babakus, and Ingram (1990, cited in Kim et al., 2009). The scale considers both intrinsic (e.g., sense of pride) and extrinsic (e.g., benefits) factors.

- Given the work I do, I feel that I am paid fairly;

- The benefits provided by the hotel are not satisfactory;

- I feel a sense of pride and accomplishment as a result of the work I do;

- I like the type of work I am doing very much.

Zhou, Li, Zhou, and Su (2008) measure job satisfaction based on the scale developed by Wood, Chonko, and Hunt (1986, cited in Zhou et al., 2008) because it is consistent with the focus of their study.

- Salary level;

- The level of importance that my supervisor places on me;

- Opportunity for promotion;

- The degree of fairness with which my supervisor treats me;

- Sense of job accomplishment.

Based on the review of existing scales of job satisfaction, this study uses Hartline and Ferrell's (1996) items for measuring employee job satisfaction. The reason is that this instrument has been commonly used in the hotel industry with a relatively high reliability and validity demonstrated in empirical studies.

2.6.5 Job Satisfaction and Internal Branding

According to Back et al. (2010, p. 1), "unlike most service industries, the manner in which the hospitality employee provides the service is as important as the service itself in determining the customer's overall enjoyment of the product or 'experience' being purchased". Importantly, this manner can be significantly influenced by internal marketing (Gounaris, 2008). Hartline and Ferrell (1996) find that empowerment within the internal marketing framework can increase employee job satisfaction. This supports the argument that internal marketing affects employee job satisfaction.

Based on the discussion on the connection between internal marketing and internal branding, it can be argued that internal branding has an equivalent impact on employee job satisfaction. In addition, Khan (2009) states that employee satisfaction is as important as other possible consequences that internal branding may lead to. Miles and Mangold (2004) also count job satisfaction as a consequence of the internal branding process. Nevertheless, no study has empirically tested their relationship. In this sense, this study will be the first attempt to assess their connection with statistical evidence.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter thoroughly reviewed the components of internal branding, organisational culture, and job satisfaction, which help provide a solid theoretical foundation for the conceptual model and hypothesised relationships among these key constructs. The findings of the literature review are beneficial in that they revealed three research gaps for this study.

- Brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image are the principal dimensions forming the internal branding process;

- Organisational culture has an effect on the internal branding process;

- Employees can be more satisfied with their job when they are working with a positive brand image.

These research gaps enabled the author to design a specific model that fit the research purposes of this study.

CHAPTER 3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of two sections. The first discusses the hypotheses deduced from a thorough study of previous literature. Further explanation of how major constructs are linked is provided. The second discusses the theoretical framework designed on these hypotheses. The theoretical framework is developed to reveal the connections that link those hypotheses.

3.2 Hypotheses

3.2.1 Elements within Internal Branding

As described in the literature review, theory holds that when brand knowledge and brand experience are coherent with brand image, the fundamental conditions have been met to build a strong brand. From this point onward, it is assumed that brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image form the basic concept of internal branding. In other words, they are the principal elements that enable internal branding to accomplish its goals of having employees deliver the brand promise to customers. This idea is argued to be true based on some authors' existing work, which has separately studied these three constructs. Their work is discussed as follows.

Brand knowledge is crucial before employees dealing with customers so that they can transform the exact desired messages to real life situations (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009;

King & Grace, 2008). Khan's (2009) theory has pointed out the importance of brand knowledge in light of its overall contribution to employees' understanding of desired message delivery; and further to the entire internal branding strategy. This highlights a crucial role that comprehensive brand knowledge plays in the internal branding strategy. It is not enough for employees to just understand what brand values are; they need to fully embody them in their daily work environment (Khan, 2009; Miles & Mangold, 2004). This implies that employees' experience of the brand promise is as important as their brand knowledge, which has implications for organisations to considering internal branding. In this process, brand knowledge and brand experience help employees form their perceptions of their employer's brand; however, there is doubt as to whether they will bring what they know and experience into reality. The final behaviour depends on the brand image in their minds from the reflection of their received knowledge and experiences (Miles & Mangold, 2004). Without such an image inside employee's minds, they will not perform as desired, even if they completely accept the brand knowledge and they are well experienced with that knowledge in their day-to-day work life. As discussed in Chapter 2 section 2.2.6, there is evidence that employees' brand image is formed through the accumulation of all received mental (brand knowledge) and physical (brand experience) messages (Hsieh et al., 2004; Ind, 1990; Lamb, 2000). Since the core objective of internal branding in this study's focus is to promote brand images effectively to employees, it is clear that brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image are prerequisite elements for achieving internal branding. As such, hypothesis 1:

H1: Internal branding's measurements are related to brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image.

The hospitality and management literature has very few studies connecting brand knowledge, experience, and image with the concept of internal branding. Between brand knowledge and brand experience, Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, and Donthu (1995) suggest that consumers often get their brand knowledge from personal experience with the brand. From employees' perspective, one study emphasises the integration of a firm's brand message and employees' general work activities (Ashraf et al., 2011). With limited research found, this study attempts to explore the relationship between brand knowledge and brand experience.

The marketing field has extensive studies exploring brand knowledge and brand image. Most of those studies emphasise the relationships among the three constructs based on customers' perceptions. Keller (1993, 2001, 2003) believes that brand knowledge and image are two important factors in building customers' memories of the brand. Both brand knowledge and brand image are established via brand associations in customers' minds, and these brand associations can be developed directly from a customer's own experiences with the brand (Keller, 2001). Moreover, Yoo, Donthu, and Lee (2000) adopt Keller's (1993) brand knowledge theory and argue that brand knowledge forms a specific brand image with strong associations. It is evident that brand knowledge and brand image are related.

Brakus et al. (2009) argue that brand experience is distinct from brand image, which imply heterogeneous between the two constructs. Malik, Naeem, and Nasir's (2011) study indicate a positive relationship between consumers' service experience and the brand image developed. Padgett and Allen (1997) propose a study on customers' service brand experience and its role in understanding the service brand image. Furthermore, Xu et al. (2011) test the relationship between the four dimensions of brand experience (sensory experience, affective experience, behavioural experience, and intellectual experience) and brand image, with a positive result. Hence, marketing research supports the idea that consumers perceive relationships between brand experience and brand image. This study tests this relationship from employees' perspective.

Although a couple of the authors have noted the significant role internal branding plays in the hotel industry (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007; Punjaisri et al., 2009), none has considered internal branding as a strategic matter and thus little has asked about what strategies organisations should take towards internal branding. Since previous work has highlighted the concept of internal branding in the practical sense, it focuses more on the cognitive level and has not developed the underlying theoretical foundation. To clarify what components the internal branding should evaluate and to confirm its theoretical foundation using data from employees, this study developed the following hypotheses:

H1-1: Employees' brand knowledge has a positive relationship with their brand experience.

H1-2: Employees' brand knowledge has a positive relationship with their brand image.

H1-3: Employees' brand experience has a positive relationship with their brand image.

3.2.2 Organisational Culture and Internal Branding

Hofstede's (2001) dimensions are considered as the measurement of organisational cultural practices. They are commonly adopted as process-oriented (Process), employee-oriented (Employee), professional, close system (Close), and internal in the service industry. Although they have been used in many management studies, the research contexts are mostly developed in the Western countries. For instance, one study evaluates American employees' perceptions of the actual practices at the organisational level (Chow, Harrison, McKinnon, & Wu, 2002); another study looks at organisational practices effects on role stress processes in the U.S. (Singh, Verbeke, & Rhoads, 1996); Øgaard (2006) uses revised Hofstede's dimensions in Norwegian hotels testing the application of organisational cultural practices in the hotel industry and also its relationship with job outcomes. However, would Chinese employees perceive organisational cultural practices the same way as Western employees remains the question. Therefore, this study attempts to verify the components of organisational cultural practices in the context of China' hotel industry. Hypothesis 5 is developed as:

H2: Organisational cultural practices' measurements are related to Process, Professional, Employee, Close, and Internal.

If organisational culture can have a powerful impact on organisation's management, operation system, and ability to enact strategies (Pizam, 1993), it is reasonable to think that organisational culture would affect the internal branding. Despite limited research is found to directly link the concepts of organisational culture and internal branding, Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009) mention the impact that organisational culture has on employees' perception of employer brand. In their study, employer brand is explained through the practice of internal marketing together with other elements. Since internal branding is derived from the concept of internal marketing, it can be argued that organisational culture also has an impact on internal branding according to the indirect relations interpreted. Furthermore, Wilson (2001) finds that organisational culture is indeed one of the key factors influencing corporate marketing activities in service organisations. This has been demonstrated in many other fields: if corporate branding strategies or practices are incongruent with organisational culture (espoused values or practices), these strategies will quite often fail (de Chernatony & Cottam, 2006; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2001; Harris & de Chernatony, 2001; Pizam, 1993). These studies all demonstrate a relationship between organisational culture and corporate branding which could indirectly link organisational culture to internal branding. The reasons are twofold: 1) internal branding is deemed as one of the practices of corporate branding; 2) "without an appropriate and supportive organisational culture, there is little chance of employees 'living the brand'" (de Chernatony & Cottam, 2008, p. 15). In another word, for reason one if organisational culture influences corporate branding, it also affects internal branding. For the second reason, if organisational culture can impact employees from living the brand for which internal branding strives, it is evident to argue that organisational culture also affect internal branding.

Failure is particularly likely if the organisational culture does not often reflect brand knowledge, specifically the espoused brand values (Gotsi, Andriopoulos, & Wilson, 2008). Their argument lies in the alignment of organisational culture and brand values indicating a strong connection between the two notions. Because brand values together with brand messages and promises represent brand knowledge in this study. It can be inferred that organisational culture and brand knowledge are also connected. From knowledge perspective, brand knowledge is transferred through organisational assets and resources; and organisational culture can influence the behaviours of employees on how they disseminate and share the knowledge (Yang, 2007). Hence, organisational culture is likely to affect employees' brand knowledge. Likewise, if employees experience a discrepancy between the messages the organisation is sending formally and informally, they would question the integrity of the organisational culture and may not live up to the organisation's expectations (Miles & Mangold, 2004). The relation between organisational culture and brand image has been derived from the relation between corporate branding, organisational culture and corporate image (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Hatch and Schultz (2003) argue that by understanding an organisation's own culture would help employees to better communicate the intangibles of the company and provide the foundation for a corporate image. In this sense, organisational culture and image are deemed to be related. Because corporate image forms the foundation of corporate branding (ibid.), it implies that organisational culture is also related to brand image. Since academia has only recently addressed internal branding in the hotel industry, this study starts with the framework tested in other industries.

Western organisational culture is likely to be different from what Chinese employees are used to, especially in international branded hotels in Hainan, China. This generates a concern: how can the management of these international branded hotels expect their employees to deliver the desired brand promise and maintain the hotel's worldwide brand image when there is a mismatch between the organisational culture and the internal branding? In order to test the potential link between organisational culture and internal branding, the following hypotheses are developed:

H3: Employees' perceived organisational cultural practice has a positive relationship with internal branding.

H3-1: Employees' perceived organisational cultural practice has a positive relationship with their brand knowledge.

H3-2: Employees' perceived organisational cultural practice has a positive relationship with their brand experience.

H3-3: Employees' perceived organisational cultural practice has a positive relationship with their brand image.

3.2.3 Internal Branding and Job Satisfaction

When organisations are implementing internal branding, they probably have benefits in mind other than just ensuring that employees consistently deliver the desired brand promise. For example, employee satisfaction is considered a priority in internal branding

since it is important for work outcomes (Khan, 2009). Moreover, Miles and Mangold (2004) have pointed out that organisations are likely to benefit from higher levels of employee satisfaction and performance once they achieve strong internal branding strategy. That is, if employees assimilate the brand knowledge given to them and feel congruence between the knowledge and what they experience, they will form a positive brand image. Working with a positive brand image will help make these employees feel satisfied with their job. Nonetheless, this assumption has not yet been substantiated with empirical evidence. Hence, this study will take the initiative to test this theory. The hypotheses are:

H4: Internal branding has a positive relationship with employee job satisfaction.

H4-1: Employees' brand image has a positive relationship with their job satisfaction.

3.3 Conceptual Model

Based on the literature, Figure 3-1 presents a conceptual model that displays all the hypotheses between constructs. Model 2 is an extension of Model 1 that presents the relations between brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image underneath internal branding, as well as their relations with the antecedent (organisational culture) and the consequence (employee job satisfaction).
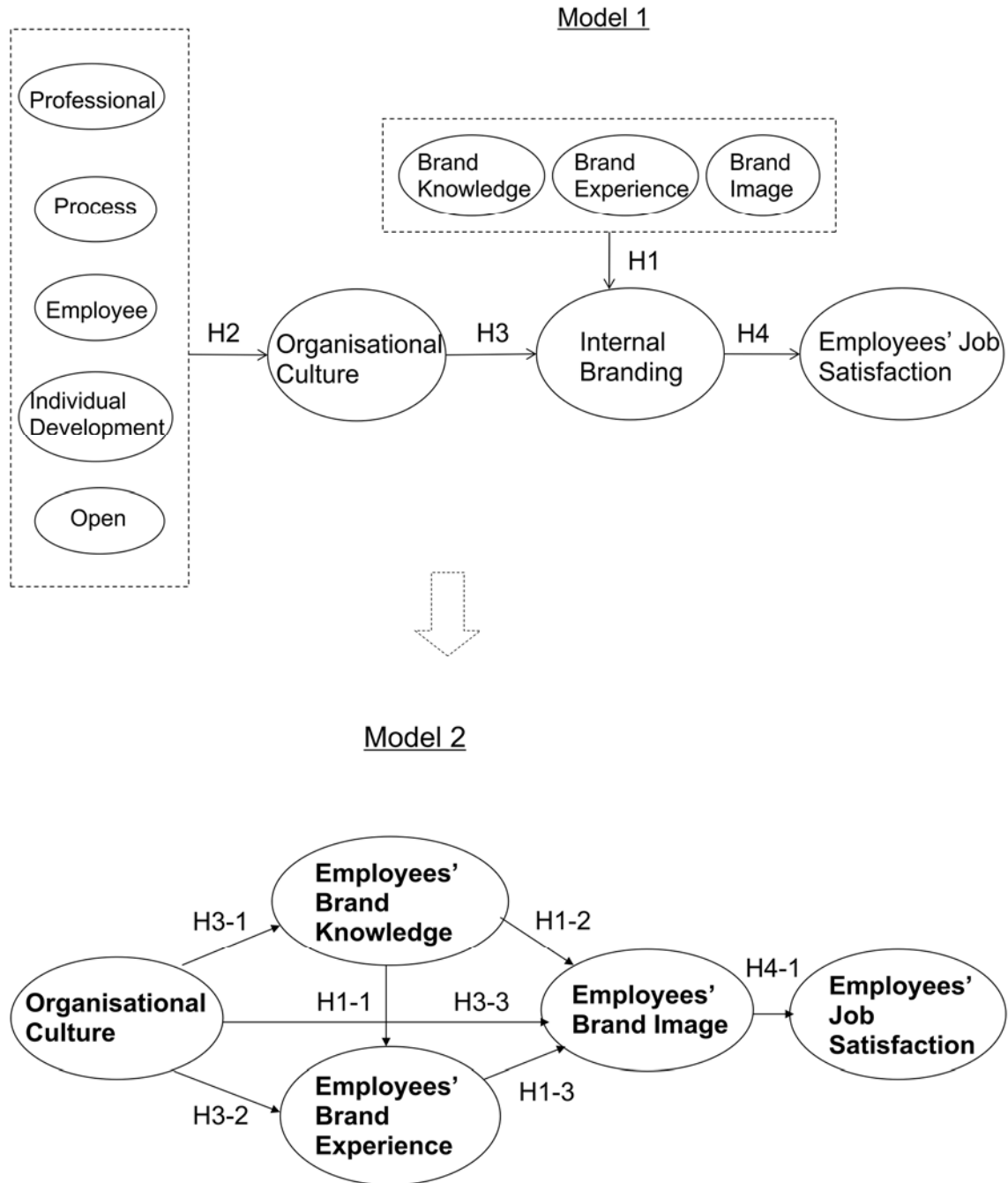
Figure 3-1 The conceptual model for this study.

Table 3-1 summarises the study, including the research objectives, research questions, and research hypothesis.

Table 3-1 Synthesis of research objective, research questions, and research hypotheses.

Research Objectives (RO)	Research Questions (RQ)	Research Hypotheses (H)
RO1. To explore the components and measurements of internal branding.	RQ1. Are brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image the elements that make up internal branding?	H1. Employees' perceived internal branding's measurements are related to brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image.
	RQ2. Does employees' brand knowledge affect their brand experience?	H1-1. Employees' brand knowledge has a positive relationship with their brand experience.
	RQ3. Do employees associate their brand knowledge with their brand image?	H1-2. Employees' brand knowledge has a positive relationship with their brand image.
	RQ4. Do employees associate their brand experience with their brand image?	H1-3. Employees' brand experience has a positive relationship with their brand image.
RO2. To examine the relationship between organisational cultural practices and internal branding.	RQ5. Which organisational cultural practices can be identified in this research context?	H2. Employees' perceived organisational cultural practices' measurements are related to professional, process, internal, employee, and close.
	RQ6. Does organisational culture affect internal branding?	H3. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a positive relationship with their perceived internal branding.
	RQ7. Does organisational culture affect employees' brand knowledge?	H3-1. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a positive relationship with their brand knowledge.
	RQ8. Does organisational culture affect employees' brand experience?	H3-2. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a positive relationship with their brand experience.
	RQ9. Does organisational culture affect employees' brand image?	H3-3. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a positive relationship with their brand image.
RO3. To examine the relationship between internal branding and employee job satisfaction.	RQ10. Does employees' perceived internal branding have an impact on their job satisfaction?	H4. Employees' perceived internal branding has a positive relationship with their job satisfaction.
	RQ11. Does employees' perceived brand image have an impact on their job satisfaction?	H4-1. Employees' perceived brand image has a positive relationship with their job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to explain the research method which was used for this study. First, research design is elaborated including the purpose, the nature of this study, and research methods applied. Second, the development of constructs' measurement is discussed, followed by an evaluation of the selected research instruments. Screening test is then applied to verify the appropriateness of those developed instruments. Pilot study is designed after screening test and the implementation of main survey data collection is presented afterwards. At the end of this chapter, data analysis methods are examined with a discussion of potential ethical issues of this study.

4.2 Research Design

4.2.1 Review of the Research Purpose

The overall aim of this research was to discover the relationships among organisational culture, internal branding (brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image) and job satisfaction from employees' perspective, in the context of international branded hotels operating in Hainan province (China). In order to investigate these hypothetical relationships among the core research constructs, both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied for fulfilling the purpose of this study.

4.2.2 Nature of the Research

Research studies could be either exploratory in nature or descriptive, or explanatory. The distinctions between these three research purposes were that an exploratory study could assist probing new insights whilst clarifying the understanding of a problem (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009); for a descriptive study the objective was to portray a clear picture of the phenomena of interests (Zikmund, 2000); and an explanatory study explained causal relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2009). From developing research purpose, it was realised that explanatory nature need to be pursued in this study for the matter of seeking correlations among international branded resort hotels' organisational culture, internal branding process, and employee job satisfaction in Hainan. Nonetheless, some exploratory work was sought firstly to gather new insights about how those hotels under study managed their organisational culture, internal branding, and employee job satisfaction.

As Kraus and Allen (1987, cited in Veal 2006) state, both forms of studies (i.e. explanatory and exploratory) represented important and valid approaches when carrying out research into opinions, feelings, experiences or behaviour. Despite "both paths use some of the same research skills; and deliver useful and informative results when they are well done" (Davies, 2007, p. 9), each of them tackled various research problems and serves rather different purposes.

For example, one of the major differences between qualitative and quantitative studies was the procedure of data collection. Qualitative research involved gathering a set of interpretive and naturalistic information rather than discovering answers to questions through the application of numerical and scientific procedures like quantitative research (Davies, 2007; Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005). Instead of collecting rich data about a small group of people in qualitative approaches, quantitative research tended to study relatively large number of people in order to ensure the reliability of the results (Jennings, 2001). As a consequence, it was typical of quantitative studies to gather restricted information. In general, qualitative study was based on people's belief in a particular situation where their experiences and feelings were best described and explained in their own words (Bryman & Bell, 2003). Comparatively, much quantitative research tended to impose the researcher's view on a situation which restrains the quality of the information collected. In the tourism and hospitality context, researchers were more likely to use quantitative measures decades ago, because they believed that "science must rely on actual measurement of scientific data" (Kraus & Allen, 1987 in Veal 2006, p.194). Since a shift in attitudes towards qualitative methods in tourism studies took place, Kraus and Allen (1987 in Veal 2006, p.194) modified their observations as "there ought to be a place for research of a more deeply probing, intuitive, or philosophical nature in an individualistic and diversified field such as recreation and leisure".

For this research, mixed methods were applied to better comprehend the nature of identified problems. Qualitative study was carried out to verify if what was discovered

from the literature was in line with the practical circumstances in Hainan's international branded hotels. Quantitative study was further conducted to test the hypotheses with reference to answering the specific research questions.

4.2.3 Research Methods

Saunders et al. (2009) argued that any research strategy was applicable to exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research; but there was no single strategy which was superior to others. Semi-structured interview and survey were deemed as appropriate strategies to be used for this study. The choice of these two instruments was guided by the research objectives and the existing literature on the topic (Saunders et al., 2009).

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were eventually applied to conduct the item-screening test for several reasons. Despite the variety of measurement items identified from previous literature in association with the five major constructs, they were either tested in other fields or for different disciplines and therefore were hardly applied to the hotel industry. For the sake of assuring those items were applicable to the hotel context, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the top level managers to clarify which of them fit in with the hotel management and operation phenomenon. Another reason was that because these items were barely implemented in the hotel industry, the author believed that it was necessary to attest with the industry practitioners and academia regarding any latent variables that were particularly relevant to the hotel realm.

The advantage of using semi-structured face-to-face interviews was its emphasis on how the interviewee understands the importance of explaining and understanding the questions (Bryman & Bell, 2003). This fited well with the purpose of carrying out the item-screening test since it aimed to find out how agreeable the adopted measurement items were implementing in the hotel context as perceived by industrial practitioners and academics. Additionally, face-to-face interview was flexible in terms of asking interviewees for further clarification without negatively affecting the quality of the data collected (Jennings, 2001). Moreover, when the item-screening test required interviewees to evaluate a questionnaire, their queries could be explained and statements could be clarified by the interviewer right away.

The idea of using focus groups was initially but rejected eventually due to its critical disadvantages. By revealing how people really think about different issues would be a useful method, in the way of observing what top managers from varied hotels understand about their internal branding process, organisational culture and employees' job satisfaction (Ghauri & Grönhaug, 2005). Nonetheless, the key drawback of a focus group method for this study was to arrange a meeting with all the busy hotel managers in a certain location at a certain time. This method was therefore abandoned due to the availability of time and budget.

Telephone interview might be a more convenient method than a semi-structured face-to-face interview, in terms of its potential advantages associated with access, speed and

lower cost (Saunders et al., 2009). Though it had a significant non-response problem; it would reach samples spreading over a wide geographic area in a relatively short period of time with less expenses. Nevertheless, constraints existed which terminates the idea of conducting telephone interviews with the managers. This interview process would involve a stage of re-examining the developed survey questionnaire for the selected managers and experts to eliminate irrelevant measurement items; and at the same time added on what they think is important as measurements, therefore it would not be practical to complete over phone conversation. Moreover, when explanation was needed for definitions of each key constructs, it would take up much amount of valuable time from the managers and they would easily lose focus and interest in the topic. Hence, the method of telephone interview was excluded.

Finally, self-administered questionnaire was chosen for the main survey collection. It was simply because the targeted front-line employees in this study were mostly guest contact staff and located dispersedly. These employees could be working at any positions that involved interaction with consumers. Allocating the questionnaires to a liaison person in the hotels and relying on this person to distribute to relevant department seemed more feasible than any other methods. Targeted employees could choose to complete questionnaires at their convenient time without sacrificing their work time. It would be improper to use either mail questionnaire or Internet questionnaire as the low level of response rate they might invariably generate. Internet questionnaire was associated with low response rate, it was true as not many front-line employees would work with a computer nor were they required to have computer skills for some positions

in a resort hotel such as lifeguard or spa therapist. For the above reasons, delivery and collection questionnaire method was found the most appropriate option for this study.

4.2.4 Sampling Design

The sample of this research was drawn from international branded hotels operating in the resort districts of Hainan province (China). Hainan was chosen as the focus of this study for two main reasons. First, China's recent promotion of Hainan, as a top world's tourism destination by 2020 (CNTA, 2010), had made it an 'instrumental' case study for researching issues related to internal branding in the hotel sector. This meant that with a large number of international branded hotel groups operating in this area, there was an advantage to study this subject under a massive coverage of worldwide hotel groups. Second, Hainan on its own was an essential resort destination in China. Its nature in resort would require more customer-facing employees who were expected to deliver the brand messages to customers. This implied a need for tourism related sectors such as hotel to better understand internal branding for the benefits of better delivering brand values.

Non-probability sampling was chosen as the most practical method for this study. Due to the inability to specify a sampling frame from various branded hotels, two non-probability sampling techniques were adopted in this study – snowball and convenience sampling (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Snowball sampling was mainly applied in the screening test while convenience sampling was used for both pilot study and main

survey. The target population of both pilot and main studies was front-line hotel employees for exploring their perceptions of the hypothetical relationships among internal branding, organisational culture and their job satisfaction. These front-line employees should be those whose job nature requires interacting with customers face-to-face, and who were non-managerial staff. Convenience sampling was used to draw the samples. This method enabled targeting of samples who were most conveniently available and were easily accessed (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Jennings, 2001). As the research purpose requested the samples to be front-line employees who work in international branded resort hotels in Hainan Island, the convenience sample would be targeted where the liaison officer can obtain a large number of completed questionnaires quickly and economically (Zikmund, 2000).

Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) suggested a 5:1 ratio of respondents to items which they consider is good enough for different types of multivariate analyses. Stevens (2009) claimed that a sample size of at least 400 should be collected to avoid misspecification errors. In order to ensure a large response to be sufficient for the subsequent statistical analysis, a target sample size of 400 was determined and would be collected from the existing 25 international branded resort hotels in Hainan. In order to reach a satisfactory response rate, the researcher was present when field survey was conducted to make enforcement on the administration of collecting questionnaires such as making sure questionnaires were completed.

4.2.5 Outline of Research Procedures

As illustrated in Figure 4-1, this study followed comprehensive research procedures to inspect survey instruments that should be adequately representative of the constructs under examination.

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│    Literature Review    │
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             ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Measurement Instrument Selection   │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
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┌─────────────────────────┐
│    Item Screening Test   │
└─────────────────────────┘
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│    Pilot Test   │
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│  Refine Measurement and Assess Reliability │
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┌───────────────────────────┐
│    Main Data Collection    │
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│  Results and Data Analysis │
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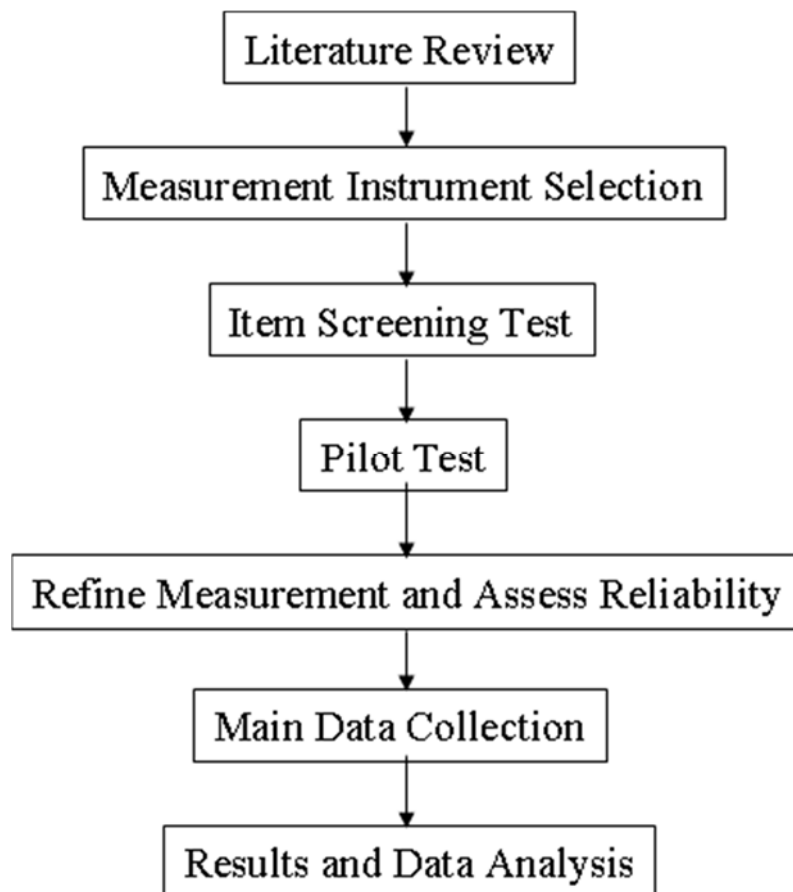
Figure 4-1 The outline of research procedures.

4.3 Measurement Items Development

4.3.1 Measurement of Organisational Culture

Based on the literature reviewed, this study adopted Hofstede's (2001) dimensions of organisational culture which was based on the descriptions of practice – what an

employee felt 'is'. Table 4-1 referred to the six dimensions together with their measuring items adopted partially from Hofstede (2001, p.397-399). Only one item was discarded due to its irrelevance to the Chinese hotel phenomenon, i.e. management dislikes union members, while the rest of the items were rephrased to fit in the overall content.

Table 4-1 Organisational Culture Dimensions and Measurement Instruments.

Dimensions	Practice Items
	In my current working hotel,
Process-Oriented vs. Results-Oriented (a concern with means vs. a concern with goals)	1. I am told when good job is done. 2. I am a typical fast employee. 3. I feel comfortable in unfamiliar situations. 4. I feel each day brings new challenges. 5. I am typically initiative. 6. I use informal style dealing with others. 7. I am typically warm. 8. I try to be pioneers. 9. I am typically direct. 10. I put in maximal effort. 11. Mistakes are tolerated. 12. I am typically optimistic. 13. I am open to outsiders and new comers. 14. Managers help good staff to advance.
Employee-Oriented vs. Job-Oriented (a concern for people vs. a concern for getting the job done)	1. I can make important decisions. 2. The hotel is only interested in work that people do. 3. Decisions are centralised at top. 4. Managers keep good staff in their department. 5. Management decree imposes changes. 6. Newcomers are left to find their own way. 7. The hotel has no special ties with local community. 8. There is little concern for employees' personal problems.
Parochial vs. Professional (units where employees derived their identity largely from the organisation vs. units in which people identified with their type of job)	1. Employees' private lives are their own businesses. 2. Job competence is the only criterion in hiring people. 3. I can think three years ahead or more. 4. I am strongly aware of competition. 5. Cooperation and trust between departments are normal.
Open System vs. Closed System (the communication climate)	1. Only very special people fit in the hotel. 2. Our department is the worst of the hotel. 3. Management is picky with trivial things. 4. Little attention is put into physical working environment.

	5. The hotel and employees are closed and secretive.
	6. New employees need more than a year to feel at home.
Loose Control vs. Tight Control (the amount of internal structuring in the organisation)	1. Everybody is cost-conscious. 2. Meeting times are kept punctually. 3. I am typically well-groomed. 4. I always speak seriously of the hotel and my job.
Normative vs. Pragmatic (the amount of structuring in the unit's external contacts)	1. The hotel is pragmatic instead of dogmatic in matters of ethics. 2. Organisation contributes little to society. 3. The major emphasis is made on meeting customer needs. 4. Results are more important than procedures. 5. I never talk about the history of the hotel.

4.3.2 Measurement of Brand Knowledge

There was limited literature considering brand knowledge as an independent concept. Since only Kimpakorn and Tocquer's (2009) study was found with an investigation of employees' brand knowledge within the hotel industry, as well as its measurement scale of brand knowledge obtained a Cronbach's Alpha of over 0.8, their instrument was applied in this study. The items were adjusted slightly to fit in the international branded hotel context as displayed in Table 4-2.

Table 4-2 Measurement items of Employees' Brand Knowledge.

Dimensions	Items
	In my current working hotel,
Employees' Brand Knowledge	1. I know clearly the goals and policies of the hotel. 2. I know the customers' expectations when they stay at this hotel. 3. I understand that my work is important to the success of the hotel. 4. I understand how my behaviour can impact this hotel. 5. I understand my role in delivering the brand promise. 6. I know the meaning of this hotel brand for customers. 7. I know this hotel is excellent in its service. 8. I know clearly who the hotel target customers are.

4.3.3 Measurement of Brand Experience

Similar to employees' brand knowledge concept, employees' brand experience was not yet fully discovered. Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009) took the initiative to look for ways of measuring employees' brand experience and came with a 14-items instrument (Table 4-3). This study used these items as the measurement of employees' brand experience since it received a Cronbach's Alpha over 0.8 according to Kimpakorn and Tocquer's result.

Table 4-3 Measurement of Employees' Brand Experience.

Dimensions	Items
	In my current working hotel,
Employees' Brand Experience	1. I am very satisfied with the manager's efforts to plan, coordinate, set goals, and establish routines for giving good service.
	2. I am very satisfied with the hotel's recruitment and selection of employees to have the right people for the right job.
	3. Management provides excellent incentives and rewards at all levels for service quality, not just productivity.
	4. Management provides freedom and authority to employees to act independently in order to provide excellent service.
	5. Employees receive training that enhances his/her ability to deliver high quality service.
	6. This hotel keeps the employees well informed.
	7. There is a supportive, open and approachable management style among line managers in this hotel.
	8. Management provides excellent leadership.
	9. This hotel never disappoints me.
	10. If this hotel makes a claim or promise to me, it is probably true.
	11. This hotel is honest and sincere in addressing my concerns.
	12. I rely on this hotel to solve employees' problems.
	13. This hotel is interested in my satisfaction.
	14. This hotel would be willing to solve a problem I might have with the work.

4.3.4 Measurement of Brand Image

Studies on employees' brand image were rarely found in the hotel industry. Even in the management literature, there was no agreeable consensus for the empirical measurement of brand image (Malik, Naeem, & Nasir, 2011). Because of the multi-dimensionality of the concept, there was a variety of work on defining its concept but resulted in ambiguity in selecting the best measurement scale (ibid.). From literature review, it seemed that Knox and Freeman's (2006) study context was closely related to the current study. Their measurement of employees' brand image was related to recruitment process for the service industry. Thus, these items were borrowed for this study. Instead of directly addressing the items which were used in a different circumstance, they were amended in light of existing hotel employees' perspective of brand's image. With such amendment, it was needed for this study to test the reliability and validity of this measurement scale. Table 4-4 listed the amended instrument.

Table 4-4 Measurement of Employees' Brand Image.

Dimensions	Items
	In my current working hotel,
Employees' Brand Image	1. This hotel allows freedom to work on your own initiative.
	2. This hotel employs people with whom you feel having things in common.
	3. This hotel has a dynamic and forward-looking approach to its business.
	4. This hotel has a friendly and informal culture.
	5. This hotel offers the opportunity to move around the organisation and work in different roles.
	6. This hotel invests heavily in employee training and development.
	7. This hotel is a pure meritocracy.
	8. This hotel is a small organisation.
	9. This hotel is widely regarded as a highly prestigious employer.
	10. This hotel offers a lot of scope for creativity in your work.
	11. This hotel offers a relatively stress-free working environment.
	12. This hotel offers a high starting salary.
	13. This hotel offers clear opportunities for long-term career

progression.
14. This hotel offers the opportunity to work and live abroad.
15. This hotel offers variety in your daily work.
16. This hotel provides you with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues.
17. This hotel cares about their employees as individuals.
18. This hotel requires you to work standard working hours only.
19. This hotel uses your educational skills.

4.3.5 Measurement of Job Satisfaction

Employee job satisfaction had long been a popular topic in the academia. It possessed a great variety of measurements designed in various circumstances. Among which, Hartline and Ferrell's (1996) measurement items were one of the most adopted instrument for job satisfaction in the hotel industry. Although it was not this study's intention to reassess employee job satisfaction; rather, this concept was included to be tested as one of the consequences internal branding would cause. In this sense, Hartline and Ferrell's (1996) measurement scale was deemed as appropriate and utilised in this study containing eight statements as shown in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5 Measurement of Employee job satisfaction.

Dimensions	Items
	In my current working hotel,
Employee job satisfaction	1. I am satisfied with my overall job.
	2. I am satisfied with my fellow workers.
	3. I am satisfied with my supervisor(s).
	4. I am satisfied with my hotel's policies.
	5. I am satisfied with the support provided by my hotel.
	6. I am satisfied with my salary.
	7. I am satisfied with my opportunities for advancement with this hotel.
	8. I am satisfied with my hotel's customers.

4.3.6 Measurement of Respondents' Profile

By encompassing respondents' profile, it helped identify their attributes for this study to capture who they really are. In most of the cases, respondents' profile was included for in order to classify samples into groups and to test the differences among these groups. This study thus included questions regarding frontline employees' gender, age, education, origin, work department, year of experience in the hotel industry, and year of experience in the current employment.

4.4 Item Screening Test

4.4.1 Personal Interview

A screening test of the measurement items was carried out using semi-structured individual interviews to check the adequacy of each adopted item. This method was applied to serve the purpose of content validity before the actual questionnaire was developed. In other words, it assisted to ensure that the items were adequate measures of what they were supposed to measure (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Moreover, these interviews allowed verifying the conceptual definition of internal branding extracted from the literature by collecting practical examples.

Interviews were conducted between November and December 2010 in both Hainan and Hong Kong. Each interview took around 50 minutes on average. Two sets of interview structures were prepared for industry practitioners and academic scholars respectively (Appendix I). Interviewees were requested to briefly narrate their background in

association with a specific hotel and with the hotel industry; followed by interpreting the concept of the key constructs and illustrating their understandings with real-life examples in hotels. This first part of the interview was aimed to help participants familiarise with the concepts studied in this study. In particular, interviewees were asked to describe their understanding of the concept of internal branding with specific examples to demonstrate their views. Conceptual definitions were provided to help participants to better understand the study domain. In the last 20 minutes of each interview, participants were asked to mark the extent to which they agreed that the questionnaire ensured a reasonably representative collection of measurement items. This second part of the interview is crucial for collecting participants' views on whether the adopted measurement items could be adequately used in the hotel industry.

The questionnaire was designed with five sections including all measurement variables. Sections I to V covered variables of organisational culture, brand knowledge, brand experience, brand image and job satisfaction respectively. All of them were measured by a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 being 'very unrepresentative' to 7 being 'very representative'. This scale was used to ask participants to examine the representativeness of each measurement item in the hotel industry context. They were not asked to reflect their agreement to each item; but to their knowledge whether the individual items could be used in this study's context. An item that was rated '7' would mean that this item was deemed as appropriate to be used in this research context according to the participants' view. An option of 'Not Sure' was included to reflect participants' opinions of the situation now and this phrase appeared to be less threatening than using 'Don't Know'

(Saunders et al., 2009). An open question was asked at the end of each section in order for interviewees to suggest other relevant elements that could be considered for studying each construct.

4.4.2 Sampling

This screening test was conducted with senior managers from different international branded hotels in Hong Kong and the Mainland China, and also with academic scholars specialised in researching China hotel industry and human resources management field from universities in Hong Kong and Hainan. Snowball sampling method was employed to identify potential participants. Since it was difficult to find managers from the desired branded hotels, this sampling method was the only suitable means once the initial contact was reached. Although one of the pitfalls that snowball sampling had was the bias it results in homogeneous sample, when respondents identify other potential respondents who were similar to themselves (Saunders et al., 2009), it would not cause any problem in this study. Because the homogeneous sample it generated was actually the target sample this screening test aimed to approach. Additionally, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) suggested that a sample of 12 would likely be sufficient for interviews "if the goal is to describe a shared perception, belief, or behaviour among a relatively homogeneous group" (p.76). Therefore, a total of 14 interviews were managed to suggest the representativeness of the measurement scale for each construct. Table 4-6 displayed the profile of the interview participants.

Table 4-6 Profile of Interview Participants.

Hotel Practitioner		Academic Scholar	
Participant	**Job Title**	**Participant**	**Job Title**
A	Deputy General Manager, International-based hotel group	H	Assistant Professor
B	Vice President of Revenue and Strategy, Asian-based hotel group	I	Professor
C	Regional Director of Finance, International-based hotel group	J	Research Student
D	Hotel Senior Partner, Asian-based hotel group	K	Lecturer
E	Director of Human Resources (retired), International-based hotel group	L	Associate Professor
F	Regional Director of Sales, Asian-based hotel group	M	Associate Professor
G	Human Resources Manager, Asian-based hotel group	N	Assistant Professor

4.4.3 Interview Results

Questionnaires that participants were asked to complete were analysed by using descriptive analysis. A total of 37 items were retained for organizational culture, 8 items for brand knowledge, 12 items for brand experience, 12 items for brand image, and 8 items for employee job satisfaction. The criteria for retaining these items were set that the mean score of each item calculated by SPSS must exceed four. Hence, items with a mean of greater than 4 were kept for further questionnaire revision.

The interview transcripts and notes were analysed by coding. From studying interviewees' understanding of the key constructs and the practical examples they used

to illustrate their points, the findings were found helpful in terms of reassuring the representativeness of the measurement items. For example, both participant J and K mentioned that management should demonstrate the brand value for employees to experience at work. This statement confirmed the first item of brand experience that employee is satisfied with the manager's efforts to plan, coordinate, set goals, and establish routines for giving good service. Participant I talked about brand image as how customers and employees associate their experience of the brand, e.g. whether the hotel is caring or personalised, etc.

Together with participants' comments and suggestions, 21 items were eliminated and 7 items were added eventually (Table 4-7). The additional items were highlighted with '*' marked before their sequential number. All of the items were rephrased to fit in the Chinese hotel context. The finalised scale items measuring each construct were employed for pilot study.

Table 4-7 Revised Measurement Scale for All Constructs.

Constructs	Measurement Scale
Organisational Culture	**Process vs. Result**
	1. I am told when good job is done.
	2. I am a typical fast employee.
	3. I feel comfortable in unfamiliar situations.
	4. I feel each day brings new challenges.
	5. I am typically initiative.
	6. I use informal style dealing with others.
	7. I am typically warm.
	8. I am typically direct.
	9. I put in maximal effort.
	10. Mistakes are tolerated.
	11. I am typically optimistic.
	12. I am open to outsiders and new comers.
	13. Managers help good staff to advance.

Employee vs. Job
1. I can make important decisions.
2. The hotel is only interested in work that people do.
3. Decisions are centralised at top.
4. Managers keep good staff in their department.
5. Management decree imposes changes.
6. Newcomers are left to find their own way.
7. The hotel has no special ties with local community.
8. There is little concern for employees' personal problems.

Parochial vs. Professional
1. Employees' private lives are their own businesses.
2. Job competence is the only criterion in hiring people.
3. I am strongly aware of competition.
4. Cooperation and trust between departments are normal.

Open vs. Closed
1. Only very special people fit in the hotel.
2. Management is picky with trivial things.
3. Little attention is put into physical working environment.
4. New employees need more than a year to feel at home.

Loose Control vs. Tight Control
1. Everybody is cost-conscious.
2. Meeting times are kept punctually.
3. I am typically well-groomed.
4. I always speak seriously of the hotel and my job.

Normative vs. Pragmatic
1. The hotel is pragmatic instead of dogmatic in matters of ethics.
2. The major emphasis is made on meeting customer needs.
3. Results are more important than procedures.
4. I never talk about the history of the hotel.

Internal Branding	**Brand Knowledge** 1. I know clearly the goals and policies of the hotel. 2. I know the customers' expectations when they stay at this hotel. 3. I understand that my work is important to the success of the hotel. 4. I understand how my behaviour can impact this hotel. 5. I understand my role in delivering the brand promise. 6. I know the meaning of this hotel brand for customers. 7. I know this hotel is excellent in its service. 8. I know clearly who the hotel target customers are. **Brand Experience** 1. I am very satisfied with the manager's efforts to plan, coordinate, set goals, and establish routines for giving good

service.
2. Employees receive training that enhances his/her ability to deliver high quality service.
3. Management provides excellent incentives and rewards at all levels for service quality, not just productivity.
4. Management provides freedom and authority to employees to act independently in order to provide excellent service.
5. Management provides excellent leadership.
6. This hotel keeps the employees well informed.
7. If this hotel makes a claim or promise to me, it is probably true.
8. This hotel is interested in my satisfaction.
9. I rely on this hotel to solve employees' problems.
*10. This hotel offers the opportunity to move around the organisation and work in different roles.
*11. This hotel offers the opportunity to work and live abroad.
*12. This hotel provides me with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues.

Brand Image
1. This hotel has a dynamic and forward-looking approach to its business.
2. This hotel has a friendly and informal culture.
*3. This hotel provides good service quality to customers.
*4. This hotel brand has significance to the customers.
5. This hotel cares about their employees as individuals.
*6. This hotel would be willing to solve a problem I might have with the work.
7. This hotel uses my educational skills.
*8. This hotel provides good service programme to employees.
9. This hotel offers a lot of scope for creativity in my work.
10. This hotel offers a relatively stress-free working environment.
11. This hotel offers clear opportunities for long-term career progression.
12. This hotel offers variety in my daily work.

Employee job satisfaction	1. I am satisfied with my fellow workers.
	2. I am satisfied with my supervisor(s).
	3. I am satisfied with my hotel's policies.
	4. I am satisfied with the support provided by my hotel.
	5. I am satisfied with my salary.
	6. I am satisfied with my opportunities for advancement with this hotel.
	7. I am satisfied with my hotel's customers.

8. I am satisfied with my overall job.

4.5 Pilot Study

4.5.1 Questionnaire Design

The pilot test was executed to test the initiated items with 200 target sample. The objective of this pilot study was to affirm the appropriateness of the entire questionnaire; to ascertain whether this questionnaire was correctly worded and easily understood by the respondents; and to check the reliability of the items. Reliability test and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were implemented to adjust the measurements for the main survey.

In light of the results generated from individual interviews, the questionnaire was further altered for pilot study. The description of seven-point Likert scale was changed from examining items' representativeness to employees' agreement on each item; in order to measure participants' degree of agreement towards each item. It is a widely used scale for measuring attitudes (Kinnear and Taylor, 1996). The scale hence was changed ranging from '1' being "strongly disagree" to '7' being "strongly agree". The main questionnaire sections representing each construct were reduced from five to three and demonstrating organisational culture, internal branding, and employee job satisfaction. Under organisational culture section there were four sub-sections consisting questions regarding employees' self-evaluation, employees' evaluation on work environment, employees' understanding of hotel's management style, and lastly employees'

understanding of their working hotel. Each sub-section started with a brief description of what each sub-section was measuring; and the statement began with 'In my current working hotel, …' and the rest of the sentence was completed with a list of the measuring statements. Take 'Self-Evaluation' sub-section as an example, "Below statements are about your self-evaluation. Please circle the number that most represent your opinion based on your actual work, while '7' being 'Strongly Agree' and '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'." "In my current working hotel, I am a typically efficient employee."

Questions regarding the profile of respondents were enclosed in the first section, asking hotel employees' gender, marital status, age, highest education attained, region of origin, work department, years of working in the hotel industry, as well as the number of years the employee had been working in the current hotel.

4.5.2 Questionnaire Translation

This questionnaire was designed in English first, and then translated into Chinese. The reason was that all of the measurement items of each construct were adopted from English literature; but the context of this study was in China with Chinese employees. Despite the convenience of applying the existing measurement items to the design of this questionnaire, a back-translation process from the Chinese version to the English version was taken to maintain the accuracy of wordings used. Two experienced interpreters were chosen to translate this questionnaire. One of them was a lecturer in tourism at Griffith University, Australia whose MSc major was in English translation. She was asked to

translate the questionnaire from Chinese to English. Another interpreter was a professional translator and interpreter specializing in hospitality at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He had a solid experience in English translation and was asked to translate the English version back to Chinese. Both interpreters assured that the language translation of this questionnaire had minimal error which ensured an accurate representation of what this study wanted to find out from this questionnaire.

4.5.3 Data Collection

Pilot data were collected in two cities i.e. Haikou and Qiongshan in Hainan from March 30 to April 4 2011. Two international branded hotels played a part in this pilot study with 200 questionnaires distributed via human resources (HR) managers in each hotel. Prior to the distribution of questionnaires, a meeting was scheduled with the HR managers individually to discuss the distribution and collection of questionnaires in the hotel property. An agreement was made that the HR managers would assist delivering questionnaires to the required target sample. As this study might involve different departments and the target sample must be front-line employees, it would cause much inconvenience if the researcher asked staff around at the hotel premise. Further disturbance might affect hotel guests. Consequently, a questionnaire guide was provided to HR managers for them to follow the delivery procedures (Appendix II). Incentives were offered to encourage hotel staff's participation. For those who completed the questionnaire, a Hong Kong Polytechnic University recycle bag was presented as an incentive. Finally, a total of 176 usable questionnaires with 88% response rate were collected from these two hotels.

4.5.4 Data Screening

The collected data was screened for further analysis. Firstly, five items including Q2.3, Q3.8, Q4.2, Q4.3, and Q4.6 were reverse coded since they were negatively worded in the questionnaire. It was necessary to take this procedure as these items were worded such that high values of the same construct were reflected by low scores (DeCoster, 2004). Negative wording was used in the questionnaire to attract respondents' attention to the questions. This would therefore result in transforming the items when analysing them in the SPSS software so that their meanings were all oriented in the same direction. For this analysis, all items were coded in the way that high scores indicated high values of the construct.

Secondly, missing data was checked since non-random missing data could bias the statistical results (Hair et al., 2010). Overall there were 28 cases with missing values and all were found to be missing at random. On the other hand, other than Q6.11 which had 6.3% missing values, all the rest of variables had either less than 5% missing values or none at all. Cohen, Cohen, West and Aiken (1983) suggested that 5% to 10% of missing data on a variable may be judged small. This implied that by excluding the cases with less than 10% of random missing data would not violate the interpretation of the findings. Listwise deletion method was applied in this pilot study, in which all cases with random missing values were removed from the dataset for analysis. This method was believed to be more robust than many other advanced techniques according to Allison (2002).

Thirdly, box plot graphs were applied to detect any possible outliers of the data. No typing mistake was identified but there were some outliers for various variables. Despite they were extraordinary observations; they might represent a valid element of the population (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, they were retained for the rest of the pilot test analysis.

Descriptive statistics for the major constructs were shown from Table 4-8 to Table 4-10. Data must be normally distributed to be able to carry out subsequent analysis such as exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. Skewness and Kurtosis were considered useful in terms of examining univariate normality. Kline (2005) suggested that it was appropriate to have the threshold of univariate normality for skewness and kurtosis to be less than three and eight respectively. Therefore, statistics shown in the below tables represented a moderate normal distribution.

Table 4-8 Descriptive Statistics for Organisational Culture.

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q1.1	5.57	1.093	-1.000	1.686
Q1.2	5.56	0.988	-0.543	0.909
Q1.3	5.35	1.189	-0.613	0.397
Q1.4	5.39	1.113	-0.462	0.098
Q1.5	5.57	1.104	-0.600	0.439
Q1.6	5.41	1.138	-0.493	0.113
Q1.7	5.34	1.218	-0.757	0.655
Q1.8	5.51	1.193	-0.903	1.461
Q1.9	5.83	1.103	-0.949	1.098
Q1.10	5.78	1.186	-1.160	1.939
Q2.1	4.85	1.524	-0.781	0.216
Q2.2	4.45	1.449	-0.481	-0.017
Q2.3	3.95	1.481	0.219	-0.466
Q2.4	5.44	1.308	-0.963	0.972
Q2.5	4.81	1.368	-0.871	0.799
Q2.6	4.89	1.397	-0.824	0.534
Q2.7	4.26	1.626	-0.238	-0.712
Q2.8	5.28	1.409	-0.841	0.682
Q2.9	5.00	1.462	-0.666	0.260
Q3.1	5.12	1.411	-0.891	0.817
Q3.2	4.52	1.413	-0.427	-0.183
Q3.3	5.08	1.428	-0.849	0.738
Q3.4	5.28	1.199	-0.873	1.183
Q3.5	4.94	1.541	-0.890	0.465
Q3.6	5.26	1.176	-0.904	1.019
Q3.7	5.20	1.309	-0.869	0.907
Q3.8	3.39	1.376	0.460	0.167
Q3.9	5.52	1.228	-0.727	0.519
Q3.10	4.94	1.509	-0.572	-0.297
Q4.1	4.78	1.556	-0.553	-0.298
Q4.2	3.69	1.480	0.297	-0.613
Q4.3	3.64	1.467	0.445	-0.190
Q4.4	4.63	1.444	-0.679	-0.006
Q4.5	3.94	1.590	-0.167	-0.699
Q4.6	3.82	1.348	0.239	-0.184
Q4.7	4.63	1.322	-0.358	0.262
Q4.8	5.40	1.348	-1.067	1.399

Table 4-9 Descriptive Statistics for Internal Branding.

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q5.1	5.51	1.144	-0.851	1.043
Q5.2	5.34	1.190	-0.746	0.568
Q5.3	5.39	1.169	-0.833	1.242
Q5.4	5.49	1.164	-1.063	1.851
Q5.5	5.53	1.146	-0.857	0.819
Q5.6	5.50	1.233	-0.898	0.854
Q5.7	5.40	1.233	-0.908	1.125
Q5.8	5.41	1.230	-0.917	1.269
Q6.1	5.48	1.190	-0.926	1.326
Q6.2	5.32	1.128	-0.956	1.944
Q6.3	5.06	1.273	-0.848	0.923
Q6.4	4.95	1.234	-0.308	-0.354
Q6.5	5.23	1.241	-0.688	0.497
Q6.6	4.87	1.255	-0.614	0.534
Q6.7	4.78	1.326	-0.753	1.079
Q6.8	4.75	1.350	-0.705	0.781
Q6.9	4.83	1.271	-0.772	1.111
Q6.10	4.83	1.398	-0.517	0.134
Q6.11	4.65	1.509	-0.506	-0.055
Q6.12	4.67	1.579	-0.624	0.107
Q7.1	5.13	1.342	-0.742	0.570
Q7.2	5.04	1.189	-0.621	1.061
Q7.3	5.36	1.262	-0.939	1.453
Q7.4	5.29	1.314	-0.779	0.807
Q7.5	5.09	1.293	-0.540	0.513
Q7.6	5.02	1.228	-0.605	0.736
Q7.7	5.04	1.270	-0.603	0.706
Q7.8	5.13	1.212	-0.982	1.948
Q7.9	5.02	1.276	-0.700	1.100
Q7.10	4.65	1.386	-0.506	0.340
Q7.11	4.99	1.255	-0.578	0.750
Q7.12	4.79	1.476	-0.630	0.226

Table 4-10 Descriptive Statistics for Employees' Job Satisfaction.

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Q8.1	5.62	1.208	-0.667	0.136
Q8.2	5.24	1.278	-0.772	0.925
Q8.3	5.01	1.189	-0.334	0.371
Q8.4	4.93	1.278	-0.445	0.484
Q8.5	4.21	1.662	-0.279	-0.596
Q8.6	4.59	1.344	-0.606	0.628
Q8.7	5.06	1.258	-0.827	1.020
Q8.8	5.09	1.280	-0.470	0.547

For multivariate normality shown in Table 4-11, the absolute values of skewness for all items ranged from 0.218 to 1.15, and the absolute values of kurtosis ranged from 0.033 to 1.856. The assumption of multivariate normality was not violated with the value of 914.946.

Table 4-11 Multivariate Normality Statistics.

Item	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
Q1.1	-0.997	-5.401	1.657	4.487
Q1.2	-0.542	-2.934	0.893	2.417
Q1.3	-0.609	-3.301	0.37	1.003
Q1.4	-0.459	-2.487	0.079	0.214
Q1.5	-0.595	-3.224	0.393	1.064
Q1.6	-0.488	-2.645	0.076	0.205
Q1.7	-0.75	-4.063	0.603	1.633
Q1.8	-0.898	-4.865	1.41	3.819
Q1.9	-0.941	-5.095	1.033	2.798
Q1.10	-1.15	-6.231	1.851	5.012
Q2.1	-0.776	-4.203	0.194	0.525
Q2.2	-0.479	-2.592	-0.033	-0.09
Q2.3	-0.218	-1.179	-0.472	-1.279
Q2.4	-0.955	-5.17	0.911	2.467
Q2.5	-0.866	-4.689	0.764	2.069
Q2.6	-0.817	-4.427	0.485	1.314
Q2.7	-0.237	-1.285	-0.7	-1.896
Q2.8	-0.834	-4.516	0.629	1.702
Q2.9	-0.66	-3.576	0.219	0.592
Q3.1	-0.888	-4.81	0.802	2.173
Q3.2	-0.425	-2.304	-0.18	-0.487
Q3.3	-0.844	-4.571	0.704	1.906
Q3.4	-0.871	-4.716	1.163	3.148

Q3.5	-0.882	-4.779	0.418	1.133
Q3.6	-0.902	-4.884	1.001	2.712
Q3.7	-0.861	-4.664	0.847	2.295
Q3.8	-0.465	-2.52	0.257	0.695
Q3.9	-0.721	-3.905	0.47	1.274
Q3.10	-0.569	-3.08	-0.308	-0.833
Q4.1	-0.556	-3.01	-0.246	-0.665
Q4.2	-0.299	-1.62	-0.547	-1.481
Q4.3	-0.442	-2.395	-0.203	-0.55
Q4.4	-0.673	-3.645	-0.04	-0.109
Q4.5	-0.166	-0.9	-0.687	-1.859
Q4.6	-0.237	-1.285	-0.197	-0.533
Q4.7	-0.357	-1.934	0.257	0.696
Q4.8	-1.058	-5.732	1.326	3.59
Q5.1	-0.846	-4.582	1.002	2.714
Q5.2	-0.744	-4.029	0.558	1.51
Q5.3	-0.829	-4.487	1.196	3.239
Q5.4	-1.057	-5.723	1.792	4.852
Q5.5	-0.849	-4.6	0.762	2.064
Q5.6	-0.89	-4.82	0.796	2.155
Q5.7	-0.9	-4.876	1.059	2.868
Q5.8	-0.909	-4.921	1.199	3.247
Q6.1	-0.918	-4.97	1.255	3.397
Q6.2	-0.948	-5.134	1.856	5.025
Q6.3	-0.841	-4.553	0.863	2.337
Q6.4	-0.305	-1.653	-0.378	-1.024
Q6.5	-0.682	-3.696	0.449	1.216
Q6.6	-0.61	-3.305	0.505	1.368
Q6.7	-0.751	-4.068	1.06	2.87
Q6.8	-0.699	-3.783	0.725	1.963
Q6.9	-0.765	-4.145	1.045	2.831
Q6.10	-0.514	-2.784	0.114	0.309
Q6.11	-0.517	-2.802	0.105	0.284
Q6.12	-0.631	-3.417	0.196	0.531
Q7.1	-0.742	-4.017	0.58	1.572
Q7.2	-0.619	-3.351	1.042	2.822
Q7.3	-0.931	-5.042	1.379	3.733
Q7.4	-0.773	-4.185	0.75	2.031
Q7.5	-0.535	-2.899	0.465	1.259
Q7.6	-0.6	-3.251	0.681	1.845
Q7.7	-0.6	-3.249	0.672	1.821
Q7.8	-0.974	-5.273	1.86	5.036
Q7.9	-0.694	-3.758	1.035	2.804
Q7.10	-0.502	-2.717	0.297	0.803
Q7.11	-0.575	-3.115	0.716	1.939
Q7.12	-0.628	-3.402	0.222	0.6
Q8.1	-0.661	-3.58	0.099	0.267

Q8.2	-0.766	-4.147	0.865	2.343
Q8.3	-0.332	-1.796	0.346	0.936
Q8.4	-0.442	-2.396	0.456	1.235
Q8.5	-0.277	-1.501	-0.599	-1.622
Q8.6	-0.602	-3.263	0.597	1.617
Q8.7	-0.822	-4.452	0.98	2.653
Multivariate			914.946	55.738

4.5.5 Profile of Participants

Participants involved in the pilot study were 55.7% female employees and 44.3% male employees. Most of the participants were single (70.9%) and at a young age ranging between 18-34 (87.3%). Around 38% of the participants went to college and universities for higher education. About 70.4% of these participants were from the southern part of China, and interestingly 11.2% from East and North of China were working in hotels in Hainan. Participants were mostly from departments in food & beverage (33.7%), room service (20.3%), recreation & spa (16.9%), and front office (15.7%). A large group of participants worked in the hotel industry for less than a year (37.7%); yet over 69% had more than 6 months of work experience in the hotel the time when the pilot study was carried out. The detailed statistics for participants' profile could be found in Table 4-12.

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Table 4-12 Profile of Pilot Study Participants.

Items	Categories	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	44.3
	Female	55.7
Marital status	Single	70.9
	Married	26.7
	Others	2.4
Age	18-24	56.3
	25-34	31.0
	35-44	10.3
	45-54	1.7
	55-64	0.6
Education	Middle school	21.1
	High school	36.8
	College/university	38.0
	Masters or above	4.1
Region	East China	4.7
	South China	70.4
	Central China	7.1
	North China	7.1
	North West	0.6
	South West	4.1
	North East	5.9
Department	Front office	15.7
	Room service	20.3
	Food & beverage	33.7
	Security	6.4
	Recreation & spa	16.9
	Entertainment	2.3
	Others	4.7
Year of Hotel Industry Experience	Less than 1 year	37.7
	1-2 years	28.0
	3-5 years	17.7
	6-10 years	9.1
	more than 10 years	7.4
Year of Current Hotel Experience	Less than 1 month	6.3
	1-3 months	10.2
	4-6 months	14.2
	7-12 months	16.5
	1-2 years	23.3
	3-5 years	18.2
	6-10 years	6.3
	More than 10 years	5.1

4.5.6 Data Analysis Results

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was applied to purify measurement items after data screening. Factors were extracted from a list of the measurement items and Cronbach's alpha values for each factor were checked for the factor's reliability. A factor loading of ± 0.4 was considered to meet the minimal level for interpretation as referred by Hair et al. (2010). Hence, it was used as the cut-off point for determining how the items were correlated with the identified factor. As it was generally agreed, for the lower limit of Cronbach's alpha 0.7 was considered (ibid.).

As Table 4-13 illustrated, five factors were identified with 37 organisational culture (OC) items. They were labelled in association with Hofstede et al.'s (1990) organisational cultural practice dimensions: 1) Professional; 2) Internal; 3) Job; 4) Result; and 5) Open. Q3.1 'I am told when good job is done' was the only item that did not load on any factor which means it could not be included in the measurement of organisational cultural practices in this study context. Therefore, this item was removed from the measurement scale. Factor loadings suggested that all other items were adequate. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < .000$) and the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was good as it exceeded 0.8. Cronbach's alpha values of all factors were greater than 0.7 which indicated that the factors were all reliable in measuring organisational cultural practice. Most of the items' communality values were over 0.5 which showed sufficient explanation by the factors they were accounted for. However, there were five exceptions under the factors of 'Job', 'Result', and 'Open' of which the communality values were less than 0.5, i.e. Q3.2, Q3.3, Q3.10, Q2.9, Q2.1. Although

they may not explain one-half of the variance accounted for by their own factor, they were kept for the main survey as the measurement scale was rarely used in the Chinese context, as they may need a further examination with a larger sample size.

Table 4-13 EFA Results for Organisational Culture.

Organisational Cultural Practices Factors	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	α	Communalities
Factor 1: Professional		8.463	22.873	.906	
Q1.4 Typically initiative	.803				.674
Q1.5 Typically warm	.793				.656
Q1.8 Typically optimistic	.772				.704
Q1.6 Typically direct	.744				.616
Q1.2 Feel comfortable in unfamiliar situations	.743				.596
Q1.7 Put in maximal effort	.734				.667
Q1.3 Feel each day brings new challenges	.656				.548
Q1.1 Typical efficient	.634				.587
Q1.9 Open to new comers	.631				.718
Q1.10 Typically well-groomed	.620				.610
Factor 2: Internal		5.747	15.532	.844	
Q3.9 Meeting times are punctual	.800				.715
Q2.4 Aware of competition	.730				.638
Q3.7 Cooperation and trust between departments is good	.688				.578
Q4.8 Meeting customer needs	.655				.517
Q2.8 Cost-conscious employees	.628				.521
Q3.6 Management decree imposes changes	.609				.584
Factor 3: Job		3.101	8.382	.800	
Q4.6 Little attention to the physical working environment	.730				.639
Q4.3 Little concern for employees' personal problems	.728				.646
Q4.4 Job competence is the only criterion in hiring	.708				.629
Q4.5 Only very special people fit in the hotel	.672				.645
Q4.7 Hotel is pragmatic in matters of employee ethics	.639				.553

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Q3.2 Mistakes are tolerated	.546				.428
Q3.3 Managers help good staff to advance	.476				.417
Factor 4: Result		2.070	5.594	.800	
Q3.8 Management is picky with trivial things	.682				.561
Q4.1 Hotel is only interested in work people do	.662				.661
Q3.10 Results are more important than procedures	.595				.427
Q3.5 Managers keep good staff in their departments	.545				.597
Q3.4 Decisions are centralised at top	.529				.534
Q2.9 Employees' private lives are their own businesses	.505				.325
Q4.2 Hotel has no special ties with the local community	.481				.525
Q2.6 Newcomers are left to find their own way	.428				.538
Factor 5: Open		1.672	4.519	.723	
Q2.2 I can make important decisions	.703				.561
Q2.3 I never talk about hotel history	.701				.625
Q2.1 I use informal style communicating with others	.596				.414
Q2.5 I speak seriously of my job and the hotel	.549				.663
Q2.7 New employees need more than a year to feel comfortable with work	.489				.516

Note: KMO= .815; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: chi-square= 3265.375, df= 666, p < .000.

Brand knowledge was grouped into two factors. One was labelled as brand meaning and the other was named as responsibility (Table 4-14). No item was removed since all factor loadings surpassed the cut-off point. With a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and a good enough KMO value, all 8 items were significant to interpret the two factors. The Cronbach's alpha values 0.919 for 'Brand Meaning' and 0.897 for

'Responsibility' were very good implying a reliable structure for the brand knowledge construct. The communality values all exceeded 0.5, indicating sufficient explanation of the items.

Table 4-14 EFA Results for Brand Knowledge.

Brand Knowledge Factors	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	α	Communalities
Factor 1: Brand Meaning		5.334	66.675	.919	
Q5.2　I know the target customers	.896				.866
Q5.1 I know the content and meaning of this hotel brand	.889				.845
Q5.3 I know the meaning of this hotel brand to customers	.861				.846
Q5.5 I know the importance of my work	.637				.683
Q5.4 I know the service level	.609				.690
Factor 2: Responsibility		1.060	13.245	.897	
Q5.8 I know customers' expectations	.878				.804
Q5.7 I know my role in delivering brand message	.875				.860
Q5.6 I know my behaviour can impact this hotel	.808				.800

Note: KMO= .893; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: chi-square= 1100.744, df= 28, $p < .000$.

All 12 items for brand experience construct were categorised into three factors: 1) company management style; 2) HR management practices; and 3) cross functional coordination (Table 4-15). These factors were reliable according to the Cronbach's alpha values 0.849, 0.814 and 0.849, respectively and had reasonable number of items to interpret (factor loading over 0.4).

Table 4-15 EFA Results for Brand Experience.

Brand Experience Factors	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	α	Communalities
Factor 1: Company Management Style		5.988	49.904	.849	
Q6.7 the hotel delivers promise	.864				.814
Q6.6 the hotel keeps employees well informed	.826				.736
Q6.8 the hotel is interested in employee job satisfaction	.734				.738
Q6.5 I experience leadership	.557				.590
Factor 2: HR Management Practices		1.382	11.516	.814	
Q6.2 I receive training	.889				.808
Q6.1 I experience manager's efforts	.752				.653
Q6.3 management provides rewards	.690				.666
Q6.4 management provides authority	.651				.581
Factor 3: Cross Functional Coordination		1.098	9.154	.849	
Q6.12 the hotel provides opportunity to work with international colleagues	.878				.820
Q6.11 the hotel offers the opportunity to work abroad.	.859				.776
Q6.10 the hotel offers internal opportunity to work in different roles.	.714				.646
Q6.9 the hotel solves problems that employees may encounter at work.	.540				.641

Note: KMO= .868; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: chi-square= 1080.419, df= 66, p < .000.

Table 4-16 showed EFA for brand image. Similarly, all 12 items were retained to explain the factors of functional and experiential benefits. According to the reviewed literature, benefits under brand association which reflect brand image are considered in

this study. Functional benefits refer to intrinsic advantages of service consumption and are often linked to fairly basic motivations such as physiological and safety needs, and involve a desire for problem removal, whilst experiential benefits relate to the feelings after using the service and they satisfy experiential needs such as sensory pleasure, variety, and cognitive stimulation (Keller, 1993). Since most items under Factor 1 can be reflected to basic motivations, hence it is labelled as functional benefits. Experiential benefits can be applied to Factor 2 because of a satisfaction in experiential needs. All items met acceptable levels of explanation with communality values greater than 0.5. High reliability of the factors, significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, KMO measure of sampling adequacy of over 0.9, and over 0.5 factor loadings all led to a fit structure of the brand image construct.

Table 4-16 EFA Results for Brand Image.

Brand Image Factors	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	α	Communalities
Factor 1: Functional Benefits		7.092	59.098	.926	
Q7.9 the hotel provides full scope for creativity	.882				.853
Q7.11 the hotel offers long-term career progression	.817				.717
Q7.7 the hotel utilises employees' strength to the purpose of application	.811				.742
Q7.8 the hotel provides good service programme	.810				.727
Q7.12 the hotel offers variety in daily work	.795				.706
Q7.10 the hotel offers a relatively stress-free working environment	.789				.668
Q7.6 the hotel proactively solve problems that	.759				.693

employees have with work				
Factor 2: Experiential Benefits		1.364	11.365	.858
Q7.1 management has a forward-looking approach	.805			.666
Q7.3 the hotel provides good service quality	.771			.738
Q7.4 the hotel brand has significance to the customers	.758			.610
Q7.2 the hotel has an informal culture	.725			.671
Q7.5 the hotel cares about each employee	.578			.664

Note: KMO= .916; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: chi-square= 1557.539, df= 66, $p < .000$.

Finally, the last construct only had 1 factor containing 7 items for representing employee job satisfaction (Table 4-17). Q8.8 'I am satisfied with my overall job' was not included for EFA since the purpose of including it in the questionnaire was to test regressions in future studies. It was not designed for measuring the construct of employee job satisfaction. The statistics demonstrated a good representation those items have on the factor with most of their communality values exceeded 0.5. Except for Q8.7, Q8.1, and Q8.5 that were low on communality. It indicated that these items had less variance in common with other items. Nonetheless, these three were kept in the questionnaire for the main survey eventually, because previous studies proved the common variance shared by all seven items when measuring employees' job satisfaction (i.e. Karatepe et al., 2006). Hence, it was considered to be worth to examine again with a larger sample size.

Table 4-17 EFA Results for Employees' job satisfaction.

Employees' job satisfaction Factors	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	α	Communalities
		4.160	59.435	.874	
Q8.4 Satisfied with the support provided by the hotel	.906				.821
Q8.3 Satisfied with hotel's policies	.877				.769
Q8.2 Satisfied with supervisor(s)	.823				.677
Q8.6 Satisfied with opportunities for advancement	.772				.596
Q8.7 Satisfied with customers	.703				.495
Q8.1 Satisfied with fellow workers	.682				.466
Q8.5 Satisfied with salary	.580				.337
Note: KMO= .857; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: chi-square= 704.96, df= 21, p < .000.					

As all the EFA figures suggest a moderate result, it could be concluded that all items used in the pilot study were appropriate and applicable to the China's hotel industry. In addition, the factors extracted were reasonable and reliable in terms of statistics and literature. These results supported the study to further carry out the main survey for a wider population.

4.6 Main Survey Data Collection

4.6.1 Survey Design

After concluding that the measurement items were applicable to the China's hotel industry context, the pilot questionnaire was finalised for the main survey. No item was deleted from the pilot questionnaire except marital status. Marital status was taken out from the main survey for two reasons. First, an uneven number for each marital category

was identified in the pilot test. With more than 70% respondents marked as 'single' and less than 30% marked as 'married', it would be biased to run further statistics for this variable. Second, a relatively high percentage of missing data (6.3%) occurred for this variable. It was thought that many respondents felt uneasy about answering this question. Although Q3.1 was detected to be non-relevant to measure organisational culture and removed from the measurement scale in the pilot study, it was carefully thought to be retained in case a large sample would result in a different outcome. A few items were reworded to improve participants' understanding of those items. In addition, a qualifying question was also included in the first section, for example, "are you a front-line employee?". Even though the liaison officers were orally briefed not to include non-frontline employees in the pilot study, they did not manage to exclude some of them. Therefore, this question enabled the researcher to identify and remove ineligible questionnaire which would help keep the quality of the collected data.

4.6.2 Survey Distribution

Main survey was conducted between July 18 and August 2, 2011 in Hainan. 12 international branded hotels were contacted, of which 10 hotels agreed to participate in this study. These 10 international branded hotels were located in three cities, Yalong Bay and Haitang Bay in Sanya city; Shenzhou Pennisula in Wanning city; and Boao in Qiong Hai city. Table 4-18 displayed the distribution of hotels for the main survey.

Table 4-18 Distribution of Hotels for Main Survey.

Hotel Participant	Hotel Location	No. of Questionnaires Completed	Data Collection Period
Hotel 1	Shenzhou Pennisula Resort	98	27/07/2011 – 02/08/2011
Hotel 2	Yalong Bay	148	25/07/2011 – 28/07/2011
Hotel 3	Boao	72	27/07/2011 – 05/08/2011
Hotel 4	Haitang Bay	11	25/07/2011 – 27/07/2011
Hotel 5	Haitang Bay	76	25/07/2011 – 26/07/2011
Hotel 6	Yalong Bay	37	23/07/2011 – 27/07/2011
Hotel 7	Yalong Bay	43	23/07/2011 – 27/07/2011
Hotel 8	Yalong Bay	39	23/07/2011 – 27/07/2011
Hotel 9	Yalong Bay	34	23/07/2011 – 27/07/2011
Hotel 10	Yalong Bay	74	23/07/2011 – 27/07/2011
Total		**632**	

Hotel General Managers and/or HR managers were firstly contacted via emails prior to the field work. Nevertheless, only two hotels showed interests in participating in the study at the initial stage. Site visits were then conducted when the field work was started. After meeting with the person in charge face-to-face, eight more hotels were willing to take part in this study. In the end, with each liaison person's help the main survey questionnaire was distributed and collected as requested. The involvement of a liaison person was needed in the main data collection period for the following two reasons. One reason was that the hotels did not approve the researcher approaching front line employees when they were occupied at work. As they had seen it as threat, that might affect the service delivery. The other reason was that frontline employees were from various departments. It would cause potential problems to the hotel if the researcher approached different departments. Meetings were held with each liaison person individually at their working hotel to cover all the terms and conditions that should be considered when distributing and collecting the data. The researcher checked all completed questionnaires at the site when they were received to briefly verify the quality

of the data. Relying on liaison person's coordination was the main method applied for collecting data.

The other approach the researcher used was to distribute the questionnaires at two hotel receptions, restaurants and bars in the evenings. Being on site collecting data enabled researcher to ensure the quality of the data collected. Nonetheless, low response rate was received as either staff refused to respond to an unrecognised party or they were too busy with their work.

Eventually, overall 632 completed questionnaires were collected with a response rate of 75%, of which 524 were obtained after filtering the ones that had obvious errors such as incompletion.

4.7 Main Survey Data Analysis

For the main survey data, a number of techniques were applied for analysis. Following the common procedure, a data screening test was carried out to remove the unsuitable data. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was applied to define dimensions for each construct. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to confirm the identified dimensions and assures whether dimensions correlate among themselves. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was performed to test the hypothetical relationships among constructs and to assess the overall model fit of the proposed theoretical model. Each of these data analysis techniques had criteria to refer to demonstrate if the analysis

outcomes are good or not. The following sub-sections explained the techniques that were used for the main survey data analysis as well as the criteria that were employed.

4.7.1 Data Screening

Missing Data. Very often that the data collected would have some missing values on one or more variables. According to Kline (2005), there were three types of missing data patterns; missing at random (MAR), missing completely at random (MCAR), and systematic pattern. For MAR most of the time, the data were missing randomly within subgroups but missing patterns would differ in levels between subgroups; by remedying the missing values would affect the whole data set (Hair et al., 2010). MCAR was a higher level of randomness that the cases with missing data were hard to be identified from cases with complete data (ibid.). In this missing pattern, any remedies could be applied without making much impact on any other variables. Systematic pattern would cause bias and would not be generalised to the whole population since non-random missing occurred (Kline, 2005).

There were various categories of methods to tackle missing data. Available case methods such as listwise deletion and pairwise deletion could be used to analyse the data only available through deletion of cases with missing observations. The pre-assumption was that the missing pattern was MCAR. Single imputation methods also assumed that the missing pattern was MCAR and its most basic methods were mean substitution, hot-deck case substitution, and regression-based imputation. These two ways could replace

the missing data with either the overall sample average or a predicted score generated by multiple regression. Model-based imputation methods involved more advanced techniques that could replace missing data with estimated values "from a predictive distribution that explicitly models the underlying data loss mechanism" (Kline, 2005, p.55).

Hair et al.'s (2010) rules of thumb stated that any imputation could be applied if the percentage of missing data was under 10%. For missing data between 10%-20%, hot-deck case substitution and regression-based imputation might be preferred for MCAR data; whereas model-based methods were necessary with MAR data. If the percentage of missing data was over 20%, regression method would be preferred for MCAR and model-based methods would be preferred for MAR.

Outliers. Outliers were observations that were identified as distinctly different from the other observations. Two kinds of outliers could occur; one was a univariate outlier that could exist as an extreme score on a single variable, and the other being a multivariate outlier that a case had extreme scores on two or more variables (Kline, 2005). An approach that could detect the types of outliers was the squared Mahalanobis distance (D^2) statistics. A value of D^2 with a relatively low p value in the chi-square distribution might lead to rejection of the null hypothesis. The level of statistical significance for this test was recommended as p< .001 by Kline (2005).

Normality. Since SEM applies maximum likelihood estimation which assumed that data must be normally distributed, multivariate normality was checked to indicate if all the univariate distributions are normal (Kline, 2005). Since it was not easy to assess all aspects of multivariate normality through examining all joint frequency distributions, univariate distributions were detected. Field (2009) referred that the absolute values of skewness and the kurtosis should be 0 and 3 respectively in a normal distribution. The greater the absolute value was than zero, the more likely it is that the data were not normally distributed. However, they have their limitations because with large sample size it was very easy to get significant results from small deviations from normality, and so a significant test did not necessarily indicate whether the deviation from normality was enough to bias any statistical procedures that were applied to the data. This study adopted Kline's (2005) threshold of univariate normality that skewness less than 3 and kurtosis less than 8 should be acceptable.

4.7.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

EFA was tested to explain the underlying factors that each item was representing. Factors abstracted could be used for searching structure among a set of variables and were assumed to best represent constructs within the data (Hair et al., 2010). EFA was conducted without knowing which variables belong to which factors within each construct in this study. The factors were determined by several established guidelines which are explained below.

Overall Measures of Inter-correlation. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity tested the presence of correlations among the variables. A statistically significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < .05$) indicated that sufficient correlations exist among the variables. The Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy measured the degree of inter-correlations among the variables and the appropriateness for factor analysis (Field, 2009). The KMO index was explained as values of .80 or above was meritorious; values of .70 or above was middling; values of .60 or above was mediocre; values of .50 or above was miserable; and values below .50 was unacceptable (Hair et al., 2010).

Variance of Variable. Common variance was accounted for based on a variable's correlations with all other variables in the analysis. A variable's communality was the estimate of its shared, or common, variance among the variables as represented by the derived factors. Generally speaking, communality for each variable should exceed .50 to meet acceptable level of explanation (Hair et al., 2010).

Eigenvalues and Scree Plot Diagram. Eigenvalue was the most commonly used indicator that indicating how much a single variable was account for in interpreting any individual factor if it was to be retained. With factor analysis each variable contributed a value of 1 to the total eigenvalue which led to those factors that had eigenvalues greater than 1 significant. Factors with eigenvalues less than 1 should be disregarded as they were considered insignificant. Eigenvalue could be a reliable tool for the cut-off point on how many factors should be extracted (Field, 2009). When there were over 50 variables,

more factors might be expected to be extracted. In that case, scree plot diagram could help to determine the number of factors. Its shape of the resulting curve was used to evaluate the cut-off point. The point at where the curve starts to straighten out was considered to indicate the number of factors (ibid.).

Factor Loading. A factor loading was the correlation of the variable and the factor. The loading must exceed .70 for the factor to account for 50 percent of the variance of a variable (Hair et al., 2010). A general index showed that loadings in the range of ± .30 to ± .40 were considered to meet the minimal level for interpretation of structure; while loadings ± .50 or greater were practically significant. Hair et al. (2010) provided guidelines for identifying significant factor loadings based on sample size. According to their guidelines, factor loadings exceeding 0.55 were reliable in a sample of 100 respondents, whilst loadings of 0.3 could be considered reliable with a sample size of 350 or greater.

Reliability. Cronbach's alpha was the most broadly used measure assessing the consistency of the scale. The generally agreed upon lower limit was .70, with a value greater than .90 meaning excellent, over .80 was good (Field, 2009).

4.7.3 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was applied to test the hypothesised relationships between the discussed constructs in order to achieve the purpose of this research. Hair et

al. (2010) depicted structural equation models by its ability to represent unobserved concepts in multiple and interrelated dependence relationships. Moreover, it sought the best solutions for the hypothesised relationships in the model to be assessed by the empirical data set (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2000). SEM was therefore deemed to be appropriate for this study in terms of studying the proposed theory-based model and exploring the causal relationships between the five latent constructs.

To assess the validity of the scales, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the attitudes and performance scales was performed. Based on the factors being tested by EFA, CFA tests if the theoretical specification of the factors would match the actual data. Amos 18.0 software program was run for data analysis since it allowed multiple-group analysis with different models for different groups (Reisinger & Turner, 1999). Hair et al. (2010, pp.654-655) outline six stages of SEM presented below:

1. Defining individual constructs;

2. Developing the overall measurement model;

3. Designing a study to produce empirical results;

4. Assessing the measurement model validity;

5. Specifying the structural model;

6. Assessing structural model validity.

This study followed this outline and referred to its standards of validity to investigate if the measurement model was valid by testing levels of goodness-of-fit and finding evidence of construct validity.

The goodness-of-fit indices contained three general groups of measures which were absolute measures, incremental measures, and parsimony fit measures. Besides the basic elements of goodness-of-fit measures, this study also adopted multiple fit indices including two absolute and one incremental measures. According to Hair et al. (2010), for the Basics of Goodness-of-Fit (GOF), Chi-square (χ^2) examined differences between the observed and estimated covariance matrices. A relatively small χ^2 value (i.e. $p > 0.05$) would indicate no statistical significance between the matrices, which meant that it supported the proposed theoretical model. Both Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were absolute fit indices; among which GFI produced a fit statistics that was less sensitive to sample size. A GFI value of greater than .90 was considered good in general. RMSEA attempted to correct for the tendency of the χ^2 GOF test to reject models with a large sample or a large number of observed variables. Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was an incremental fit index assessing how well the estimated model fits some alternative baseline model. Table 4.19 illustrated the cut-off point for each GOF index.

Table 4-19 Goodness-of Fit Indices for Measurement Model.

No. of observed variables (m)	N > 250		
	m < 12	12< m < 30	m ≥ 30
χ^2	Insignificant *p*-values even with good fit	Significant *p*-values expected	Significant *p*-values expected
CFI	.95 or better	Above .95	Above .90
RMSEA	Values < .07 with CFI of .97 or higher	Values < .07 with CFI of .92 or higher	Values < .07 with CFI of .90 or higher

Source: Hair et al., 2010, pp. 672.

4.8 Ethical Issue

This study applied the Hong Kong Polytechnic University Human Subjects Ethics approval for ethical appropriateness. This meant no exploiting of the sample or breaking of any ethical rules agreed with the hotels. The questionnaire was designed without sensitive issues which might be of concern to hotel's stakeholders. All information was collected anonymously so that no data source could be traced. There was an introduction of the nature of this study on the top of the questionnaire, stating that this research was carried out by a third party and their information would be kept confidential. Furthermore, all data was carefully obtained and there should be no misrepresentation in reporting during the study.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter explained the research methods which were chosen for this study. It reviewed the research objectives and justified appropriateness for the selected measurement items for each construct. The screening test and pilot study were conducted to reassure validity of the measurements. The main survey was eventually carried out with 524 complete data collected for analysis. Preliminary data screening and exploratory factor analysis were implemented testing the reliability of the data and the structure among constructs. After describing how the data was distributed and collected, data analysis approaches that were used to test main survey data were discussed. The ethical issue was addressed to prove that this study was ethically appropriate. Findings of the main survey are presented in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Based on data analysis methods described in the previous chapter, this chapter analyses the findings of this study and discusses the core research objectives. The first three sections describe the data screening process, sample characteristics, and descriptive statistics. The next two sections present results of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis for each construct and the overall models. The next two sections report the outcome of the structural models. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the results of all hypotheses and research questions.

5.2 Data Screening

Missing Data. For the main survey data, the missing value analysis function in SPSS 18.0 was used to identify any missing data. There were 16 cases that had more than 10% missing values, and these cases were deleted from the main dataset. Most variables had less than 2% missing values, except for Q6.11, which had 5.2%. Since no specific pattern to the missing data was identified and because the percentage of the remaining missing values was low, listwise deletion was used for exploratory factor analysis. The mean-substitution method was used for confirmatory factor analysis because it could provide all cases with complete information (Hair et al., 2010). The number of 524 cases is large enough for using listwise deletion method while not compromising the results of EFA, however, the very same method would reduce the amount of valid information when used in CFA with two separated datasets. Hence, mean-substitution method was

used to replace missing values with the mean value of a specific item. After the deletion, the total number of valid questionnaires was thus reduced from 524 to 508.

Outliers. Outliers were detected using Mahalanobis D^2 values in AMOS. Overall, 12 cases were tagged as outliers according to low p value that were less than 0.001. Therefore, they were removed from the dataset to increase the representativeness of the sample. That left 496 usable questionnaires for the final data analysis.

Normality. Table 5-1 displays the univariate and multivariate normality test results. The absolute values of skewness of all 75 variables ranged from 0.462 to 1.278, and the absolute values of kurtosis ranged from 0.027 to 2.36. All variables meet Kline's (2005) cut-off points for skewness (< 3.0) and kurtosis (< 8.0). However, a normal distribution may not necessarily guarantee a multivariate normal distribution if the sample size is large enough to inflate chi-square values (Kline, 2005). Additionally, West, Finch, and Curran (1995) claimed that most data cannot meet the assumption of multivariate normality in practice. For these reasons, it can be argued that the survey data did not seriously violate the assumption of multivariate normality.

Table 5-1 Univariate and Multivariate Normality Test Results (*N*=496).

Variable (*N*=75)	skew	*c.r.	kurtosis	*c.r.
Organisational Culture				
Q1.1 Efficient	-1.041	-9.462	1.801	8.186
Q1.2 Initiative	-0.514	-4.67	-0.371	-1.685
Q1.3 Warm	-0.501	-4.556	-0.402	-1.828
Q1.4 Direct	-0.85	-7.725	0.961	4.368
Q1.5 Optimistic	-0.639	-5.814	0.027	0.121
Q1.6 Well-groomed	-0.83	-7.548	0.452	2.054
Q1.7 Open to new comers	-0.886	-8.052	0.323	1.467
Q1.8 Feel comfortable in unfamiliar situations	-0.805	-7.322	0.623	2.83
Q1.9 Feel challenge everyday	-0.881	-8.012	0.92	4.18
Q1.10 Put maximal effort	-1.104	-10.034	1.627	7.395
Q2.1 Use informal communication style	-0.836	-7.601	-0.1	-0.453
Q2.2 Make important decisions	-0.672	-6.113	0.115	0.522
Q2.3 Aware of competition	-0.84	-7.64	0.711	3.233
Q2.4 Keep meeting time punctually	-1.069	-9.721	1.219	5.544
Q2.5 Talk about hotel history	-0.462	-4.197	-0.194	-0.883
Q2.6 Speak seriously of job and hotel	-0.661	-6.008	0.326	1.483
Q2.7 Cost-conscious	-1.056	-9.599	1.562	7.1
Q2.8 Private life is my own business	-0.787	-7.152	0.05	0.226
Q2.9 New employees are left to find own ways of working	-0.726	-6.604	0.32	1.456
Q2.10 New employees need more time to feel comfortable with work	-0.551	-5.008	-0.723	-3.287
Q3.1 Informed when a good job is done	-1.188	-10.803	1.553	7.059
Q3.2 Help good staff to advance	-1.093	-9.933	1.484	6.745
Q3.3 Mistakes are tolerated	-0.801	-7.287	0.394	1.789
Q3.4 Keep good staff	-0.67	-6.089	0.324	1.472
Q3.5 Departments cooperation and trust	-0.777	-7.064	0.941	4.279
Q3.6 Management imposes change by decree	-0.766	-6.962	0.809	3.678
Q3.7 Decisions are centralised at top	-0.613	-5.571	0.059	0.267
Q3.8 Results rather than procedures	-0.738	-6.708	0.069	0.313
Q4.1 Interest in employees' work	-0.485	-4.411	-0.713	-3.242
Q4.2 Tie with the community	-0.778	-7.072	0.628	2.855
Q4.3 Concerned with employees' personal problem	-0.712	-6.473	0.195	0.888
Q4.4 Job competence as hiring criterion	-0.843	-7.663	0.317	1.441
Q4.5 Emphasis on customer needs	-0.84	-7.636	0.483	2.197
Q4.6 Physical working environment	-0.532	-4.836	-0.185	-0.842
Q4.7 Pragmatic employee ethics	-0.748	-6.801	0.541	2.46
Q4.8 Special people can fit in the hotel	-0.473	-4.304	-0.634	-2.882

Brand Knowledge

Q5.1 Content and meaning of the hotel	-1.077	-9.791	2.227	10.123
Q5.2 Target customers	-0.962	-8.749	1.532	6.963
Q5.3 Meaning of hotel brand to customer	-0.817	-7.431	0.918	4.175
Q5.4 Service level	-0.955	-8.68	1.513	6.876
Q5.5 Importance of my work	-0.597	-5.432	-0.118	-0.536
Q5.6 Impact of my behaviour	-0.858	-7.8	0.783	3.559
Q5.7 Role in delivering brand message	-0.733	-6.666	0.445	2.024
Q5.8 Customers' expectations	-0.991	-9.012	1.237	5.622

Brand Experience

Q6.1 Manager's efforts	-0.815	-7.415	0.225	1.025
Q6.2 Leadership	-0.586	-5.326	-0.271	-1.234
Q6.3 Training	-0.865	-7.864	0.661	3.004
Q6.4 Rewards	-0.773	-7.029	0.563	2.557
Q6.5 Authority	-0.663	-6.028	0.131	0.597
Q6.6 Keep employees informed	-0.742	-6.742	0.76	3.454
Q6.7 Deliver promises	-0.79	-7.183	0.687	3.125
Q6.8 Interested in employee job satisfaction	-0.752	-6.841	0.704	3.199
Q6.9 Solve employees' problems at work	-0.839	-7.631	0.71	3.226
Q6.10 Offer internal opportunity	-0.667	-6.062	0.153	0.697
Q6.11 Offer work abroad	-0.701	-6.376	-0.044	-0.2
Q6.12 International colleague	-0.854	-7.761	0.438	1.991

Brand Image

Q7.1 Forward-looking approach	-1.032	-9.382	1.137	5.171
Q7.2 Informal culture	-0.958	-8.706	0.975	4.431
Q7.3 Service quality	-0.789	-7.171	0.464	2.112
Q7.4 Brand significance to customers	-0.914	-8.306	0.823	3.742
Q7.5 Care about employees	-0.634	-5.762	0.039	0.178
Q7.6 Solve employees' problems	-0.714	-6.488	0.362	1.647
Q7.7 Utilise employees' strengths	-0.749	-6.809	0.418	1.9
Q7.8 Provide service programme	-0.689	-6.268	0.229	1.039
Q7.9 Allow creativity	-0.548	-4.98	-0.171	-0.776
Q7.10 Offer stress-free working environment	-0.513	-4.665	-0.183	-0.831
Q7.11 Offer long-term career progression	-0.695	-6.322	0.333	1.514
Q7.12 Offer variety in daily work	-0.674	-6.129	0.179	0.813

Employee Job Satisfaction

Q8.1 Fellow worker	-1.196	-10.876	1.859	8.452
Q8.2 Supervisor	-1.278	-11.615	2.36	10.73
Q8.3 Hotel customers	-0.887	-8.066	0.706	3.21
Q8.4 Hotel policy	-0.773	-7.032	0.432	1.962
Q8.5 Salary	-0.569	-5.171	-0.041	-0.187

Q8.6 Opportunity for advancement	-0.596	-5.422	0.235	1.07
Q8.7 Hotel support	-0.627	-5.7	0.171	0.778
Multivariate			1956.781	202.751

*c.r. (critical ratio) – referred to standard normal distribution; c.r. values > 1.96 indicate two-sided significance at 5% level.

5.3 Sample Characteristics

Table 5-2 displays the profile of the front-line employees who participated in this survey. Categories include gender, age, level of education, region, department, years of work experience in the hotel industry, and years of work experience in the current hotel.

Among all respondents from the 10 international branded hotels, the proportion of male and female employees was relatively equal, with 46.5% male and 53.5% female. It is rather common to see more female than male employees working in the front line positions in the hotel industry. This phenomenon has been improved since the gap is narrowed in comparison with previous numbers. Statistics of 2008 salary survey report for the hotel industry shows that 67.44% of the overall frontline service employees are female nationwide while 32.56% are male frontline service employees (Meadin.com, 2008).

Table 5-2 Profile of Respondents (*N*=496).

Items	Categories	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	46.5
	Female	53.5
Age	18-24	44.4
	25-34	42.3
	35-44	9.3
	45-54	2.8
	55-64	1.2
Education	Primary school or under	1.2
	Middle school	20.6
	High school/Vocational school	34.9
	College/University	41.5
	Masters or Ph.D.	1.8
Region	East China	8.7
	South China	43.6
	Central China	10.9
	North China	7.7
	Northwest China	3.4
	Southwest China	11.7
	Northeast China	12.1
	Taiwan/Hong Kong/Macao	0.8
	Overseas	1.0
Department	Front office	26.1
	Room service	30.6
	Food & beverage	21.5
	Security	4.7
	Recreation & spa	10.3
	Entertainment	6.9
Years of Hotel Industry Experience	Less than 1 year	20.0
	1-2 years	38.9
	3-5 years	27.6
	6-10 years	9.3
	more than 10 years	4.2
Years with Current Hotel	Less than 1 month	7.3
	1-3 months	12.1
	4-6 months	16.5
	7-12 months	24.8
	1-2 years	28.0
	3-5 years	9.1
	6-10 years	1.8
	More than 10 years	0.4

Employees between 18 and 34 years old made up 86.7% of all respondents. This means that most front-line employees are young which illustrates an universal phenomenon in the hotel industry in China. The media has revealed that some hotels even require prospective front-line staff to be between 18 and 30 years old (Hetu, 2012). The same article pointed out that there is an issue for keeping young employees in this industry because the employees born in the 1980s- and 1990s frequently hop from jobs in one hotel to another. With so much employee turnover, participants' work experience in the hotel industry and in their current hotel may be important variables to look at.

Around 20% of employees had worked in the hotel industry for less than a year. The largest group of employees had worked in the hotel industry for 1-2 years (38.9%), followed by the group with 3-5 years (27.6%). Very few employees (13.5%) had worked in the hotel industry for more than 6 years, which indicates a lack of skilled and experienced employees in this industry. This conclusion matches De Han Consulting's (2011) conclusion that the hotel industry has many inexperienced personnel and few experienced experts.

About 28% of employees had worked 1 to 2 years in their current hotels, 24.8% had worked between 7-12 months, and 16.5% for 4-6 months. Around 19.4% of employees had worked less than 3 months in their current hotel. This figures again suggest the inexperience staff and potential frequent job-hop situation. Employees who had worked in their current hotel for more than 2 years made up 11.3%.

Over 40% of participants went to college or university for higher education, although still more than 20% had only middle school qualification or less. These figures differ from a research report from various hotels in Hainan that found only 9.04% had university degrees and 13.78% vocational degrees (『国际旅游岛』从人才资源角度看海南酒店业, 2010). In contrast, the sample in this current study is quite well educated. This could be because that this study focuses on international branded hotels, which may require staff to have certain educational qualifications.

Not surprisingly, most respondents (43.6%) were originally from southern China, including local residents. A total of 22.8% of respondents were from less economically developed regions in China's Western Development Zone. Their moves can be seen as in search of better pay or development opportunities (China Labour Bulletin, 2008; Zhou, 2012). Still, around 8.7% of participants came from eastern China, which is the most developed of China's three major economic and administrative regions. In addition to mainland Chinese employees, almost 2% were from overseas, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau.

The questionnaire asked which department respondents worked in to see if there were any differences between employees from different departments. The department options were front office, room service, food & beverage, security, recreation and spa, and entertainment, since these departments have the highest number of customer-contact

employees. There were more participants from room service department (30.6%) than front office (26.1%) and food & beverage (21.5%).

5.4 Descriptive Statistics

Respondents were asked to rate their perception of their hotel's organisational culture, brand knowledge, brand image, experience of the brand from daily work, and their satisfaction with their job. Tables 5-3 to 5-5 illustrate the mean (μ) and standard deviation of all variables after data cleaning.

Table 5-3 Descriptive Statistics for Organisational Culture.

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q1.1 Efficient	5.78	1.104
Q1.2 Initiative	5.79	1.011
Q1.3 Warm	5.88	0.946
Q1.4 Direct	5.66	1.145
Q1.5 Optimistic	5.75	1.083
Q1.6 Well-groomed	5.88	1.069
Q1.7 Open to newcomers	5.96	1.015
Q1.8 Feel comfortable in unfamiliar situations	5.71	1.115
Q1.9 Feel challenged everyday	5.70	1.139
Q1.10 Put forth maximal effort	5.80	1.168
Q2.1 Use informal communication style	5.00	1.69
Q2.2 Make important decisions	5.00	1.451
Q2.3 Aware of competition	5.68	1.145
Q2.4 Keep meeting times punctually	5.84	1.127
Q2.5 Talk about hotel history	5.26	1.305
Q2.6 Speak seriously of job and hotel	5.64	1.118
Q2.7 Cost-conscious	5.76	1.129
Q2.8 Private life is my own business	5.71	1.236
Q2.9 New employees are left to find own ways of working	5.68	1.147
Q2.10 New employees need more time to feel comfortable with work	4.80	1.768
Q3.1 Informed when a good job is done	5.60	1.32
Q3.2 Help good staff to advance	5.68	1.194
Q3.3 Mistakes are tolerated	5.06	1.513
Q3.4 Keep good staff	5.27	1.365
Q3.5 Departments have cooperation and trust	5.61	1.158

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Q3.6 Management imposes change by decree	5.48	1.211
Q3.7 Decisions are centralised at the top	5.39	1.265
Q3.8 Results rather than procedures	5.21	1.485
Q4.1 Interest in employees' work	4.76	1.773
Q4.2 Ties with the community	5.44	1.2
Q4.3 Concerned with employees' personal problems	5.16	1.403
Q4.4 Job competence as hiring criterion	5.06	1.529
Q4.5 Emphasis on customer needs	5.84	1.093
Q4.6 Physical working environment	5.54	1.172
Q4.7 Pragmatic employee ethics	5.46	1.253
Q4.8 Special people can fit in the hotel	4.57	1.723

Among all organisational culture variables, 'I am open to newcomers' (Q1.7, $\mu = 5.96$) was rated the highest on average, followed by 'I am a typically warm employee' (Q1.3, $\mu = 5.88$) and 'I am a typically well-groomed employee' (Q1.6, $\mu = 5.88$). These statements more or less represent the hotel industry's emphasis that employees being well-groomed and warm to customers. In contrast, the items agreed on the least were 'only very special people can fit in the hotel' (Q4.8, $\mu = 4.57$); 'the hotel is only interested in the work that employees do' (Q4.1, $\mu = 4.76$); 'new employees need more than a year to feel comfortable with work' (Q2.10, $\mu = 4.8$). Although these items received the lowest values of organisational culture items, participants still tended to agree with these statements. All three statements imply that hotels have relatively less concern with whether employees settle into the hotel and fit into the work environment.

Brand items received relatively high ratings compared with organisational culture items. For brand knowledge in general (Table 5-4), participants reported knowing the service level of their working hotel (Q5.4, $\mu = 5.73$); the content and meaning of the hotel (Q5.1,

$\mu=5.72$); and the importance of their work to the success of the hotel (Q5.5, $\mu=5.72$) better than they knew their customers' expectations (Q5.8, $\mu=5.48$). Even though 'I know customers' expectations when they stay at this hotel' was rated the lowest among brand knowledge items, its high mean value still represents high confidence in their understanding of customer expectations.

For brand experience section in Table 5-4, participants mostly agreed with 'I experience managers' efforts to establish routines for giving good service' (Q6.1, $\mu=5.9$); but agreed least with 'the hotel offers the opportunity to work abroad' (Q6.11, $\mu=5.04$). Though it is rare to send front-line employees abroad to work, if the hotel provides the opportunity to more senior employees, front-line employees would benefit when their careers advance. It seems that these 10 international branded hotels have work-abroad programmes.

Table 5-4 Descriptive Statistics for Brand Knowledge, Brand Experience, and Brand Image Items.

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Brand Knowledge		
Q5.1 Content and meaning of the hotel	5.72	1.071
Q5.2 Target customers	5.63	1.11
Q5.3 Meaning of hotel brand to customer	5.70	1.059
Q5.4 Service level	5.73	1.077
Q5.5 Importance of my work	5.72	1.086
Q5.6 Impact of my behaviour	5.64	1.156
Q5.7 Role in delivering brand message	5.56	1.169
Q5.8 Customers' expectations	5.48	1.243
Brand Experience		
Q6.1 Manager's efforts	5.90	1.027

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Q6.2 Leadership	5.71	1.079
Q6.3 Training	5.63	1.203
Q6.4 Rewards	5.54	1.195
Q6.5 Authority	5.37	1.298
Q6.6 Keep employees informed	5.41	1.231
Q6.7 Deliver promise	5.37	1.291
Q6.8 Interested in employee job satisfaction	5.37	1.237
Q6.9 Solve employees' problems at work	5.42	1.249
Q6.10 Offer internal opportunities	5.47	1.23
Q6.11 Offer work abroad	5.04	1.569
Q6.12 International colleagues	5.26	1.463
Brand Image		
Q7.1 Forward-looking approach	5.78	1.199
Q7.2 Informal culture	5.71	1.173
Q7.3 Service quality	5.81	1.075
Q7.4 Brand significance to customers	5.71	1.188
Q7.5 Care about employees	5.51	1.237
Q7.6 Solve employees' problem	5.46	1.248
Q7.7 Utilise employees' strength	5.44	1.267
Q7.8 Provide service programme	5.59	1.185
Q7.9 Allow creativity	5.45	1.236
Q7.10 Offer stress-free working environment	5.14	1.403
Q7.11 Offer long-term career progression	5.47	1.253
Q7.12 Offer variety in daily work	5.29	1.346

In the brand image section, participants rated that customers had been given good service (Q7.3, μ = 5.81) on average. This echoes their experience of service effort in daily work, as well as their understanding of service. The statistics generally indicate that all of the hotels have a strong focus on service quality, regardless of whether employees get that perception from the provided brand knowledge, their experience at work, or both. 'The hotel offers employees a relatively stress-free working environment' (Q7.10, μ = 5.14) had the lowest mean value of all the items on brand image. The hotel industry is known for its long working hours and job burnout. Employee stress is a significant issue in the industry (O'Neil & Davis, 2011). Therefore, it is surprising to get an agreement－even slightly－from 496 participants that their companies provide a

stress-free working environment. This outcome may suggest that hotels in resort areas may face a different scenario from hotels in cities and suburban areas.

Participants in this study were highly satisfied with their colleagues (Q8.1, $\mu = 5.89$) and supervisors (Q8.2, $\mu = 5.87$) (Table 5-5). This implies that the hotels have fairly good vertical and horizontal relationships. Satisfaction with salary was rated lowest, with a 4.86 mean value. This seems to be universal in China's hotel industry. Salary is the top reason why employees hop to other jobs (『国际旅游岛』从人才资源角度看海南酒店业, 2010).

Table 5-5 Descriptive Statistics for Employee Job Satisfaction Items.

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q8.1 Fellow workers	5.89	1.136
Q8.2 Supervisor	5.87	1.113
Q8.3 Hotel customers	5.65	1.215
Q8.4 Hotel policy	5.42	1.304
Q8.5 Salary	4.86	1.534
Q8.6 Opportunity for advancement	5.31	1.331
Q8.7 Hotel support	5.45	1.262

5.5 Individual Measurement Models

The final main survey dataset was randomly separated into two subsets after data screening. This was done for the purpose of assessing the generalisability of the results of the model to the general population. Hair et al. (2010) suggested what is now the most

commonly used approach to divide the sample into two parts (if the sample is large enough), with one being a calibration subsample to identify the model and the other being a validation subsample to test the model. Researchers can use random or systematic procedures to delineate the two independent samples. This study used the random approach, resulting in two data sets with approximately equal sample sizes. The calibration sample set used for the EFA had 244 cases, and the validation sample set used for the CFA had 252 cases.

The individual measurement model was examined first by EFA and CFA. EFA was used to reduce the measurement items and identify the underlying dimensions of each construct (Field, 2009; Vieira, 2011). CFA was then used to assess the dimensionality, convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity. This study used second-order factor analysis because the proposed model contains a few latent constructs that have multiple first-order latent dimensions. Latent constructs－such as internal branding, organisational culture, and brand experience－can be represented explicitly by second-order factors, where first-order factors become indicators of the second-order factors (Hair et al., 2010). The decision to use a second-order measurement model for those constructs was purely grounded in theory. All rules of thumb discussed in the previous chapter work the same on second-order factors as they do on first-order factors.

One important issue must be addressed before reporting the results of the analysis. The goodness-of-fit indices that were used to check the validity of the measurement model in

the CFA did not always meet the optimal values recommended in previous studies. In that case, "model modification in specification is needed in order to identify a model that better represents the sample data" (Byrne, 2009, p. 107). This study considered two diagnostics to test for problems: standardised residuals and modification indices. Standardised residuals were used to identify paired items for which the specified measurement model does not accurately predict the observed covariance between the two items (Hair et al., 2010). Modification indices help find evidence of the misspecification associated with the pairing of error terms in connection with their items (Byrne, 2009). The CFA test in this study used these two diagnostics for model modification.

5.5.1 Measurement Model for Internal Branding

5.5.1.1 *Exploratory Factor Analysis of Internal Branding*

This study proposes a new measurement theory of internal branding based on the literature review that includes three dimensions: brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image. These three dimensions were included in the EFA to explore their relationship with internal branding. Table 5-6 illustrates the results of the internal branding EFA. Three factors were generated that explained 67% of the total variance. In particular, brand image factor explained 47.74% of the variance followed by brand knowledge (11.74%) and brand experience (7.46%). The extracted factors resembled the hypothesis that this study proposed based on the literature development. The KMO of 0.92 was much greater than the 0.6 cutoff suggested by Hair et al. (2010). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant with $p < .000$ and χ^2 (df = 120) = 2182.57 (N = 232). These

two figures imply that correlation among the variables was not extreme and that reliable factors could be extracted. Communality values all exceeded 0.5 indicating sufficient explanation of the factors.

Variables with loadings lower than 0.5 were eliminated for the reasons that either they had low correlations with the identified factors; or they cross-loaded onto different factors. In total, 16 variables were retained, and each had loadings over 0.6 on their respective factors. The reliability coefficients for the factors ranged from 0.83 to 0.92, exceeding the minimum standard of 0.7. All figures suggest an internal consistency of the dimensions and thus all remaining variables were kept for CFA validation.

Table 5-6 EFA Results of Internal Branding.

Internal Branding Factors (N = 232)	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	Reliability Coefficient	Commu-nalities
Factor 1: Internal Branding Brand Image (IBBI)		7.638	47.738	.915	
Q7.7 Utilise employees' strength	.824				.772
Q7.9 Allow creativity	.784				.731
Q7.5 Care about employee	.772				.696
Q7.6 Solve employees' problem	.771				.724
Q7.11 Offer long-term career progression	.730				.660
Q7.8 Provide service programme	.702				.661
Factor 2: Internal Branding Brand Knowledge (IBBK)		1.879	11.743	.871	
Q5.7 Role in delivering brand message	.800				.719
Q5.4 Service level	.787				.680
Q5.6 Impact of my behaviour	.776				.660
Q5.5 Importance of my work	.758				.634
Q5.3 Meaning of hotel brand to customer	.741				.649
Factor 3: Internal Branding Brand Experience (IBBE)		1.193	7.456	.826	
Q6.9 Solve employees' problem at work	.759				.715

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Q6.10 Offer internal opportunity	.743	.632
Q6.11 Offer work abroad	.686	.606
Q6.8 Interested in employee job satisfaction	.662	.619
Q6.6 Keep employees informed	.619	.553

Note: KMO= .92; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: χ^2 = 2182.57, df= 120, $p < .000$.

5.5.1.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Internal Branding*

First-order CFA

A validation sample of 252 cases was used to verify the 3-factor solution of internal branding. In order to test whether brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image are the key dimensions of internal branding and whether the 16 observed indicators (variables) represent the hypothesised latent constructs (each dimension in the EFA), each level of the higher-order construct was examined separately to that the measurement model was identified carefully (Byrne, 2009). Hence, a first-order CFA was conducted to test the relationships between the 16 observed indicators and 3 latent constructs (brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image).

Table 5-7 illustrates the initial model results, including estimated coefficient values, t-values (C.R.), standardised factor loadings, and squared multiple correlations (SMC). All indicators demonstrated a significant factor loading over 0.5; all t scores were greater than 1.96. Though four items' SMC values were lower than 0.5 suggesting little variance explained by the factors, the convergent validity of internal branding was relatively satisfactory.

Nevertheless, the goodness-of-fit indices (χ^2= 300.04, df = 101, p < .000, χ^2/df= 2.97, GFI = .86, CFI= .91, RMSEA= .089) showed a slightly problematic fit between the model and the sample data based on the goodness-of-fit criterion (explained in Section 4.7.3). Five items had SMC values lower than 0.5 indicating little variance was explained by their corresponding factors. This model was then modified by identifying large residuals (> 2.0) that could be causing an unacceptable degree of error. For the internal branding modified measurement model (Table 5.7), both items Q5.7 ('I know my role in delivering the brand message') and Q5.6 ('I know how my behaviour can impact this hotel') had large residuals when they were removed from the model individually. Both items were thus dropped. By checking modification indices, three more items (Q6.6 'the hotel keeps employees well informed', Q7.8 'the hotel provides good service programme to employees', and Q7.11 'the hotel offers clear opportunities for long-term career progression') were deleted because of high cross-loadings. Item Q6.10 ('the hotel offers employees a relatively stress-free working environment') was also dropped since its factor loading was lower than the adequate value of 0.6 cutoff. Thus, 6 items were eliminated after the first-order CFA, resulting an improvement of the measurement model fit to χ^2 = 55.704, df = 32, p = .006, χ^2/df = 1.74, GFI= .96, CFI= .98, RMSEA= .054. Still, three items' SMC values were less than the 0.5 cutoff point and were kept for the next test. In the end, 10 indicators were retained and subjected to the second-order CFA test.

Table 5-7 Initial and Respecified Measurement Model of Internal Branding (First-Order).

Initial Model (N = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Respecified Model (N = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC
Factor 1: IBBI					Factor 1: IBBI				
Q7.5<---IBBI	0.88	13.17	0.76	0.57	Q7.5<---IBBI	0.94	12.23	0.75	0.56
Q7.6<---IBBI	0.84	13.76	0.78	0.61	Q7.6<---IBBI	0.89	12.26	0.77	0.59
Q7.7<---IBBI	1.00		0.82	0.67	Q7.7<---IBBI	1.08	13.92	0.82	0.67
Q7.8<---IBBI	0.80	12.95	0.74	0.55	Q7.9<---IBBI	1.00		0.79	0.62
Q7.9<---IBBI	0.91	13.96	0.77	0.60					
Q7.11<---IBBI	0.84	11.97	0.70	0.48					
Factor 2: IBBK					Factor 2: IBBK				
Q5.3<---IBBK	1.05	13.16	0.80	0.63	Q5.3<---IBBK	1.12	15.12	0.91	0.82
Q5.4<---IBBK	1.00		0.76	0.58	Q5.4<---IBBK	1.00		0.82	0.67
Q5.5<---IBBK	0.96	11.07	0.73	0.53	Q5.5<---IBBK	0.82	11.00	0.67	0.45
Q5.6<---IBBK	0.98	10.02	0.70	0.49					
Q5.7<---IBBK	0.99	9.43	0.66	0.44					
Factor 3: IBBE					Factor 3: IBBE				
Q6.6<---IBBE	1.30	9.07	0.76	0.57	Q6.8<---IBBE	1.18	10.77	0.79	0.62
Q6.8<---IBBE	1.32	9.29	0.79	0.62	Q6.9<---IBBE	1.00		0.69	0.48
Q6.9<---IBBE	1.18	8.77	0.72	0.52	Q6.11<---IBBE	1.23	9.07	0.66	0.44
Q6.10<---IBBE	1.00		0.59	0.35					
Q6.11<---IBBE	1.32	7.98	0.63	0.39					

Second-order CFA

Compared to the first-order CFA, the second-order model exhibited better construct validity (Table 5-8). Each of the indicators had a significant factor loading: IBBI had a loading of 0.97, IBBK of 0.70, and IBBE of 0.92. In addition, all factor loadings were above 0.6, with t values of each indicator greater than 1.96, suggesting that the indicators are valid measurements of the constructs. The second-order model showed good model fit based on the goodness-of-fit indices. Moreover, composite reliability values were higher than 0.7, and AVE values were all above 0.5. These figures suggest that the construct has high validity, which further corroborates suggests that the

measurement of internal branding can involve the components of brand image, brand knowledge, and brand experience.

Table 5-8 CFA Results of Internal Branding (Second-Order).

	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Composite Reliability	AVE
IB						.75
IBBI<--- IB	.94	12.60	.97	.94	.86	.61
IBBK<---IB	.60	9.73	.70	.49	.84	.64
IBBE<---IB	.87	11.93	.92	.84	.76	.51
χ^2 = 55.704, df = 32, p = .006, χ^2/df = 1.741, GFI= .956, CFI= .981, RMSEA= .054						

5.5.2 Measurement Model for Brand Knowledge

5.5.2.1 *Exploratory Factor Analysis of Brand Knowledge*

The EFA for brand knowledge obtained one factor solution with seven variables that explained 60% of variance. Item Q5.8 ('I know customers' expectations when they stay at this hotel') was deleted because it was not significantly related to the brand knowledge factor. The rest of the variables had factor loadings ranging from 0.72 to 0.83 (Table 5-9). A high KMO value of 0.89 and significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p < .000) suggested a reasonable pattern of correlations between the variables. The Cronbach's alpha value (0.89) revealed that the brand knowledge items were internally consistent. All communality values were greater than 0.5 suggesting adequate variance explained by the factors. These seven variables were used for the validation CFA of brand knowledge.

Table 5-9 EFA Results of Brand Knowledge.

Brand Knowledge Factors (*N* = 240)	FL	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	Reliability Coefficient	Commu-nalities
		4.2	59.998	.888	
Q5.3 Meaning of hotel brand to customer	.827				.684
Q5.7 Role in delivering brand message	.790				.624
Q5.5 Importance of my work	.785				.616
Q5.4 Service level	.778				.605
Q5.6 Impact of my behaviour	.769				.592
Q5.1 Content and meaning of the hotel	.749				.562
Q5.2 Target customers	.719				.517

Note: KMO = .89; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: χ^2 = 807.94, df = 21, *p* < .000.

5.5.2.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Brand Knowledge*

The model fit indices of the initial model indicated a relatively poor fit χ^2 = 123.857, df = 14, *p* < .000, χ^2/df = 8.85, GFI = .87, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .18 (Table 5-10). Factor loadings of items Q5.6 and Q5.7 were lower than 0.6, even though they had significant t values (C.R. > 1.96), which suggested that they are viable indicators of brand knowledge. Four items explained less than half of the variance accounted for by the factors (SMC < 0.5). During model specification, a large residual of 4.46 was discovered between Q5.6 and Q5.7; the modification index suggested a misspecification between Q5.7 and Q5.6 (MI = 55.70). Consequently, Q5.7 ('I know my role in delivering the brand message') and Q5.6 ('I know how my behaviour can impact this hotel') were dropped from the model. The respecified model improved in model fit χ^2 = 15.54, df = 5, *p* < .000, χ^2/df = 0.01, GFI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA= .09. Although the RMSEA value still seemed poor, all the other absolute fit indices (χ^2 and GFI) demonstrated a good fit of the data. All

factor loadings exceeded 0.6 and had significant t values. Except that two items which are Q5.5 and Q5.1 explained less by the factor. The reliability of the measurements was quite high and the AVE score was above 0.5, implying adequate convergent validity. Overall, the brand knowledge measurement model demonstrates adequate fit with the sample data and in the relationships between the indicators and the construct.

Table 5-10 Initial and Respecified Measurement Model of Brand Knowledge.

Initial Model (*N* = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Respecified Model (*N* = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC
Q5.5<--- BK	0.76	11.95	0.68	0.46	Q5.5<--- BK	0.67	11.33	0.63	0.40
Q5.4<--- BK	0.89	15.90	0.80	0.64	Q5.4<--- BK	0.83	16.12	0.79	0.62
Q5.3<--- BK	1.00		0.89	0.79	Q5.3<--- BK	1.00		0.94	0.88
Q5.2<--- BK	0.86	13.37	0.72	0.52	Q5.2<--- BK	0.79	13.26	0.71	0.50
Q5.1<--- BK	0.74	11.31	0.64	0.41	Q5.1<--- BK	0.71	11.56	0.65	0.42
Q5.6<--- BK	0.70	9.55	0.59	0.35					
Q5.7<--- BK	0.72	9.21	0.57	0.33					
					Composite Reliability	0.86			
					AVE	0.57			

5.5.3 Measurement Model for Brand Experience

5.5.3.1 *Exploratory Factor Analysis of Brand Experience*

Three factors were extracted for the brand experience measurement model, which is consistent with the theory. As shown in Table 5-11, HR management practices factor explained 53.06% of variance with four variables. Factor loadings for different variables ranged from 0.73 and 0.84. The company management style factor also had four variables, explaining 10.96% of the total variance. The factor loadings of each variable exceeded 0.6, signifying a high correlation with the factor. Two items, Q6.5 ('management provides authority to employees to act independently in order to provide excellent service') and Q6.10 ('the hotel offers internal opportunity to work in different roles'), were removed for the reason that their factor loadings were lower than 0.5. The last factor, cross-functional coordination explained 8.49% of the variance.

The KMO of sample adequacy was 0.88 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant $p < .000$, χ^2 (df = 45) = 1237.50, suggesting satisfactory appropriateness for the factor analysis. The reliability coefficient values were 0.87 for human resource management practices, 0.87 for company management style, and 0.67 for cross-functional coordination. Although variable loadings on the last factor seemed to be less reliable (with reliability coefficients slightly below the cutoff), they were kept for the CFA test since cross-functional coordination factor appears often in the literature. All items met acceptable levels of explanation with communality values greater than 0.5.

Table 5-11 EFA Results of Brand Experience.

Brand Experience Factors (N = 235)	FL	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	Reliability Coefficient	Commu-nalities
Factor 1: HR Management Practices		5.306	53.064	.865	
Q6.2 Leadership	.844				.790
Q6.1 Manager's efforts	.776				.693
Q6.3 Training	.768				.709
Q6.4 Rewards	.728				.670
Factor 2: Company Management Style		1.096	10.955	.865	
Q6.7 Deliver promises	.827				.821
Q6.8 Interested in employee job satisfaction	.814				.766
Q6.6 Keep employees informed	.697				.624
Q6.9 Solve employees' problems at work	.695				.674
Factor 3: Cross-Functional Coordination		.849	8.489	.667	
Q6.12 International colleague	.849				.775
Q6.11 Offer work abroad	.762				.730
Note: KMO= .88; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: χ^2 = 1237.50, df = 45, p < .000.					

5.5.3.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Brand Experience*

First-order CFA

The initial model of the brand experience construct fit adequately based on the fit indices (Table 5-12; χ^2 = 99.19, df = 32, p < .000, χ^2/df = 3.1, GFI = .92, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .09). With significant factor loadings all over 0.6, this model seemed to achieve an sufficient fit. However, items Q6.4 and Q6.9 had inadequate SMC values that were lower than 0.5. The modification index suggested a correlated error of measurement between Q6.1 ('I experience managers' efforts to establish routines for giving good service') and Q6.2 ('I experience leadership provided from management') (E5 and E8, MI = 19.11). A model respecification was conducted by removing each of

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these two indicators to see if it would increase model fit significantly. After comparing it to both specified models, it was concluded that the model without Q6.1 retained a better and more significant model fit $\chi^2 = 43.37$, df= 24, $p = .009$, $\chi^2/df = 1.81$, GFI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06. SMC values were also improved with almost all items explaining more than half of the variance of the factors. These figures suggest that the measurements have a clear relationship with the first layer of the brand experience construct. The final modified model (Table 5.12) was used for the second-order CFA test.

Table 5-12 Initial and Respecified Measurement Model of Brand Experience (First-Order).

Initial Model (N = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Respecified Model (N = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC
Q6.3<---HRMP	0.98	13.25	0.76	0.58	Q6.3<---HRMP	1.19	12.76	0.82	0.71
Q6.4<---HRMP	0.84	11.79	0.70	0.49	Q6.4<---HRMP	1.04	11.85	0.77	0.67
Q6.2<---HRMP	1.00		0.89	0.79	Q6.2<---HRMP	1.00		0.79	0.58
Q6.12<---CFC	0.89	12.03	0.82	0.67	Q6.12<---CFC	0.90	12.21	0.82	0.49
Q6.11<---CFC	1.00		0.91	0.83	Q6.11<---CFC	1.00		0.91	0.83
Q6.9<---CMS	0.73	11.82	0.70	0.49	Q6.9<---CMS	0.74	11.82	0.70	0.68
Q6.6<---CMS	0.84	13.55	0.76	0.58	Q6.6<---CMS	0.85	13.48	0.76	0.62
Q6.8<---CMS	0.88	14.88	0.81	0.66	Q6.8<---CMS	0.90	14.89	0.82	0.60
Q6.7<---CMS	1.00		0.85	0.72	Q6.7<---CMS	1.00		0.84	0.67
Q6.1<---HRMP	0.84	15.43	0.78	0.61					

<u>Second-order CFA</u>

The second-order measurement model of brand experience was significant $\chi^2 = 43.63$, df = 25, $p = .012$, $\chi^2/df = 1.75$, GFI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .05. This would be sufficient evidence of satisfactory model fit, especially if the composite reliability of each indicator is also significantly high. Average variance extracted ranged from 0.61 to 0.75, signifying a good convergence of variance explained. The results of the second-order CFA suggest that the measurement model of brand experience is valid and reliable (Table 5-13).

Table 5-13 CFA Results of Brand Experience (Second-order).

	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Composite Reliability	AVE
BE					.85	.65
CMS<---BE	1.000		.933	.871	.86	.61
HRMP<---BE	.629	10.075	.765	.585	.83	.63
CFC<---BE	.960	10.348	.709	.503	.86	.75
$\chi^2 = 43.63$, df = 25, p = .012, $\chi^2/df = 1.75$, GFI = .96, CFI = .98, RMSEA= .05						

5.5.4 Measurement Model for Brand Image

5.5.4.1 *Exploratory Factor Analysis of Brand Image*

Brand image, as a single layer latent factor generated from the data, contained seven variables explaining 62.06% of the total variance. Five items were discarded for the reasons of either not meeting the threshold or having persistent cross-loading. They were Q7.4 ('its brand has great significance to the customers'), Q7.5 ('the hotel cares about each employee'), Q7.8 ('the hotel provides good service programme to employees'),

Q7.10 ('the hotel offers employees a relatively stress-free working environment'), and

Q7.12 ('the hotel offers variety in employees' daily work'). Variables that were left in

the measurement scale all had factor loadings surpassing 0.7 and all of their

communality values were greater than 0.5. Sampling adequacy was verified by a high

KMO value of 0.854 and a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $\chi^2 = 1009.16$, df = 21.

The Cronbach's alpha value was 0.90, showing an internally consistent scale for brand

image (Table 5-14).

Table 5-14 EFA Results of Brand Image.

Brand Image Factors ($N = 240$)	FL	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	Reliability Coefficient	Commu-nalities
		4.34	62.06	.90	
Q7.9 Allow creativity	.82				.66
Q7.7 Utilise employees' strengths	.81				.65
Q7.6 Solve employees' problems	.80				.64
Q7.11 Offer long-term career progression	.79				.62
Q7.3 Service quality	.79				.62
Q7.2 Informal culture	.79				.62
Q7.1 Forward-looking approach	.73				.54

Note: KMO = .85; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: $\chi^2 = 1009.16$, df = 21, $p < .000$.

5.5.4.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Brand Image*

The initial model of brand image fit poorly $\chi^2 = 62.27$, df = 14, $p < .000$, GFI = .93, CFI

= .94, with RMSEA = .12 and $\chi^2/df = 4.45$ (Table 5-15). Three items' SMC values were

lower than 0.5 which were not sufficiently explained by the factor. Both standardised

residual and modification indices pointed to sources of the poor fit. Item Q7.1

('management has a forward-looking approach to its business') was paired with item

Q7.2 ('the hotel has an informal culture') with a standardised residual value of 2.45. At

the same time, Q7.1 also had correlated error with Q7.11 ('the hotel offers clear opportunities for long-term career progression') (E6 and E7, MI= 10.27). In this situation, a model respecification was used to locate the most appropriate measurement model that is supported by both theory and data. Item Q7.1 was eventually dropped, which improved the model fit indices $\chi^2 = 21.71$, df = 9, $p = .01$, $\chi^2/df = 2.41$, GFI = .97, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .075. It also improved the SMC values to a certain extent that two of the remaining items (Q7.3 and Q7.11) were inadequate in representing brand image. Since no further modification index suggested to remove these two items, they were kept for further tests.

Table 5-15 Initial and Respecified Measurement Model of Brand Image.

Initial Model (*N* = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Respecified Model (*N* = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC
Q7.7<---BI	1.00		0.82	0.68	Q7.7<---BI	1.00		0.84	0.70
Q7.9<---BI	0.93	14.13	0.79	0.63	Q7.9<---BI	0.92	14.41	0.80	0.64
Q7.6<---BI	0.78	12.53	0.73	0.53	Q7.6<---BI	0.76	12.56	0.73	0.53
Q7.2<---BI	0.84	12.72	0.76	0.58	Q7.2<---BI	0.79	12.31	0.73	0.53
Q7.3<---BI	0.62	9.65	0.60	0.36	Q7.3<---BI	0.60	9.53	0.60	0.36
Q7.1<---BI	0.67	9.32	0.59	0.35	Q7.11<---BI	0.82	11.75	0.69	0.48
Q7.11<---BI	0.81	11.35	0.67	0.45					
					Composite Reliability	0.87			
					AVE	0.54			

The composite reliability of 0.87 was sufficient to indicate an internally consistent measurement for brand image. The AVE value of 0.54 surpassed the threshold suggesting an adequate amount of variance explained. Significant t values with factor

loadings over 0.6 all pointed to a reasonable model modification fit. In summary, a total of six indicators were retained to measure the construct of brand image in the overall measurement model.

5.5.5 Measurement Model for Organisational Culture

5.5.5.1 *Exploratory Factor Analysis of Organisational Culture*

The factor analysis resulted the construct of organisational culture in five factors , which explained 68.43% of the overall variance. Twenty items were removed from the EFA. Fifteen were deleted because of cross-loadings with another factor; two items had factor loadings less than 0.5 threshold; and three items had communality values smaller than the cut-off point of 0.5, as suggested by Hair et al. (2010). Sixteen variables were kept after the EFA, with factor loadings over 0.6 on average. The results of KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Table 5-16) revealed that the dataset is appropriate for factor analysis. Reliability coefficient scores of the factors ranged from 0.66 to 0.84, implying adequate internal consistency. Communality values indicated good explanation of the variances.

Table 5-16 EFA Results of Organisational Culture.

Organisational Culture Factors (N = 235)	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	Reliability Coefficient	Commu-nalities
Factor 1: Professional		5.096	31.851	.82	
Q2.4 Keep meeting time punctually	.770				.667
Q2.7 Cost-conscious	.745				.642
Q1.7 Open to newcomers	.689				.573
Q2.3 Aware of competition	.685				.619
Q2.6 Speak seriously of job and hotel	.661				.628
Factor 2: Process		2.081	13.006	.82	
Q1.2 Initiative	.823				.756
Q1.1 Efficient	.819				.735
Q1.3 Warm	.740				.677
Q1.4 Direct	.619				.519
Factor 3: Closed		1.435	8.971	.66	
Q2.10 New employees need more time to feel comfortable with work	.772				.645
Q2.1 Use informal communication style	.755				.613
Q4.8 Special people can fit in the hotel	.718				.634
Factor 4: Individual Development		1.196	7.476	.84	
Q3.1 Informed when a good job is done	.900				.861
Q3.2 Help good staff to advance	.868				.845
Factor 5: Employee		1.141	7.129	.74	
Q4.2 Ties with the community	.836				.791
Q4.3 Employees' personal problem	.813				.745

Note: KMO = .793; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: χ^2 = 1477.65, df = 120, $p < .000$.

5.5.5.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Organisational Culture*

First-order CFA

The results of the initial first-order CFA model did not illustrate a good fit for organisational culture construct because the GFI was below the cut-off point, and more than three indicators had factor loadings lower than the expected value of 0.6. A number of items' SMC values were lower than 0.5 suggesting a poor explanation of the variances accounted for by the factors (Table 5-17).

Table 5-17 Initial Measurement Model of Organisational Culture (First-Order).

Initial Model ($N = 252$)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC
Q2.6<---Professional	.92	9.30	.68	.46
Q2.3<---Professional	.87	8.80	.63	.39
Q1.7<---Professional	.71	8.58	.60	.36
Q2.7<---Professional	.93	9.41	.68	.47
Q2.4<---Professional	1.00		.72	.52
Q1.4<---Process	.99	9.27	.67	.45
Q1.3<---Process	.90	10.64	.76	.58
Q1.2<---Process	1.00		.75	.56
Q1.1<---Process	1.03	10.70	.72	.51
Q2.1<---Close	.61	5.94	.56	.31
Q4.8<---Close	.58	5.22	.51	.26
Q2.10<---Close	1.00		.89	.80
Q4.3<---Employee	1.11	7.19	.67	.44
Q4.2<---Employee	1.00		.74	.54
Q3.2<---Individual Development	1.00		.76	.58
Q3.1<---Individual Development	1.27	8.53	.85	.72
$\chi^2 = 223.74$, df = 94, $p = .000$, $\chi^2/df = 2.38$, GFI = .90, CFI= .90, RMSEA= .074				

By examining model diagnostics, item Q1.7 ('I am open to newcomers') was found to have large residuals with more than three paired items in the standardised residual output, which suggests problems. Hence, item Q1.7 was removed first to check if it would improve model fit. That increased the GFI from 0.897 to 0.91, which is a good sign; however, that made the factor loading of item Q4.8 ('all decisions are centralised at top') fall to 0.498. With this unacceptable factor loading, item Q4.8 was deleted. That led to a negative variance estimate of -1.439 in the model fit indices, which suggests a reasonable fit to the data. Hair et al. (2010) termed negative error variance as a 'Heywood case', which could be caused by either small samples or a violation of the three-indicator rule in CFA models. The occurance of a Heywood case in this specific

measurement model implied that AMOS produced an improper solution. Therefore the solution may not be reliable.

One solution is to eliminate an offending item so that the model does not violate the three-indicator rule (Hair et al., 2010). However, removing the offending item Q2.10 ('new employees need more than a year to feel comfortable with work') would leave only one indicator (Q2.1 'I use informal style communicating with other employees') representing the Close construct. This change would obviously violate the three-indicator rule, particularly when the sample size is less than the suggested 300. From another perspective, the entire Close construct appears unreliable with Q2.10 causing a high error variance estimate and Q2.1 carrying an insignificant factor loading of 0.42 (C.R. = 1.91, p = 0.056). Overall, the data suggests that the Close construct should be omitted from the measurement model.

After removing the factor of 'Close' and its indicators from the model, the respecified measurement model (Table 5-18) had better goodness-of-fit χ^2 = 107.17, df = 48, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.23, GFI = .93, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .07. No factor loading was below 0.6 and all were significant. It was interesting to observe that half of the items had SMC values less than 0.5. That means many of these items were less explained by their corresponding factors. Due to that this scale has been tested in many different research contexts (e.g. Hofstede, 2011; Øgaard, 2006), the items with problematic SMC values were kept in this study for future tests. Based on the results, the organisational culture

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second-order measurement model in this study contains only four constructs: Professional, Process, Employee, and Individual Development.

Table 5-18 Respecified Measurement Model of Organisational Culture (First-Order).

Respecified Model ($N = 252$)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC
Q2.3<---Professional	.97	8.79	.66	.44
Q2.6<---Professional	.96	8.86	.68	.46
Q2.7<---Professional	.96	8.87	.67	.45
Q2.4<---Professional	1.00		.69	.47
Q1.4<---Process	.99	9.24	.67	.45
Q1.3<---Process	.90	10.61	.75	.57
Q1.2<---Process	1.00		.75	.56
Q1.1<---Process	1.03	10.73	.72	.52
Q4.3<---Employee	1.06	7.32	.65	.43
Q4.2<---Employee	1.00		.75	.56
Q3.2<---Individual Development	1.00		.84	.70
Q3.1<---Individual Development	1.06	8.31	.77	.60
$\chi^2 = 107.17$, df = 48, $p < .000$, χ^2/df = 2.23, GFI = .93, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .07				

Second-order CFA

In the second-order CFA test, first-order latent constructs became the indicators of the underlying latent construct at the second layer. Four indicators were tested with a rational level of composite reliability and significant factor loadings (Table 5-19). However, the AVE value for Professional was lower than 0.5, indicating that more errors remained in the items than variance was explained by the latent construct. Since both the factor loadings and reliability of Professional estimated the amount of convergent validity among item measures, it can be concluded that the convergent validity of this indicator was adequate. Most importantly, the goodness-of-fit thresholds were met.

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Table 5-19 CFA Results of Organisational Culture (Second-Order).

	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Composite Reliability	AVE
OC					.84	.57
Professional<---OC	.62	9.01	.83	.69	.77	.46
Process<---OC	.61	9.43	.79	.63	.81	.52
Employee<---OC	.67	8.71	.77	.59	.66	.50
Individual Development<---OC	.67	7.10	.61	.37	.79	.65
$\chi^2 = 119.87$, df = 50, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.40, GFI = .93, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .075						

5.5.6 Measurement Model for Employee job satisfaction

5.5.6.1 *Exploratory Factor Analysis of Employee job satisfaction*

Table 5-20 summarises the results of EFA test for the construct of employee job satisfaction. All seven variables were kept, explaining 52.17% of the variance. KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity indicated the analysis was robust. The reliability value of 0.84 suggested good internal consistency. Nonetheless, items Q8.1 ('I am satisfied with my fellow workers'), Q8.2 ('I am satisfied with my supervisor[s]'), and Q8.5 ('I am satisfied with my salary') had low communality values of 0.48, 0.47, and 0.34 respectively, all lower than the 0.5 threshold. The guidelines recommend that these items should be deleted, but they were kept for further CFA validation because previous studies strongly recommended that they have roles in measuring employee job satisfaction. Therefore, all seven variables were retained for the CFA test.

Table 5-20 EFA of Employee Job Satisfaction.

Employee Job Satisfaction Factors (*N* = 241)	FL	Eigen-value	Var. (%)	Reliability Coefficient	Commu-nalities
		3.65	52.17	.84	
Q8.4 Hotel policy	.79				.62
Q8.7 Hotel support	.78				.61
Q8.3 Hotel customer	.76				.57
Q8.6 Opportunity for advancement	.75				.56
Q8.1 Fellow worker	.69				.48
Q8.2 Supervisor	.69				.47
Q8.5 Salary	.58				.34
Note: KMO= .80; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: χ^2 = 714.78, df = 21, *p* < .000.					

5.5.6.2 *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Employee job satisfaction*

The employee job satisfaction measurement model retained all variables from the EFA test. The model fit the data poorly χ^2 = 180.22, df = 14, *p* < .000, χ^2/df = 12.87, GFI = .81, CFI = .79, RMSEA = .217 (Table 5-21). Item Q8.5 ('I am satisfied with my salary') loaded the lowest among of all indicators, with a value of 0.423, which did not meet the cutoff.

Table 5-21 Initial and Respecified Measurement Model of Employee Job Satisfaction.

Initial Model (N = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC	Respecified Model (N = 252)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. FL	SMC
Q8.7<--- EJS	1.06	8.86	0.67	0.45	Q8.4<--- EJS	1.23	8.71	0.69	0.47
Q8.6<--- EJS	1.02	7.74	0.59	0.35	Q8.3<--- EJS	1.69	8.87	0.92	0.85
Q8.5<--- EJS	0.82	5.86	0.42	0.18	Q8.2<--- EJS	1.11	12.60	0.69	0.48
Q8.4<--- EJS	1.13	9.42	0.73	0.53	Q8.1<--- EJS	1.00		0.61	0.37
Q8.3<--- EJS	1.25	10.84	0.79	0.62					
Q8.2<--- EJS	1.06	11.33	0.76	0.58					
Q8.1<--- EJS	1.00		0.70	0.49					
					Composite Reliability	0.82			
					AVE	0.54			

The model was therefore respecified according to standardised residuals and modification indices. Item Q8.6 ('I am satisfied with my opportunities for advancement with this hotel') appeared to be a misspecification because it had more than two large residuals with two other paired items (e.g., Q8.7 'I am satisfied with the support provided by my hotel'). Furthermore, the modification index also revealed a correlation between Q8.6 and Q8.7 (E6 and E7, MI = 56.17). These results suggested the removal of Q8.6, Q8.7, or both. The decision was made to drop both items because that improved the model fit closer to the cutoff points for all standard criteria. Still, the modification index showed that the error variance of Q8.1 and Q8.2 correlated 0.51. Because Q8.1 ('I am satisfied with my fellow workers') and Q8.2 ('I am satisfied with my supervisor[s]') both referred to internal colleagues, it is reasonable that they would correlate. Hence a

double-headed arrow was drawn between Error 1 and Error 2 to demonstrate the correlation.

The final model had a fair fit to the data $\chi^2 = 11.02$, df = 4, $p = .026$, $\chi^2/df = 2.76$, GFI = .94, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .084). It was noticed that item Q8.5 ('I am satisfied with my salary') again had the lowest factor loading, even lower than its loading in the initial model. Q8.5 was then deleted and resulted in an insignificant chi-square value of 0.44 (df = 1, $p = .506$). Thus, the model fit was improved to $\chi^2/df = .44$, GFI = .99, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00. Although SMC values of items Q8.1, Q8.2, and Q8.4 reduced from the initial model, they were evident to explain sufficient levels of variance of employees' job satisfaction construct according to previous research (e.g. Karatepe, 2006). Both composite reliability value and AVE value met the adequate level of acceptance. Four indicators were retained to represent the underlying latent construct of employee job satisfaction.

5.6 Overall Measurement Model

5.6.1 Model 1 – OC, IB, and EJS

An overall measurement model is needed as a pre-requisite before evaluating the structural model. The first overall measurement model was comprised of all three latent variables, including the first layers of each construct. In this model, organisational culture was defined as a second-order construct containing four dimensions: process, professional, employee, and individual development. Internal branding was another

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second-order construct composed of three dimensions: IBBI, IBBK, and IBBE. Employee job satisfaction was a single layer construct with four indicators.

Table 5-22 displays the results of the first overall measurement model. All factor loadings exceeded 0.6, which gave evidence that the model achieved convergent validity at the construct level. The squared multiple correlation values of the three internal branding dimensions exceeded 0.5, showing that the latent construct internal branding explained an adequate proportion of the construct variance. Although the rest of the SMC values ranged from 0.37 to 0.63, they still explained a moderate amount of the construct variance. The C.R. t values in the overall measurement model were generally higher than the corresponding values calculated in the individual measurement models. The fit indices of this model showed a relatively poor fit of the data (χ^2 = 888.59, df = 288, p < .000, χ^2/df = 3.09, GFI = .87, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06).

Table 5-22 Overall Measurement Model (Model 1).

OC, IB, and EJS ($N = 496$)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. Factor Loading	SMC
Process<---OC	1.00		.71	.50
Professional<---OC	1.08	10.56	.79	.63
Employee<---OC	1.19	10.20	.74	.55
Individual Development<---OC	1.12	9.62	.63	.39
IBBI<---IB	1.000		.87	.76
IBBK<---IB	.79	12.90	.78	.61
IBBE<---IB	.98	14.17	.87	.75
Q8.4<---EJS	1.42	11.58	.76	.57
Q8.3<---EJS	1.36	13.20	.78	.61
Q8.2<---EJS	1.09	16.10	.68	.46
Q8.1<---EJS	1.000		.61	.37
χ^2 = 888.59, df = 288, p < .000, χ^2/df = 3.09, GFI = .87, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06				

The initial model was modified according to the modification indices (Table 5-23). Q6.11 ('the hotel offers the opportunity to work abroad') was removed because it had large residuals with four paired items in the standardised residual output. The goodness-of-fit indices were improved especially the chi-square value (χ^2 = 787.77, df = 264, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.98). After examining the stadardised residual covariance, Q8.4 ('I am satisfied with my hotel's policies') and Q2.4 ('I need to keep meeting time punctually') were further removed for the reason that both items had large residuals with more than three paired items. The modification indices indicated that Q1.2 ('I am typically initiative') and Q1.4 ('I am a typically direct employee') were correlated (E1-E4, MI=26.81). A double-headed arrow was drawn between Error 1 and Error 4 to demonstrate the correlation. The outputs of the modification indices also suggested that Q4.2 (' the hotel has close ties with the local community') (E9 - RES 3, MI = 4.982) and Q4.3 ('the hotel concerns for my personal problems') (E10 - RES 3, MI = 31.987) were candidates for deletion due to their high modification indices. This indicated a cross-loading that exists between the error covariance of Q4.2 and IBBE as well as a cross-loading existing between the error of covariance of Q4.3 and IBBE. After the deletion of Q4.2 and Q4.3, model fit has been improved that all indices met the threshold values as the table shows. All SMC values of the items showed a reasonable level of measurement on corresponding constructs, even though three of them had relatively low SMC values (e.g. process, individual development, and Q8.1).

Table 5-23 Overall Measurement Model (Respecified Model 1).

OC, IB, and EJS (N = 496)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. Factor Loading	SMC
Process<---OC	1.00		.68	.46
Professional<---OC	1.00	10.11	.85	.72
Individual Development<---OC	1.11	9.80	.64	.41
IBBI<---IB	1.000		.86	.74
IBBK<---IB	.81	12.55	.79	.63
IBBE<---IB	1.00	13.71	.81	.71
Q8.3<---EJS	1.25	12.91	.81	.65
Q8.2<---EJS	1.05	17.06	.74	.54
Q8.1<---EJS	1.000		.69	.47
χ^2 = 405.61, df = 178, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.28, GFI = .93, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .05				

Table 5-24 demonstrates the correlations between the three constructs. Both exogenous constructs organisational culture and internal branding are correlated with the endogenous construct employee job satisfaction with estimated coefficient of 0.76 and 0.75 respectively. Organisational culture and internal branding were highly correlated with a value of 0.95, which brings caution that this result is too close to 1.0. Hair et al. (2010) suggested that values of 1.0 are illogical standardised parameters. This might suggest that there was a high degree of multicollinearity in the data, implying what were thought to be separate variables might actually be measuring a similar thing. By examing the indicators of brand experience, the items were very similar to *individual development* dimension of organisational cultural practices. Despite the fact that it was less logical to include both concepts in the structural model, they were kept because they were perceived as different constructs in this study. It was necessary to retain organisational culture as an antecedent of internal branding. This largely illuminates the cultural dimensions that Chinese employees perceive in international branded hotels, which can enrich the organisational culture theory. Brand experience was proposed to be one of the essential measurements of internal branding. It was explicitly reflected in

employees' physical contact with the brand stimuli that formed impressions of the brand in their mind. The two concepts were interpreted differently and were thereby retained in this study. Nonetheless, the results helped meet the need to redevelop a scale for both organisational cultural practices and brand experience in the hotel industry. More details are discussed in the Conclusion.

All constructs showed sufficient reliability values and high AVE. These AVEs indicated a good convergent validity but poor discriminant validity when compared to the squared correlation values in parentheses. Discriminant validity measures the extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, the figures suggested that employees' job satisfaction cannot be clearly distinct from both internal branding and organisational culture. Moreover, internal branding also cannot be differentiated from organisational culture. This means that items of these three constructs may overlap with items from the other two constructs.

Table 5-24 Correlations (Squared Correlations), AVEs and Composite Reliability of the Overall Measurement Model (Model 1).

	EJS	IB	OC
EJS	1.00		
IB	.75 (0.56)	1.00	
OC	.76 (0.58)	.95 (0.90)	1.00
Composite Reliability	.79	.87	.77
AVE	.56	.69	.53

5.6.2 Model 2 – OC, BK, BE, BI, EJS

The second overall measurement model consists of five underlying latent constructs: organisational culture, brand knowledge, brand experience, brand image, and employees' job satisfaction. Internal branding was broken down into individual dimensions representing the first layer of the construct (Table 5-25). Model fit indices suggested a poor model fit (χ^2 = 1687.25, df = 611, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.76, GFI = .83, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .06). Similar to model 1, organisational culture and brand-related constructs had high factor loadings over 0.6, while employees' job satisfaction had one indicator with factor loadings lower than the cutoff value of 0.5. Most SMC values of items are lower than 0.5 showing less representativeness of the factors.

Table 5-25 Overall Measurement Model (Model 2).

OC, BK, BE, BI, EJS (N = 496)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. Factor Loading	SMC
Process<---OC	1.00		.70	.49
Professional<---OC	1.12	10.80	.81	.66
Employee<---OC	1.20	10.41	.72	.52
Individual Development<---OC	1.14	9.89	.62	.39
Q7.9<---BI	1.00		.79	.63
Q7.7<---BI	1.06	20.17	.82	.67
Q7.6<---BI	.97	18.14	.76	.58
Q7.2<---BI	.85	16.52	.71	.50
Q7.3<---BI	.73	15.27	.66	.44
Q7.11<---BI	.93	17.26	.73	.53
Q5.4<---BK	1.00		.75	.56
Q5.3<---BK	1.11	18.92	.85	.72
Q5.5<---BK	.95	15.51	.70	.49
Q5.1<---BK	.91	14.76	.69	.47
Q5.2<---BK	.98	15.40	.72	.51
CMS<---BE	1.00		.83	.69
HRMP<---BE	.84	15.41	.90	.81
CFC<---BE	.84	11.41	.70	.49
Q8.5<---EJS	.99	7.93	.43	.19
Q8.4<---EJS	1.53	11.68	.78	.62

Q8.3<---EJS	1.38	12.61	.76	.57
Q8.2<---EJS	1.09	15.63	.65	.42
Q8.1<---EJS	1.00		.59	.34

χ^2 = 1687.25, df = 611, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.76, GFI = .83, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .06

The model fit was improved to χ^2 = 560.246, df = 257, p < .000, χ^2/df = 2.18, GFI = .91, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .05 after the modification. CFC dimension of brand experience was removed because both items Q6.11 ('the hotel offers the opportunity to work abroad') and Q6.12 ('the hotel provides opportunity to work with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues') had large residuals that were greater than 2.5. Items that were also removed based on large residuals were Q7.3 ('the hotel provides good service quality to customers'); Q2.4 ('I need to keep meeting time punctually'); and Q6.7 ('the hotel delivers promise to me'). Items that cross-loaded on other constructs were also removed from the model (e.g. Q7.9; Q7.6; Q1.1; and Q5.5). One of organisational cultural practices' dimension 'employee' was removed because both items under that dimension had cross-loadings on other constructs (Q4.3 'the hotel concerns for my personal problems' and Q4.2 'the hotel has close ties with the local community'). Moreover, Q8.5 ('I am satisfied with my salary') was deleted since the factor loading did not meet the acceptable level of 0.5. Similar to the results from Model 1, the error covariance of Q1.2 and Q1.4 indicated a correlation between these two items (E1 and E3, MI = 26.65). In addition, Q5.1 ('I know the content and meaning of this hotel brand') and Q5.2 ('I know the target customers of this hotel') are correlated suggested by the modification index (E28 and E29, MI = 17.45). Double-headed arrows were added between Error 1 and Error 3, and Error 28 and Error 29 in the model.

Table 5-26 Overall Measurement Model (Respecified Model 2).

OC, BK, BE, BI, EJS (*N* = 496)	Estimate	C.R.	Std. Factor Loading	SMC
Process<---OC	1.00		.71	.51
Professional<---OC	1.05	10.07	.87	.76
Individual Development<---OC	1.14	9.77	.63	.40
Q7.7<---BI	1.00		.79	.63
Q7.2<---BI	.82	15.45	.70	.49
Q7.11<---BI	.90	16.46	.72	.51
Q5.3<---BK	1.00		.87	.76
Q5.4<---BK	.88	18.74	.75	.56
Q5.1<---BK	.79	16.10	.68	.46
Q5.2<---BK	.85	16.90	.70	.49
CMS<---BE	1.00		.84	.70
HRMP<---BE	.99	13.80	.91	.82
Q8.4<---EJS	1.49	11.82	.77	.60
Q8.3<---EJS	1.37	12.85	.76	.58
Q8.2<---EJS	1.09	15.86	.66	.44
Q8.1<---EJS	1.00		.60	.36

χ^2 = 560.246, df = 257, *p* < .000, χ^2/df = 2.18, GFI = .91, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .05

There were high correlations between exogenous and endogenous constructs (Table 5-27). The highest correlation was between organisational culture and brand experience (0.92), and the lowest correlation was between brand knowledge and employee job satisfaction (0.59). The composite reliability scores for all constructs met the cutoffs value. The AVEs for all variables ranged from 0.50 to 0.76, surpassing the 0.5 cutoff. This suggests an adequate convergence. Comparing the AVE with the squared correlation, it appears that items measuring employee job satisfaction and brand knowledge were rather different. The same conclusion could be applied to (1) brand knowledge and brand experience, (2) brand knowledge and brand image, and (3) brand experience and employees' job satisfaction because their AVEs were greater than their squared correlations.

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Table 5-27 Correlation (Squared Correlation), AVE, and Composite Reliability of the Overall Measurement Model (Model 2).

	BE	EJS	BK	BI	OC
BE	1.00				
EJS	.81 (0.66)	1.00			
BK	.86 (0.74)	.59 (0.35)	1.00		
BI	.91 (0.83)	.83 (0.69)	.69 (0.48)	1.00	
OC	.92 (0.85)	.79 (0.62)	.83 (0.69)	.87 (0.76)	1.00
Composite Reliability	.86	.80	.84	.78	.79
AVE	.76	.50	.57	.55	.56

5.7 Structural Model

5.7.1 Model 1 – OC, IB, and EJS

With a satisfactory measurement model, the structural model can be assessed based on the proposed hypotheses. The purpose of evaluating the structural model for model 1 was to determine whether the specified theoretical relationships are supported by the empirical data. In this model, the proposed paths were from organisational culture to internal branding, and from internal branding to employee job satisfaction (Table 5-28). Model fit indices suggested that the hypothesised model fit the data reasonably well with $\chi^2 = 407.08$, df = 179, $p < .000$, χ^2/df = 2.27, GFI = .93, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .05. Compared to the overall CFA model fit for Model 1, the fit indices of both CFA and structural models were very similar, which corroborated the validity of the structural theory. That means that this structural model adequately explains inter-construct relationships. All first-order constructs were reflective indicators of second-order constructs.

Along with the goodness-of-fit assessment, the proposed structural theory may also be examined by comparing the individual structural parameter estimates against the corresponding hypotheses. Hair et al. (2010, p. 736) pointed out that the factor loading estimates from CFA can be used to test "if the measurement estimates for one construct are being significantly affected by the pattern of relationships in the structural model". The loadings estimates were almost remained unchanged comparing with the CFA results. The maximum change among all loading estimates was 0.1. Such little change in the loadings suggested that the construct reliabilities were identical.

Table 5-28 Path Coefficient in the Structural Model (Model 1).

OC, IB, EJS ($N = 496$)			Standardised Coefficient	t value
IB	<---	OC	.97	10.99 ***
EJS	<---	IB	.76	11.00 ***
Process	<---	OC	.68	
Professional	<---	OC	.85	10.11 ***
Individual Development	<---	OC	.64	9.80 ***
IBBI	<---	IB	.85	
IBBK	<---	IB	.79	12.70 ***
IBBE	<---	IB	.83	13.58 ***
Q8.3	<---	EJS	.81	12.89 ***
Q8.2	<---	EJS	.74	17.06 ***
Q8.1	<---	EJS	.69	

Note: *** significant at $p < 0.01$; ** significant at $p < 0.05$.

Standardised structural path estimates were inspected to further validate the model. Both proposed paths were significant and in the expected direction. The results suggested that organisational culture is a powerful factor affecting internal branding with a value as

high as 0.97; meanwhile, internal branding also strongly influences employees' job satisfaction with the coefficient value of 0.76. Overall, the estimates are consistent with the hypotheses, supporting the theoretical model. A visual diagram portraying the structural model is shown in Figure 5-1. This model presents two second-order constructs, six first-order latent constructs, and a total of 21 measured indicators.
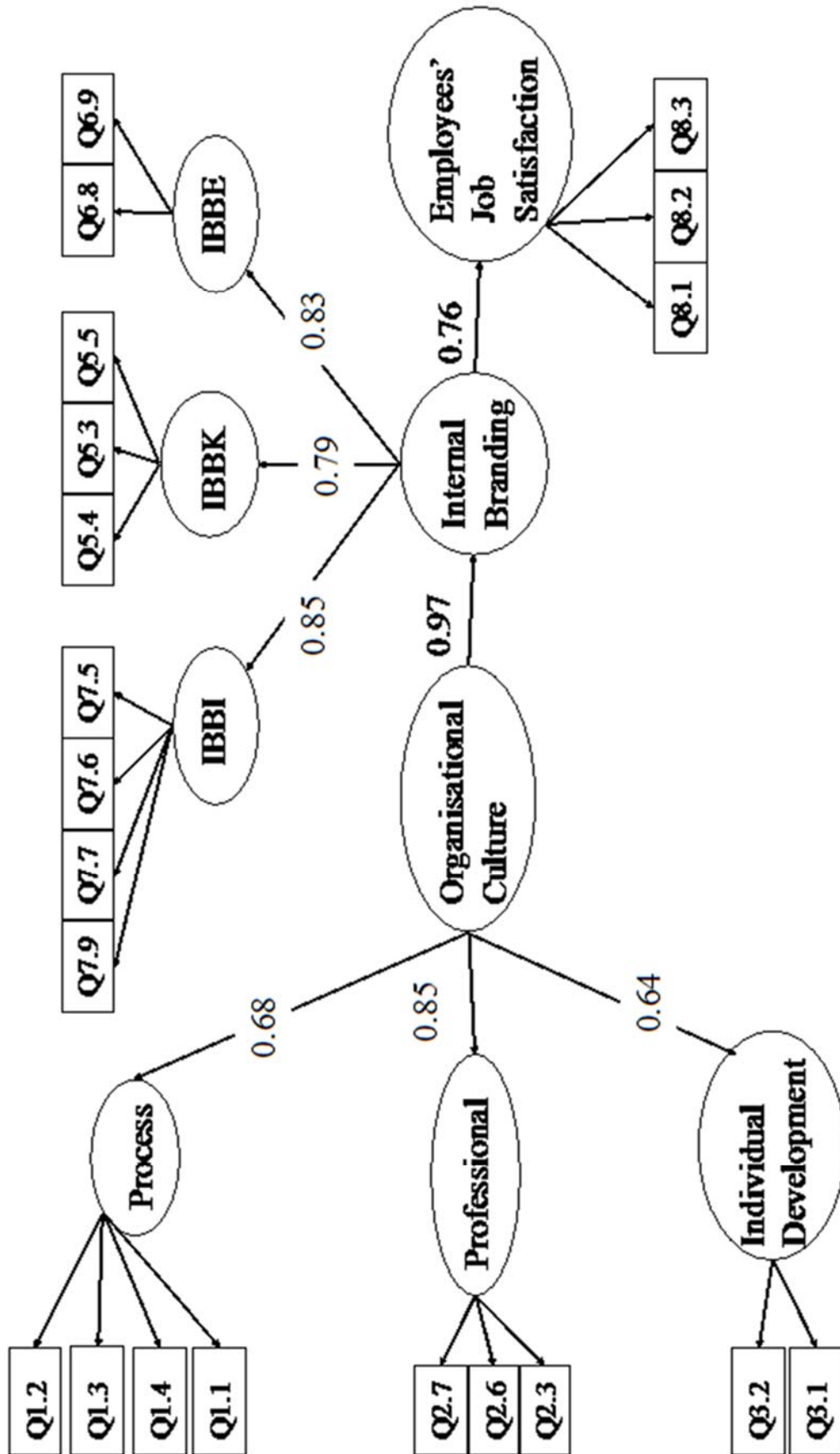
Figure 5-1 Structural Model for Model 1.

5.7.2 Model 2 – OC, BK, BE, BI, and EJS

The goal of testing the structural model for Model 2 was to study the relationships between the proposed constructs. The proposed paths for model 2 were: (1) from organisational culture to brand knowledge; (2) from organisational culture to brand experience; (3) from brand knowledge to brand experience; (4) from brand knowledge to brand image; (5) from brand experience to brand image; and (6) from brand image to employee job satisfaction. In total, there were six paths designed. Table 5-29 shows the path coefficients of the structural model. The model fit indices suggested that the model fit the data well χ^2 = 564.60, df = 260, p < .001, χ^2/df = 2.17, GFI = .91, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .05. The fact that the loadings estimates were comparable to the CFA fit estimates, suggested that there was an adequate construct fit with a change of pattern for the relationships in a structural model.

Table 5-29 Path Coefficients in the Structural Model (Model 2).

OC, BK, BE, BI, EJS (N = 496)			Standardised Coefficient	t value	p
BK	<---	OC	.83	11.14***	
BE	<---	OC	.67	4.84***	
BI	<---	OC	.37	1.50	.13
BE	<---	BK	.31	2.62**	.01
BI	<---	BK	-.46	-3.42***	
BI	<---	BE	.98	3.31***	
EJS	<---	BI	.86	11.92***	
Note: ***Significant at p < 0.01; **Significant at p < 0.05					

All except two structural path estimates were significant at p < 0.01. The exceptions were the estimates between (1) organisational culture and brand image and (2) brand knowledge and brand experience. The first exception's estimate was insignificant at p <

0.05 indicating a rejection of the hypothesis. On the other hand, the estimate between brand knowledge and brand experience was significant at $p < 0.05$. The estimate of all relationships were positive except the one between brand knowledge and brand image which was negative. Although the estimate was significant, the hypothesised direction was not supported. On the whole, the theoretical model was supported, given that five of seven estimates were compatible with the hypotheses. Figure 5-2 graphically illustrates the structural relationships between the exogenous and endogenous constructs.

The outputs also showed the indirect effect of brand knowledge and brand experience on three relationships. As Table 5-30 illustrates, the estimate of total effect of organisational culture on brand experience was 0.92 with a direct estimate value of 0.67. The inclusion of brand knowledge resulted an increment of the estimate value by 0.26. This result suggests the mediating effect of brand knowledge on the relationship between organisational culture and brand experience. Similarly, brand experience has a positive indirect effect on the relationship between brand knowledge and brand image (β = 0.30), representing a mediating effect of brand experience. Despite the direct effect of organisational culture on brand image was insignificant, the results demonstrated that its indirect effect on brand image through brand knowledge and brand experience was significant ($\beta = 0.53$, $p < 0.05$).
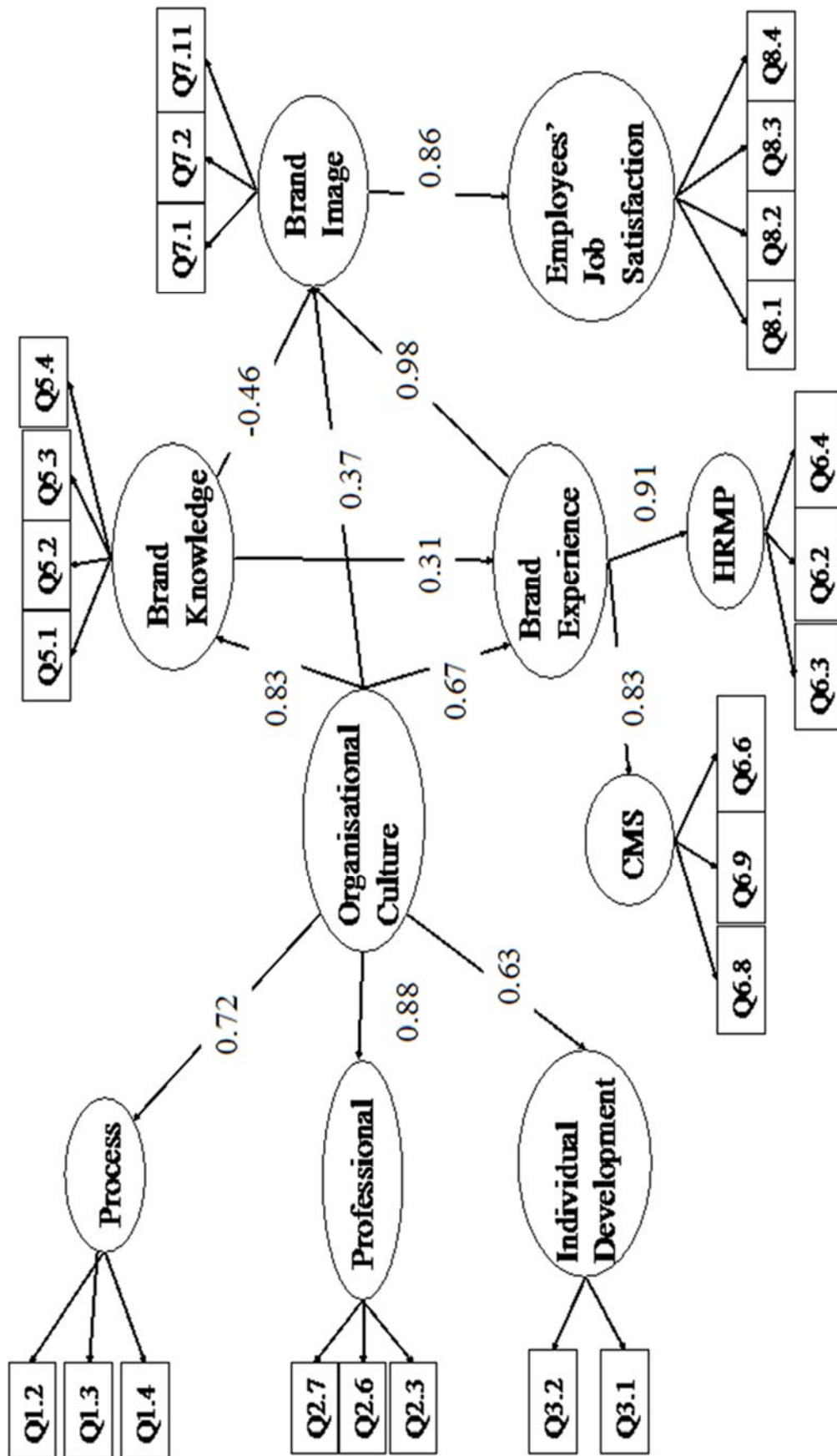
Figure 5-2 Structural Model for Model 2.

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Table 5-30 - Direct/Indirect Effect, and Total Effect of the Structural Model (Model 2).

Path			Standardised Coefficient (β)		
			Direct	**Indirect**	**Total**
BK	<---	OC	.83***		
BE	<---	OC	.67***	.26***	.92
BI	<---	OC	.37	.53***	.89
BE	<---	BK	.31**		
BI	<---	BK	-.46***	.30**	-.15
BI	<---	BE	.98***		
EJS	<---	BI	.86***		

χ^2 = 564.60, df = 260, p < .001, χ^2/df = 2.17, GFI = .91, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .05

Note: ***Significant at p < 0.01; **Significant at p < 0.05

5.8 Discussion

Table 5-31 summarises the findings of this study together with the respective research questions and hypotheses. This table shows the groundwork for the following discussion of the results.

Table 5-31 A Summary of Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Findings.

Research Questions	Research Hypotheses	Findings	Hypothesis Test
RQ1. Are brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image the elements that make up internal branding?	H1. Employees' perceived internal branding's measurements are related to brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image.	Employees' perceived internal branding in the hotel context is a second-order construct consisting of brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image.	Supported
RQ2. Does employees' perceived brand knowledge affect their brand experience?	H1-1. Employees' brand knowledge has a positive relationship with their brand experience.	The impact of employees' brand knowledge on their brand experience was positive though quite weak.	Supported
RQ3. Do employees associate their brand knowledge with their brand image?	H1-2. Employees' brand knowledge has a positive relationship with their brand image.	There was a negative influence on employees' brand image caused by their brand knowledge.	Partially Supported
RQ4. Do employees associate their brand experience with their brand image?	H1-3. Employees' brand experience has a positive relationship with their brand image.	Employees' brand image is positively affected by their brand experience.	Supported
RQ5. Which organisational cultural practices can be identified in this research context?	H2. Employees' perceived organisational cultural practices' measurements are related to professional, process, internal, employee, and close.	Organisational culture is a second-order construct consisting three factors in this research context: process, professional, and individual development.	Partially Supported
RQ6. Does organisational culture have an impact on internal branding?	H3. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a positive relationship with their perceived internal branding.	Organisational culture is a powerful factor in influencing internal branding.	Supported

Table 5-32 A Summary of Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Findings (continue).

Research Questions	Research Hypotheses	Findings	Hypothesis Test
RQ7. Does organisational culture have an impact on employees' brand knowledge?	H3-1. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a positive relationship with their brand knowledge.	Organisational culture has a positive effect on employees' brand knowledge.	Supported
RQ8. Does organisational culture have an impact on employees' brand experience?	H3-2. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a positive relationship with their brand experience.	There is a positive effect of organisational culture on brand experience.	Supported
RQ9. Does organisational culture have an impact on employees' brand image?	H3-3. Employees' perceived organisational culture has a direct positive relationship with their brand image.	Organisational culture has insignificant impact on brand image; however, brand knowledge and brand experience act as mediators and indirectly explain the relationship between organisational culture and brand image.	Not Supported
RQ10. Does employees' perceived internal branding have an impact on their job satisfaction?	H4. Employees' perceived internal branding has a positive relationship with their job satisfaction.	The impact on employee job satisfaction from internal branding is positive.	Supported
RQ11. Does employees' brand image have an impact on their job satisfaction?	H4-1. Employees' brand image has a positive relationship with their job satisfaction.	Perceptions of employees on brand image can influence their job satisfaction positively.	Supported

5.8.1 Research Question 1: Internal Branding Measurement

5.8.1.1 *Measurement Theory of Internal Branding*

Hypothesis 1 was tested with EFA, CFA, and structural models, which confirmed the components of internal branding and its measurements. It could be concluded that IBBI, IBBK, and IBBE were dimensions of internal branding, with 69% of mean variance extracted on the construct in the overall CFA model. This empirical result successfully justified the important roles that brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image play in the internal branding process. In contrast with some previous studies, this result helped to illuminate the composition of internal branding from a deeper level rather than at a surface level. Unlike previous research that used a collection of corporate functions—such as orientations, training, and group meetings—to measure internal branding (Punjaisri & Wilson 2007; Punjaisri et al., 2009), this study attempted to measure internal branding by tracing the substratum of the basic concept.

In this study, the foundation of internal branding lied in the understanding of the concepts of brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image. This was rooted in several research studies. For instance, one study argued that brand knowledge contributed to employees' understanding of desired brand message delivery (Khan, 2009); one study showed that brand experience enabled employees to practice the obtained brand knowledge (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009); and another study argued that brand images were the most important messages that employees should have in mind when delivering services to customers (Miles & Mangold, 2005). In light of these arguments, the definition of internal branding took into account brand knowledge, brand

experience, and brand image. Although very little research had addressed this or similar questions about the conception of internal branding, one recent study on the telecom sector recognised the role of human resources in influencing employees' perception of the brand. In particular, their findings revealed a need to incorporate brand messages into routine work activities and embed branding initiatives within the routine work activities (Ashraf et al., 2011). Their results implied the necessity of making desired brand knowledge and brand experience into routine work from the viewpoint of employees. This argument was closely in line with the results of this study.

Additionally, by assessing the proposed measurement theory of internal branding, this study found that internal branding is a second-order construct composed of three factors, with nine measurement variables. IBBI loaded the most on internal branding with a loading of 0.86, followed by IBBE (0.81). IBBK loaded the least (0.79). This outcome suggested that brand image was the most important predictor of internal branding. This result was consistent with the idea that internal branding was the transition of management's desired brand image to the brand messages that management send to employees, which was further transformed to employees' perceived brand image (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003; Khan, 2009; Mahnert & Torres, 2007). There was little evidence to suggest whether brand knowledge or brand experience predicted internal branding better. Recalling the literature reviewed, most past studies on internal branding emphasised incorporating all communication vehicles/functions to get the brand message to employees (Ashraf et al., 2011; Mahnert & Torres, 2007; Miles & Mangold, 2004). However, they paid little attention to the exact content of the brand messages.

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This ignored the substance of employees' experience of brand messages/values in their daily work routines and activities. Employees working in international branded hotels in Hainan perceived their brand experience to be higher than their brand knowledge. That echoed the above notion. Overall, the findings suggested that brand image, among all the other dimensions, was the most important dimension of internal branding.

5.8.1.2 *Measurement Items of Internal Branding*

IBBK was associated with three indicators Q5.3 ('I know the meaning of this hotel brand to customers'), Q5.4 ('I know the service level of this hotel'), and Q5.5 ('I know the importance of my work to the success of this hotel'). Based on data from employees working in international branded hotels in Hainan, the essential components of brand knowledge were the meaning of the hotel brand to customers, the service quality of the hotel, and the importance of their work.

In more details, their perceived brand knowledge constituted an understanding of the brand meaning that the hotel customers anticipated. This point could be reflected back to Keller's (1993) definition of consumers' perceived brand knowledge: that a brand node—'linked brand associations'—in one's memory influenced how brand information was recalled, which ultimately influenced one's behaviour and brand decisions. If this notion was applied to a customer-employee interaction (e.g., King, 2010), it was clear that employees would need the same brand node/associations as the customers in order to be able to behave in the manner desired by the organisation. Hence, one of the keys to

employees' ability to deliver the brand promise was an understanding of consumers' perceived brand meaning.

Lings and Greenley's (2005) study on brand knowledge dissemination found that information about service offerings from the brand helps to clarify employees' roles. Moreover, employees' understanding of the significance of their work to the success of the hotel also helped determine how clear employees are about their roles. Training employees about service level and offering signs of the importance of their work would dissipate any potential role conflict and confusion. This could explain why employees' perception of service and the importance of their work were involved in measuring brand knowledge.

IBBE was measured by Q6.8 ('the hotel is interested in employee job satisfaction'), and Q6.9 ('the hotel solves problems that employee may encounter at work'). Since employees' brand experience is based on consumers' brand experience (Iglesias et al., 2011), employees form brand experiences by encountering all sorts of stimuli from a brand—design, identity, packaging, communications, and environment. Therefore, the questionnaire asked a mixture of questions about the brand identity, environment, and communications. Thus it was surprising to see that only employees' work-related facets were related to their experience of the hotel brand. Inevitably, the hotel's interest in promoting employee job satisfaction would fall into its goal of giving the guests a good sensory experience, based on Brakus et al.'s (2009) categories of brand experience.

Meanwhile, solving hotel problems would fall under improving the employees' intellectual experience.

For IBBI, four indicator variables were retained Q7.9 ('the hotel provides employees with full scope for creativity'), Q7.7 ('the hotel fully utilises employees' strength to the purpose of application'), Q7.6 ('the hotel proactively solve problems that employees might have with work'), and Q7.5 ('the hotel cares about each employee'). Although the brand image scale used in this study covered a range of questions—such as hotel culture, service quality, and brand significance—the four remained indicators all asked about employee matters. This result certainly explained to some extent how brand experience was transformed into the accumulation of an overall brand image (Hsieh et al., 2004; Low & Lamb, 2000). When employees perceived a strong employee-oriented brand image, it highlighted the importance of employees' brand knowledge for their work. It also highlighted the importance of understanding the meaning of the hotel brand and providing quality service.

Based on the definition of brand image, the brand associations held in employees' memory in this study would fall under the benefit category (Keller, 1993). All four image indicators related to the personal value that employees attach to their work. It was mostly experiential benefits that fulfil employees' experiential needs of sensory pleasure, variety, and cognitive stimulation (ibid.). For instance, the image that the hotel cared about each employee (Q7.5 'the hotel cares about each employee') suggested that the

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hotel was giving employees the sensory pleasures of caring and warmth. Providing scope for creativity (Q7.9 'the hotel provides employees with full scope for creativity') implied the needs of variety.

In sum, since the measurement indicators of each factor of internal branding construct were also verified by the existing literature, it was plausible to claim that the tested measurement scale of internal branding was empirically and theoretically sound.

5.8.2 Research Question 2–4: Brand Knowledge, Brand Experience, and Brand Image

5.8.2.1 *Relationship between Brand Knowledge and Brand Experience*

This study separated internal branding into three elements and tested the relationships between each of the variables. Hypothesis 1-1 suggested that brand knowledge would be positively related to brand experience, and the results supported this hypothesis. The link between employees' brand knowledge and their brand experience was significant. This suggested that employees' brand knowledge was positively related to employees' brand experiences in international branded hotels. In spite of the significant relationship between brand knowledge and brand experience, the impact was somewhat small ($\beta = 0.31$). This observation could be addressed from theoretical perspective.

Compared to past studies, Ashraf et al.'s (2011) industry study exposed telecom employees to a positive brand experience, which was integrated with work activities after they had acquired brand knowledge. Those employees used the company's brand knowledge in their routine work and referenced brand values when making decisions. The better they understood the knowledge, the more confident employees would be at encapsulating brand efforts in their work activities. From this perspective, knowledge positively influenced telecom employees' brand experience. The finding of this study therefore demonstrated a similar result, although there were very few studies to compare with.

In Aurand et al.'s (2005) study, they also found that the incorporation of the brand message into work activities was not particularly strong. The current study confirmed this phenomenon and it could be interpreted as that hotel front-line employees' brand knowledge was perceived to have small impact on the messages that were implanted into their daily work routine. It appeared that hotel front-line employees did not think brand knowledge was important enough to have a strong effect on their experience with the brand. In this case, hotel management could consider developing separate brand messages to be used for delivering desired brand knowledge and brand experience to employees. This strategy should leave employees to access to various stimuli of the brand which might help them associate more with the brand.

5.8.2.2 *Relationship between Brand Knowledge and Brand Image*

The results showed a negative relationship between employees' brand knowledge and their brand image (β = -0.46). This meant that employees' understanding of the brand meaning (Q5.1), their understanding of the hotels' target customers (Q5.2), their knowledge of the meaning of the hotel brand to customers (Q5.3), and service level (Q5.4) were negatively associated with their perceptions of the brand; which eventually led to their brand image negatively.

One scenario could be suggested to discuss this phenomenon in the context of international branded hotels in Hainan. Employees' understanding of the brand knowledge did not match to what they associated and pictured in mind. The more employees understood the brand messages, the less they would reflect to the image generated from their perceived mental and physical brand associations. Any mismatch might cause a specific negative image of the brand. Also, the level of knowledge (or more specifically the messages) about brand meaning, target customers, and service quality as perceived by employees could have exceeded the level of employees' acceptability. Hotel front-line employees might not have sufficient time to grasp every piece of knowledge they were offered before entering the field. Repelling attitude could be generated from receiving too much information that could not be reflected to brand associations. Opposing associations might be created to form a negative brand image in the mind of employees. With more messages that employees were reluctant to receive, they would associate with more negative brand image. If delivering too much of that message to employees, it would not create an image of hotels utilising employees'

strength (Q7.7); nor demonstrating an image of having an informal culture (Q7.2). In the end, employees' brand images were largely reflected in the work routine provided by the hotel. An industry example collected in the screening interview might support this notion. Hotel Y brand gave different forms of brand messages to their employees constantly but did not leave time for them to digest and work through the meaning of those messages during daily work (Participant F). With such a hectic pace for sending out the brand knowledge, employees found it difficult to generate the desired brand images. This instance illustrated how messages and employees' actual brand image can be out of alignment.

Findings demonstrated a mediator role played by brand experience when examining the relationship between brand knowledge and brand image. With the inclusion of brand experience, the negative impact of brand knowledge on brand image was reduced by 0.30. It could be explained that this study took place in the hotel industry, which was common to see front-line employees spending more hours dealing with customers than receiving training exercises. Employees might be less exposed to the brand messages that were sent via formal channels than those sent by experiencing the brand during interactions with colleagues and customers or simply by completing routine work in a brand-oriented environment. Brand experience therefore played a positive role in terms of explaining the relationship between brand knowledge and brand image. From this perspective, it would be understandable that brand knowledge would have a less negative impact on brand image when employees experiencing the brand at the same time.

In the findings of other studies, it was evident that there should be a connection between employees' brand knowledge and brand image in the hotel industry. Unlike the results of this study, Yoo, Donthu, & Lee's (2000) study found a positive relationship between brand knowledge and brand image. Their results suggested that brand knowledge had strong associations with a specific brand image. The discrepancy between these two studies could be caused by the study participants. Their study measured students' perceptions of products' brand equity, whereas this study measured service employees' knowledge of the brand. The discovery of a discrepancy in the findings on the relationship between brand knowledge and brand image when studied in different contexts implied a need to further explore the same idea in diverse situations. This would help us broadly understand the connection between these two concepts. In conclusion, Hypothesis 1-2 was partially supported, and it brought about some interesting findings.

5.8.2.3 *Relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Image*

In contrast with brand knowledge, employees' brand experience was found to have a strong relationship with their associated brand image, with a standardised coefficient of 0.98. This result suggested that there was a strong link between brand experience and brand image from the viewpoint of hotel front-line employees. Hypothesis 1-3 was thus supported. Few scholars had looked into this relationship, especially from the perspective of employees. The results were interpreted in a way that hotel brands values were embedded in their work routines, which gave employees the deep associations with

brand elements and produced brand images. Employees in this study linked those hotel brand embedded work routines with hotels' interests in company management style (CMS) and HR management practices (HRMP). CMS included employees' job satisfaction (Q6.8), hotels' initiation in solving employees' problems at work (Q6.9), and hotels' communication style (Q6.6). HRMP included leadership provided by the management (Q6.2), training received by employees (Q6.3), and service quality rewards provided by the management (Q6.4). Front-line employees experienced those facets in these international branded hotels during their daily work routines. Based on the six facets of brand experience, three facets of employees' brand image were shaped: the image of hotels fully employing employees' strength (Q7.7), having an informal culture (Q7.2), and providing opportunities for long-term career progression (Q7.11).

The findings showed that employees' experience of how the hotel brand treated its staff had significant effects on employees' image of that brand. It seemed that participants in this study had a great concern on their work related matters such as encountering problem at work, or receiving training from the human resources department. In this case, management in Hainan international branded hotels would need to pay much attention on setting brand values that reflect more on employee matters for them to associate. After all, hotel employees were the people who pass on the desired brand image to hotel guests. Once they felt their concerns were handled in their daily work routine, that was to experience brand stimulus as how they expected, they would form positive image of the brand in the end. Hence, human resources functions such as

employees' job satisfaction, training, service quality rewards, and communication style should be emphasised when implanting brand messages into employees' work.

Connecting this interpretation with existing theory, the six identified brand experience facets could be matched to dimensions (sensory experience, behavioural experience, and intellectual experience) of the generic concept of brand experience (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009). In particular, hotels' interests in employees' job satisfaction and offering service quality rewards could be matched to sensory experience; hotels' initiative in solving employees' problems at work and providing training to employees could be matched to intellectual experience; and hotels' communication style and leadership could be matched to behavioural experience. In this study, employees' brand experiences were in line with the universal notation that brand experiences were positively related to brand image, which had been shown several times, albeit from the customer perspective (Cliffe & Motion, 2005; Nam, Ekinci, & Whyatt, 2011; Xu, Zhang, & Tang, 2011).

5.8.2.4 *Holistic View of Internal Branding Elements*

By examining the elements of internal branding, there was no clear reason to argue the relationship between brand knowledge and brand experience. Rather, the two elements could act in parallel on brand image. This suggestion was discussed because researchers had argued that embedding employees' experience in relation to the brand promise was as important as obtaining brand knowledge when constituting a brand image in

employees' mind (Miles & Mangold, 2004). However, the results of this study did not support that argument. In fact, for these front-line employees, brand experience had a much more powerful relationship with their brand image than did brand knowledge despite the latter relationship was negative. As a result, when international branded hotels consider implementing internal branding strategy, management should take into consideration about how these underlying elements could be intertwined.

5.8.3 Research Question 5: Organisational Cultural Practices Measurement

Hypothesis 2 listed potential components of organisational cultural practices in China's international branded hotels. This list was partially supported by the EFA, CFA, and overall measurement model. Unlike what was hypothesised on the basis of Hofstede et al.'s (1990) organisational cultural practice dimensions (HF's dimensions), the survey data only revealed three dimensions. They were labelled as Process, Professional, and Individual Development. Comparing these three dimensions with the six dimensions that were initially used as a fundamental model of organisational culture, there were quite a few differences between the original and current dimensions. This divergence could be addressed in threefold.

First, the EFA and CFA tests validated two dimensions in this study that were suggested by HF's dimensions: process and professional. However, the meaning of process-oriented culture was different from HF's. In process-oriented cultures, employees perceived themselves as being initiative, warm, and direct. These attributes emphasised

heavily on how management wanted things to be done in the sample hotels. In contrast, HF's process-oriented cultures involved a concern of means such as employees avoiding risks and spending limited efforts on jobs (Hofstede, 1998). It could be argued that front-line employees in international branded hotels in Hainan were required to be initiative, warm, and direct when interacting with customers. Unlike HF's process dimension, these attributes of organisational cultural practices were more industry specific since the hotel industry placed a great emphasis on how customer-facing employees great and serve customers.

Employees of professional cultures emphasised being cost-conscious, and speaking seriously of the job and the hotel. They were also aware of the competitions with other companies. According to Hofstede (1998), these features implied that their organisational identity was largely derived from the type of job they were involved in. Employees of professional cultures showed more seriousness to their work which made them more cost-conscious and were aware of competitions. This result was compatible with Øgaard's (2006) findings which suggested a common hotel cultural practice of being professional-oriented from the views of employees.

Second, the third dimension diverged from HF's dimensions. This dimension was termed 'individual development', which represented a culture of advancing staff development and acknowledging employees' work performance. This might be a hidden organisational cultural practice for the hotel industry. Similarly, Tepeci and Barlett

(2002) also found organisational cultural practices containing an individual development dimension that existed in the hospitality and service industry. This supported the claim that a culture of individual development might be unique and specific to hotels within the hospitality industry.

Third, the rest of the cultural practices from Hofstede's study evidenced less according to the desirable reliability in this study, which indicated a less concern from hotel employees' perspective in this research context. For front-line hotel employees in Hainan, internal, closed and employee-oriented cultural practices were not as significant to their daily work. This result was quite different from other Western studies such as Øgaard (2006) who concluded that his organisational practices corresponded well to previous findings in studies of similar topics. It might suggest that internal, closed and employee-oriented cultural practices were commonly adopted in the Western research context. In that case, the exclusion of these three dimensions might due to cultural differences between Western and Chinese employees. Employees' understanding and perception of organisational cultural practices varied from Western and Chinese cultures. Therefore, this third difference could be culture specific.

The validation of the organisational cultural practices scale evoked an investigation on the application of organisational culture in different industries. There was evidence that cultural forms evolved to fit industry dynamics and that there could be great variation across industries (Lee & Yu, 2004). Scholars of institutional theory argued that industry

was a key determinant of organisational culture, which could mould organisational practices (MacIntosh & Doherty, 2010; Ogbonna & Harris, 2002). Hence, it was very likely that any organisational culture instrument would be less valid and representative when it was used in a different industry. Furthermore, Verbeke (2000) pointed out that the independence of organisational cultural practices was shaped not only by the core values, but also by internal and external forces, such as management control systems and competitive pressure. Therefore, organisational cultural practices required all members of the hotel to change constantly in response to the competitive environment. In order not to compromise the face validity of organisational cultural practice—that was to minimise mismatching items with conceptual meaning of the dimensions in different studies—more development work was needed.

5.8.4 Research Question 6–9: Organisational Culture and Internal Branding

5.8.4.1 *Relationship between Organisational Culture and Internal Branding*

As suggested by the literature reviewed, organisational culture was found to have a relationship with internal branding. Hypothesis 3 was thereby supported, with a high standardised coefficient between organisational culture and internal branding ($\beta = 0.97$), indicating a strong relationship. It could now be claimed that organisational culture was not only an antecedent of corporate marketing or corporate branding (Davies & Chun, 2012; Wilson, 2001); it also shaped the success of internal branding strategy in employees' standpoint. This relationship could be explained by arguing that the more employees appreciated of the organisation's cultural practices, the more smoothly they could fulfil the needs of internal branding.

International branded hotels in Hainan should be cautious with the organisational cultural practices identified from this study because they might change over time. According to Hofstede (2001), the way cultures affect employees in an organisation was through shared practices. What practices were shared might vary from time to time depending on employees' perceptions of the values that hotel management had shaped. As a result, management should evaluate organisational cultural practices regularly and study possible dimensions that might influence internal branding strategy.

This result could be further extended to the question of how organisational cultural practices influence internal branding. This study did not examine which dimension of organisational cultural practices had the strongest relationship with internal branding. Whether internal branding could be carried out successfully was depended on the congruency between employees' perceived organisational cultural practices and internal branding. Any incoherence between the two perceptions could cause resistance and eventually brought the branding strategy to an end. Many studies (e.g., de Chernatony & Cottam, 2006; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2001) demonstrated a similar phenomenon in other service industries. Unfortunately, this study did not focus on employees' perceptions of the relationships between individual organisational cultural practices and internal branding. This question was left for follow-up studies in the future.

5.8.4.2 *Relationship between Organisational Culture and Brand Knowledge, Brand Experience, and Brand Image*

When exploring more specifically on the relationship between organisational culture and internal branding, it was worth investigating how organisational culture affected employees' brand knowledge, their brand experience, and their brand image in the concept of internal branding. Hypotheses 3-1 and 3-2 predicted that organisational cultural practices would be positively related to brand knowledge and brand experience, and the results supported these two hypotheses. On the other hand, hypothesis 3-3 was rejected and not supported by the data due to an insignificant effect of organisational cultural practices on brand image.

Organisational culture had a fairly strong relationship with brand knowledge, with a standardised coefficient of 0.83. This could be interpreted as a more comprehensive understanding of the organisational culture would lead to a better brand knowledge. This result echoed with previous literature's findings regarding the indirect connection between organisational and brand knowledge (such as Gotsi et al., 2008). Employees' perceived organisational cultural practices were designed based on the values established by the top management, as described by Hofstede (1998). Yet, not all employees of any hotel shared these values in reality. But, if they would want to keep their jobs in the hotel, they would need to follow the specific organisational cultural practices. Hence, with an improved awareness of cultural practices employees would pick up more of the brand knowledge; this would happen when viewing brand knowledge as one part of the organisational values. Hotel managers should devote some

of their attentions on looking for ways to promote organisational cultural practices. These cultural practices would influence employees' behaviours at work (Yang, 2007); for example, once some hotel employees realised that all other employees are initiative and warm, they would be more likely to follow the same practice. In the end, it would help form employees' perception of hotel's service standard being initiative and warm. It would result a better understanding of the brand knowledge since service level is one part of the brand knowledge concept.

Likewise, organisational culture was positively related to brand experience. Based on the correlation between organisational cultural practices and brand experience, 1 unit increase in organisational cultural practices would lead to a 0.67 unit increase in brand experience. This echoed with Mosley's (2007) argument about customer experience that the reinforcement of culture from front-line employees would enhance the delivery of a distinctive customer brand experience. It would also apply to employees that they had to experience the brand experience first before delivering to customers. Therefore, from both theoretical and empirical perspectives, employees' perceived organisational cultural practice had a positive influence on their brand experience. This relationship could be strengthened when employees' brand knowledge is involved as a mediator. Statistics showed that the total effect of organisational cultural practice on brand experience could be increased by 0.26. With a consistent organisational cultural practice and perceived brand knowledge, employees could feel more sensory experiences that might help them to generate positive image of the brand. Thus, hotel HR department should be constantly promoting organisational cultural practices and brand knowledge in various ways such

as training, daily briefings, and memo; this is where Punjaisri and Wilson's (2009) measurement of internal branding could be applied to deliver the desired cultural practices and brand knowledge to employees repeatedly. As a result, employees' would notice more when experiencing the brand at work.

The direct effect of organisational cultural practice on brand image was insignificant with an estimate value of 0.37. It demonstrated a lack of relationship between the two concepts. Despite the relationship identified in Hatch and Schultz's study (2003), the result suggested that the hypothesis of a positive relationship between organisational cultural practice and brand image was rejected in the current study context. This implied that organisational cultural practices would not influence the perceived associations that employees might have with their daily work activities. Although organisational cultural practices had impact on employees' brand knowledge and their brand experience which helped to form employees' brand image; hotel employees in this study did not view organisational cultural practices having enough direct influence to affect their brand image.

It could be assumed as hotels that were surveyed in this study might have little organisational cultural practices that were perceived by the survey participants. Many hotels in this study were opened less than five years and only a few were operated for more than 10 years in Hainan. The operation period of those young hotels might be too short to form proper organisational cultural practices. With the issue of talented

professionals hoping jobs from hotel to hotel frequently (("『国际旅游岛』," 2010), it would be common to see new managers changing the old ways of working in their new positions. This phenomenon would seriously affect the cultural practice in an organisation. Hotel employees therefore would not be able to pick up new practices easily. Although hotel employees identified three organisational cultural practices dimensions in this study, these dimensions were tested at the individual level when asking each participant to provide their opinions. Individual participant had identified significant cultural practices; but when collecting all of their views together it did not show whether these cultural practices were commonly shared by these employees (Wilson, 2001). In other words, the result showed in this study might be caused by the employees who might not share the same organisational cultural practices. That would thus result no relation towards brand image which was perceived individually. In that case, their perceived brand image would not be influenced by the organisational cultural practices.

Nevertheless, employees' brand knowledge and brand experience were discovered to have mediating effect on the relationship between the aforementioned two concepts. The total indirect effect caused by employees' brand knowledge and brand experience had a coefficient estimate value of 0.53. With the inclusion of brand knowledge and brand experience, the impact of organisational culture on brand image was increment to $\beta = 0.89$. Both brand knowledge and brand experience indirectly and significantly explained the relationship of organisational cultural practice and brand image. Therefore, employees' brand knowledge and brand experience played a critical role if hotel

management consider the impact of organisational cultural practices on enhancing employees' brand images.

This result illustrated a different idea about the relations between image and culture. Hatch and Schultz (2003) argued that the projected images must align with organisational culture in order to generate brand values that reflect with the actual brand experience. However, it was the opposite scenario in this study according to the result. It was evident that brand knowledge and brand experience were essential for creating brand image when there was an impact of organisational culture. In conclusion, employees' organisational cultural practices would not affect their brand image; unless brand knowledge was obtained and/or sensory experiences were felt. Further study could look into the reasons why organisational cultural practices were not related to employees' perceived brand image.

5.8.5 Research Question 10–11: Internal Branding and Employee Job Satisfaction

Internal branding was significantly related to employee job satisfaction. Employees' brand image was in particularly strongly related to job satisfaction. Hypothesis 4 and 4-1 were supported, in line with Miles and Mangold's (2004) proposition. If internal branding strategies were successfully implemented, employees would be more likely to have positive brand experience. At the same time, a positive brand image would form in their mind. From examining the mean values of the data, participants from this study showed a relatively high satisfaction rate to most indicators apart from salary. This could

be resulted by a positive image they have on their fellow workers, supervisors, hotel guests, hotel policy, hotel support, and hotel advancement programmes. In order to have such positive image formed, employees must have encountered brand knowledge and brand experience from their daily routine work such as understanding training materials and working with supervisors. A positive perception of their brand knowledge and brand experience would consequently result a positive brand image. Employees who perceived such brand image would feel more satisfied with their job. This implied how internal branding had an impact on employees' job satisfaction. This result empirically confirmed the proposition of Miles and Mangold (2004) and illustrated a positive relationship between internal branding and employee job satisfaction.

When they were highly satisfied, employees could see a series of outgrowth opportunities, for instance increased sense of belonging, a boost in brand loyalty, and reduced turnover. These potential outcomes were currently major issues for Hainan's international branded hotels. The fast development of this industry in the market had produced a constant human resources problem for hotel management. If implementing internal branding would diminish the negative issues of human resources, Chinese national/local branded hotels might also be interested in testing whether this strategy could be generalised to them. Therefore, hotel management in international branded hotels should consider applying more internal branding strategies. Especially, employees' perceived brand experiences should be focused essentially. It is because brand experience in this study influenced most on employees' formed brand image. Managers must consider improving their organisation management style and human resource

management practices in a way that, employees' job satisfaction was considered; employees' problems at work were solved; hotels' communication styles were refined; management leadership was developed; employees' training was delivered; and service quality rewards were awarded. By strengthening these facets would be very helpful for achieving employees' job satisfaction.

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter started with an analysis of the findings. The results on the usability of the collected data suggested that the data was appropriate for carrying out further tests. Sample characteristics and descriptive statistics provided background information about the sample population and their answers. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted for each construct to explore the underlying dimensions of each construct. That was followed by confirmatory factor analysis for each measurement scale to verify the reliability and validity of each measurement scale. An overall measurement model of CFA was later tested to check for correlations between the latent variables. In the end, two proposed structural models were run, testing the hypotheses.

Most of the hypotheses were supported, except for three of which two being partially supported and one being rejected. This meant that the theoretical foundation of the proposed conceptual models was quite solid. In addition, the data collected from the chosen sample was adequate for this study. In summary, brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image were shown to be elements of internal branding that could

be used to measure internal branding. Brand knowledge was negatively related to brand image, whilst brand experience was positively related to employees' image of the brand. Organisational cultural practices contained three dimensions: process, professional, and individual development. Organisational culture was strongly related to internal branding, and it was related to brand knowledge and brand experience when tested separately. The only insignificant relationship was between organisational cultural practices and brand image. The results suggested that internal branding might increase employee job satisfaction, especially brand images that strongly influenced job satisfaction.

The second half of this chapter extended the analysis of the findings to a critical discussion on how results were to be interpreted. The discussion was ordered based on the research questions on which each result was based. This section explained whether the research questions of this study were answered from the findings. Moreover, critical contentions were brought forward for further thought in the hope that this would further future studies.

To conclude, the objectives of this study were fulfilled after a rigorous empirical test of the hypotheses. Relationships among the five constructs were definite, and problems in the process were addressed accordingly. A discussion of the contributions made to knowledge and practice would bring this study to a conclusion.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the entire process of this study including the purpose, theory development, research method selection, hypothesis test, results and discussion. In addition, the significance of this study in terms of its theoretical contribution and implication to the industry are addressed. Limitations are explained followed by suggestions on future research directions. A conclusion remark is issued in the end of this chapter.

6.2 Overview of the Study

6.2.1 Review of Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to consolidate the theoretical foundation of internal branding and to further examine if organisational culture would make any impact on the implementation of internal branding in international branded hotels that are operating in China. Another purpose is to empirically verify whether internal branding would affect employees' satisfaction towards their jobs.

These research objectives are designed in order to study employees' perceptions on brand in international branded hotels. Branding issues have been noticed in China's hotel industry; one of them being if international branded hotels could successfully embed their brand values into local employees' mind. Introduction chapter has

pinpointed some obvious consequences caused by several misconducts of the internal branding. From recognising those existing problems, this study has identified the importance of studying internal branding and its ties with any possible precursor as well as consequence. At last, organisational culture and employee job satisfaction are chosen as internal branding's inducement and sequel, respectively, to be inspected in this specific research context in Hainan.

Chapter 2 and 3 have reviewed relevant studies that examined the key concepts of this study. As groundwork of understanding conceptions, studies concerning branding, corporate branding, internal marketing, internal branding, culture, national, corporate and organisational culture, and job satisfaction have been pertinently and critically analysed. With rigid knowledge gained after reviewing past literature, research gaps have been discovered along with an establishment of the synthesis of major constructs. Subsequently, a conceptual framework is pictured with 11 hypotheses about internal branding measurements and its linkages between organisational culture and job satisfaction.

Given the nature of this study on the subject of international branded hotels operating in China, Hainan Island has been selected as the study context as it has a rapid growing market for international branded hotels. Methodology chapter explains the reasons for adopting specific measurement scales for each construct; and using exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modelling to test the suggested hypotheses. Sampling

methods and data collection methods have been justified individually in each stage of the research procedure, containing measurement item screening test stage, pilot study stage, and main survey stage. Preliminary findings extracted from screening and pilot tests are illustrated in this chapter as well. In order to ease the process of expounding findings, available data analysis techniques together with the criteria that have been employed are explicated towards the end of the chapter.

6.2.2 Outcome of the Study

Chapter 5 interprets the findings produced from the main survey data. All 11 hypotheses have been examined with some expected as well as surprising results. In summary, internal branding is verified to comprise brand knowledge, brand experience and brand image as its primary elements and measurements. Especially, brand knowledge has a negative impact on brand image while brand experience on the opposite has a positive and strong impact on brand image. A positive yet small impact is found on brand experience from brand knowledge. Organisational culture is found to have only three dimensions instead of six as suggested by other scholars. It appears to be one of the strong factors influencing internal branding; at the same time it has positive effects on both brand knowledge and brand experience and has no direct effect on brand image. Being confirmed as a corollary of internal branding's implementation, employee job satisfaction can be increased when the implementation of internal branding achieves its goals or employees perceive a strong brand image.

These results have been further discussed in association with past research results and practical industrial cases. Research questions have been reflected in the discussion to address the accomplishment of research objectives. The premier focus of the discussion is on whether the empirical data supports proposed theoretical base; and the next essential focus regards to the generalisability of the results when compared with other similar or interrelated studies. In general, three core research objectives initially raised for this study have been accomplished with fairly good results. This research study has reached its major goals for the current stage.

6.3 Theoretical Contribution

6.3.1 Internal Branding Concept

Although many study foci have been switched to internal branding in recent years, little consensus has been reached on what internal branding refers to and how it is assessed. From reviewing extensive previous literature, this study integrates the primary concerns of internal branding into one integral definition which contains three major dimensions. This may reduce misinterpretation and confusions caused by various understandings of internal branding. To produce a holistic view of internal branding may also ease researchers' efforts in addressing irrelevant issues when studying different phases of this concept each time. Take Punjaisri et al's (2009) study as an example, their idea of internal branding emphasises more on an integrative collaboration among corporate functions which has been classified as the third dimension in the overall definition in this study – 'applying the process at all organisational levels to align management and employee behaviour and values' (details in Section 2.3.1). For that purpose, they used

employees' perceptions towards orientation, training, group meeting and so on to measure internal branding. It would be inappropriate to apply the same measurement theory when studying how hotels promote brand values/images effectively to the employees. Thus, it makes great sense to distinguish the underlying aspects of internal branding and provides a fairly thorough definition for this concept before deciding suitable measurement theory.

Besides the development of a universal definition of internal branding, this study has pursued the basis of internal branding for the first dimension that is promoting brand values and images effectively to employees. Brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image have been empirically proved to form the support to internal branding promotion. It implies the necessity to apply brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image together into the study whenever the study focus is on promoting brand values/images to employees. They should be adopted as a whole to examine numerous research problems in relation to internal branding promotion. If probing into the basic principle of internal branding, it would benefit the accuracy of measuring this concept.

In order to fully understand the integrity of internal branding, this study encloses one antecedent and one consequence of internal branding too. Scientific figures help to learn how organisational culture affects internal branding, and how internal branding affects employee job satisfaction. This study fills in the gaps in theory regarding the effectiveness of organisational culture to internal branding and internal branding to

employee job satisfaction. It aids to better explain internal branding allied phenomenon and offers factual evidence to support hypotheses.

The concept of internal branding has been researched in different regions such as Thailand, U.S., Taiwan, UK, and etc, but not in China. It is believed that this study has firstly brought internal branding concept into the Chinese research context and applied it in the hotel industry. By studying internal branding in China, the results of this study can help international branded hotels further improve their internal branding strategies by reviewing their brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image. It can also help domestic branded hotels to further develop their internal branding strategies. This study provides a starting point for non-branded domestic hotels to initiate internal branding strategies. The growing attention on service industry in China implies a critical need of internal branding to help strengthen organisations' service brands. Hence, the results of this study have provided suggestions on what to consider when promoting brand promises to employees.

6.3.2 Hotel Branding Concept

This study is initiated from identifying problems that exist in the hotel industries, especially in Hainan where hotel development has achieved a great leap. International branded hotels in particular suffer from high turnover rate and lacking sufficient professionals and talents in Hainan. With the unique characteristics of hotel industry, inseparability between service and consumption largely requires employees'

understanding of the brand and their instant response to customers' needs. In addition, hotels operating in a resort destination involve extensive interaction between employees and hotel guests. This special feature of hotels generates a need for hotel management to pay extra attention on how their employees deliver desired brand promises to guests. This study specifically aims at examining internal branding concept for international branded hotels to help advancing the implementation of effective internal branding programmes.

Measurement scales used for all constructs in this study are checked with both hotel industrial practitioners and academic experts in the hotel field. Therefore, the items generated are uniquely for the international branded hotels. These measurement items are used in the survey targeting front-line employees who are working in the international branded hotels in Hainan. As a result, data collected represent international branded hotel employees mainly and the findings only reflect to what these employees perceive. The results of this study greatly identify the features of internal branding that have been implemented in the studied hotels. Furthermore, employees' perception of internal branding, organisational culture, and job satisfaction examined in this study help to fulfil the gap that is little researched in the hotel or hospitality literature.

Hence, the hotel branding concept has been advanced in terms of benefiting from the implications of this study. Hotel employees' perceptions have been examined regarding internal branding, organisational culture, and job satisfaction. Features of internal

branding, organisational culture, and job satisfaction that are specifically identified in this study can add additional understanding to hotel branding discipline.

6.3.3 Generalisation of the Study Approach

Generally speaking, studying employees' perceptions in the matter of internal branding remedies a lack of employees' voice in theory development. Employees have received little attention in quite a few branding areas, such as corporate branding, service branding, and internal branding/marketing. Nonetheless, it becomes rather difficult to neglect their viewpoint in a research topic like the current one. From understanding what they perceive and desire, internal branding studies can be extended to an in-depth and also an immense domain.

One appended gain of this study is the realisation of how organisational cultural practice measurement varies from one study context to another. It intimates that a commonly adopted measurement scale of organisational culture developed by Hofstede et al. (1990) should not be directly applied into any context which is different from its original one. Since organisational cultural practice differs from industry to industry, it is recommended to explore specific cultural practices when studying a sample from another industry. This may arouse a research interest in comparing cultural practices in different industries and how these practices vary accordingly.

Internal branding concept should not be evaluated only in the hotel industry. It is vital for other service industries to discover the impact internal branding could bring to the businesses. Although this study has identified the integral definition of internal branding and suggested the fundamental basis of the concept, it is worthwhile to explore whether this implication would work for other service industries, especially each industry has its own features. The meaning of internal branding may vary between industries. For example, Miles and Mangold (2005) term internal branding as employee branding and position their developed employee branding process on Southwest Airlines. Their study has considered source/modes of messages essential in the process which is not deemed as vital in this study. Each service industry may acquire features of brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image variably. Measurements will have to be redeveloped to suit specific industry's nature. It certainly will prolong the study of internal branding and improve the notion of this concept.

6.4 Practical Contribution

6.4.1 International branded hotels

This study enables researchers to learn internal branding and its relevant matters from employees' standpoint. It helps to understand how front-line employees perceive the implementation of internal branding strategy in international branded hotels. Furthermore, it assists to explore what branding features are important to employees when they are engaged in the internal branding. By understanding their perceptions, hotels can figure ways to stimulate employees to receiving brand associations from messages and/or experiences; and then to generate associated images. For instance, this

study shows that 'the meaning of hotel brand', 'the importance of one's work', and 'service level of the hotel' are critical features that could bring brand associated knowledge into employees' attention. The hotels examined in this study can therefore successively enforce communication of these messages via hotel policy, employees' handbook, and hotel leaflet and brochure, etc.

Hotels can now draw their attentions on brand messages/values (brand knowledge), and five senses (Brakus et al., 2009) that can be felt through daily work routines (brand experience). They should first carefully consider the substance of brand image they would like their employees to picture. Then, the types of brand messages and five senses (sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste) can be developed in association with the desire brand image. Whether employees would digest and internalise the conveyed materials depends largely on their senses experienced at work, followed by acquired brand information; suggested by the findings of this study.

Understanding what forms employees' brand associated images is a vital task for hotels to tackle. This study locates 'hotel's interests in employee job satisfaction', and 'hotel solves employees' problem at work' as the sensory experiences from employees' eyes. In this case, hotel management should highlight their interests in employees' job satisfaction via different channels in the work environment; while initiating solutions to resolve any employees' problems. It is not difficult to identify employees' needs for hotels' care. If hotels could accurately identify the employees' needs and interests, and

cater to employees' tastes; internal branding can achieve twice the results with half the effort.

It is necessary for hotels to recognise the importance of internal branding in terms of achieving employee job satisfaction. Many current HRM issues occurred in international branded hotels operating in Hainan are either directly or indirectly connected with employees' satisfaction towards their jobs. Examples include high turnover rate, job burnout, negative service quality, lack of loyalty and many more. By providing a thriving internal branding employees should perceive a positive brand image that is partnered with their benefits. It would directly increase the satisfaction level of employees. Hence, international branded hotels in this study are suggested to contemplate the ways of effectively promoting brand messages/values under internal branding.

6.4.2 Domestic Branded Hotels

Although this study aims at international branded hotels that are operating in Hainan, the intention has originally sought to assist brand development for domestic hotels. For those branded or intended to be branded hotels in China, this study points out the importance of implementing internal branding for accomplishing a fundamental step of brand development. In addition, this study advocates an understanding of the roles employees play; as well as the significance in providing them necessities to deliver the desired brand image, namely brand knowledge and brand experience. Given that a

guideline has been provided for conducting one dimension of internal branding strategy that is how to effectively promote brand messages and values, domestic branded hotels can adhere to the recommendations advised in previous sections and start building their own strategy.

Organisational cultural practices should be recognised as a key influential factor on internal branding. China domestic branded hotels may perform completely different cultural practices in comparison with those international branded ones operating in China. Therefore, there is a must to get familiar with the types of culture practices that exist in different hotels; and then further inspect the influence of each types of organisational cultural practice on internal branding strategy. It would be interesting to find out which practice would have stronger impact on internal branding and what would be the discrepancy among domestic branded hotels and international branded hotels.

Domestic hotels will receive great benefits once they initiated the internal branding approaches, such as achieving employees' job satisfaction. As discussed in early sections, employees' job satisfaction has an impact on turnover, job performance, and intention to leave. By implementing internal branding strategies, domestic hotels are likely to minimise potential human resources issues if employees' job satisfaction is positively affected.

6.4.3 Hotels in Hainan

The results of this study explicitly reflect the perceptions of hotel employees working in Hainan. This would suggest that hotels in Hainan should focus on specific features identified in this study when considering internal branding, the impact of organisational culture, and the potential consequence that may cause to the human resource issues. In particular, hotels should emphasis brand messages on the content of the hotel, target customers, meaning of the hotel to customers, and service level. It seems that Hainan employees associate more with these facets. In terms of brand experience, hotel management style should focus on keeping employees informed, considering job satisfaction, and solving problems for employees; whilst human resources practices should focus on leadership, providing training and rewards. By implementing these approaches, employees are probable to associate desired image of the hotel brand.

However, each hotel brand should apply the approaches accordingly due to that they may require different brand images to be received by employees. In that case, brand knowledge and brand experience should be adjusted to reflect hotel brand promise specifically. If a hotel brand desire employees to picture a harmony culture, the content of the brand and the meaning of the brand to customers should indicate heavily on creating a harmony atmosphere. At the same time, the leadership style, training content, and problem solving pattern should also hint the same matter. This advice also applies to organisational cultural practices that hotels need to take practices into their own business context and consider carefully how to utilise the impacts to their full extents.

Both international branded hotels and domestic hotels in Hainan can reward from this study's results. Nonetheless, international branded hotels may encounter less changes because of their established branding system. Yet, they may face other problems when modifying the programmes such as employees resistance to the change. On the other hand, domestic hotels in Hainan may need less time to achieve the desired result since they start from the scratch, and building an internal branding programme that has been empirically and significantly tested.

6.5 Limitations of the Study

Several limitations have been identified which may affect the validity of this study in light of accomplishing the research objectives and answering the research questions. Since organisational culture is closely related to national culture (Pizam, 1993) especially when discussing a cross-culture matter, the findings may not be comprehensive and objective by simply considering the impact of organisational culture on internal branding process. Nevertheless, by focusing only one level of culture in investigating the possible impact on internal branding, this study can provide some insights of the issues that may appear and keep the discussion centred and grounded to a certain extent.

Limited literature has been found on direct connection between organisational culture and brand knowledge/brand experience; as well as the connections among internal branding elements from employees' perspective. Although customers' perspective of

branding topics has been considered, it raises a concern on the relevance of those adopted literature towards the theme of this study. This limitation however has been reduced by finding the support from seeking views from the hotel managers during the screening test stage. Once completed appropriately, this study significantly contributes to branding theory in terms of empirically consolidating the root for relationships among organisational culture and internal branding and its elements from employees' perceptions.

The targeted population is mainly Chinese employees. However, there may exist cultural differences among these Chinese employees in terms of their hometown, educational background, and so on. This study has no intention to measure whether the cultural differences among Chinese employees would have an impact on internal branding process; nor if there is any difference between the perceptions on internal branding that fell into various categories of characteristics. Nevertheless, demographic profile questions are still included in the survey questionnaire to offer basic background information of front-line employees working in international branded hotels in Hainan. Convenience sampling could be a biased sampling method.

Descriptive data analysis has shown a skewed sampling distribution in terms of age, education, and year of work experience. According to the central limit theorem, if the sample data are relatively normal the sampling distribution will be normal too (Field, 2009). In this case, the sample data for age, education, and year of work is not normally

distributed. This would be problematic if testing the multiple group analysis in future studies.

Research method design involves screening test and pilot test, findings still proved multicollinearity and cross-loading issues. This warns future study to redevelop measurement items for organisational culture practice and brand knowledge, brand experience, brand image under internal branding. Moreover, issues can also be avoided by conducting pilot test twice. One is for developing the measurement scales after identifying potential items from the screening test; the other one is for verifying the questionnaire with a test of the newly developed measurement scales in order to reduce the number of variables for the main survey. Applying comprehensive tests to confirm measurements may minimise probable issues to be occurred in CFA and structural model. Findings have also suggested the differences that may occur when testing the same scale in different research contexts.

Since data collection assignment allocated to liaison officers in the selected hotels permits them to choose who to give out the questionnaires, it risks the quality of data. Although researcher's presence on field may help to reduce the potential damage of data incompletion, the liaison officers could still choose those employees who are easily accessible. At this point, the sample is subject to bias (Jennings, 2001).

By studying Hainan as a specific case for the connections between internal branding and other discussed constructs, this study may not be able to generate generalised results which represent a wide range of population. This research could only be seen as the first attempt to explore the relationships between those constructs and which may need further research to reach a broader situation.

6.6 Future Research Directions

Follow up research is taken into consideration to further expand the knowledge regarding internal branding and its antecedent as well as consequence. Future research directions can be threefold: 1) internal branding; 2) organisational culture; and 3) descriptive analysis on employees' characteristics or hotel differences.

As mentioned several times in this study, there is a strong need to redevelop measurement scale of internal branding along with the underlying dimensions, i.e. brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image. While the study figures employees' chief role in interpreting internal branding, it is prerequisite to know their perception of what hotel brand is and how they associate such a perception with their working environment. After collecting views from employees via interview or focus group, a series of attributes would probably be developed representing employees' views of branding elements. From then on, researchers can verify the reliability and validity of those attributes by applying them into any context.

Causal relationships among brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image can be further tested in another service industry to provide generous evidence of how they interlinks with each other. A comparison between customers and employees' views on brand knowledge, brand experience, and brand image can be explored in order to determine the similarity and difference between the two groups. It could better bridge the gap between what customers expect and what employees observe in the service consumption circumstance.

Furthermore, which participated hotels of this study have practiced internal branding approaches can be investigated by using the measurement items of internal branding identified from this study. Frequency test and ANOVA test can be used as the main method to find out the mean values of each variable of internal branding that has been noted by the participants from different branded hotels.

Organisational culture is always a popular topic to be further examined. The extension of this study regarding organisational culture is again to redefine its measurement scale on cultural practices. As identified in this study that industry shapes organisational cultural practice, it is imperative to explore latent practices existing in various industries. This study does not compare between the three factors of cultural practices in terms of their impacts on internal branding or on brand knowledge/brand experience. It would be appealing to see which cultural practice has the most influence on internal branding and which one has the least. This topic will be further developed into a research paper. Not

only cultural practices should be studied, organisational cultural values may vary between industries. Despite that values are rather stable at the organisational level; different interpretation may cause differences between employees and later affect their perceptions on organisational strategies.

Future studies will also include sample characteristics to look for differences between employees' background and how that would affect the perception of internal branding. Furthermore, a comparison among all studied hotels in this study is deemed as compelling to discern which hotel brand outperforms others in internal branding performance. These recommended topics will be followed up soon in the future.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter concludes the study of this research topic. An overview of the study is presented summarising the key aspects of each chapter. Implications to both theory and industry have been illustrated which can lead to practical execution. Hotels, no matter international branded ones or domestic branded ones, can be of benefit to learn the basis of internal branding and its vital elements from this study. Research gaps discovered in literatures are now filled with contributions to the understanding of the concepts. No research study can be perfect without any limitation in any shape or form, so is this one. Limitations in this study have been thought of for future improvement. Some can be avoided in the follow up studies. Future research directions are pointed out to further extend the knowledge of internal branding and organisational culture. It is hoped to

continue the contributions to both academic theory and industry practice in studying internal branding.

Appendix I. Interview Structure

Interview Structure – Industrial Practitioner

Things to mention at the beginning:

i. The length of the interview; 访谈需时

ii. Confidentiality; 信息保密

iii. The use of voice recorder. 询问录音事宜

I. Brief background introduction (简单的背景调查):

➢ 1. When did you join this hotel? (您是什么时候加入这家酒店的？)
➢ 2. How long have you been in this position? (您在目前这个职位上的时间？)
➢ 3. How long have you been worked in the hotel industry? (您在酒店行业里工作有多久？)
➢ 4. Can you please briefly describe the history of this hotel brand by using one or two sentences? e.g. when did it establish? what were the milestones? etc.
(您可以用一到两句话来描述贵酒店品牌的历史吗？例如，什么时候建立的？有哪些里程碑？等)

II. Knowledge about the key concepts (对主要概念的理解)：

➢ 1. I would like to find out about your perception of this hotel's organisational culture. Please give examples to illustrate.
我想了解您对贵酒店组织文化的理解，请举实例说明。

➢ 2. Similarly, what is your understanding of employees' job satisfaction? Examples.
相同的，我想了解您对员工满意度的了解，请举实例说明。

➢ 3. The very key concept of my research is Internal Branding,
我的研究里最主要的一个概念是内部品牌化，

- i. does this hotel have some sort of internal branding process/procedures? Examples.

请问贵酒店是否有类似内部品牌化的策略？请举例说明。

- ii. how does this hotel promote brand messages to employees? Examples.

请问酒店是如何向酒店员工推广品牌信息的？请举例说明。

- iii. how does this hotel influence employees' experiences on employer's brand via daily work? Examples.

请问酒店是如何通过日常工作去影响员工对雇主品牌的体验的？请举例说明。

- iv. can you share with me if this hotel has conducted any research on employees' perception of brand image? Examples.

请问贵酒店有没有对员工进行过有关对贵酒店品牌形象认知的调查？请举例说明。

III. Questionnaire evaluation (问卷评估)：

➢ Explain the purpose; 陈述问卷目的
➢ Explain the process; 陈述问卷方法
➢ Explain the time needed. 需时约 15 – 20 分钟

IV. Wrap up (总结):

➢ Ask for questions/comments/suggestions if there is any;
询问问题，意见及建议。

➢ Show appreciation;
表示感谢。

➢ Arrange future cooperation – data collection.
计划未来的合作 – 数据收集。

Others （其他）：

Interview Structure – Academic Scholar

Things to mention at the beginning:

i. The length of the interview; 访谈需时

ii. Confidentiality; 信息保密

iii. The use of voice recorder. 询问录音事宜

I. Brief background introduction (简单的背景调查):

➤ 1. Have you worked in a hotel before? (您在酒店行业工作过吗？)
➤ 2. How much do you know about the hotel industry? (您对酒店行业的认识)
➤ 3. Can you please briefly describe the history of one hotel brand by using one or two sentences? e.g. when did it establish? what were the milestones? etc.
(您可以用一到两句话来描述某个酒店品牌的历史吗？例如，什么时候建立的？有哪些里程碑？等)

II. Knowledge about the key concepts (对主要概念的理解):

➤ 1. I would like to find out about your perception of this hotel's organisational culture. Please give examples to illustrate.
我想了解您对酒店组织文化的理解，请举实例说明。

➤ 2. Similarly, what is your understanding of employees' job satisfaction? Examples.
相同的，我想了解您对员工满意度的了解，请举实例说明。

➤ 3. The very key concept of my research is Internal Branding,
我的研究里最主要的一个概念是内部品牌化，

- i. does this hotel have some sort of internal branding process/procedures? Examples.

请问酒店是否有类似内部品牌化的策略？请举例说明。

- ii. how does this hotel promote brand messages to employees? Examples.

请问酒店是如何向酒店员工推广品牌信息的？请举例说明。

- iii. how does this hotel influence employees' experiences on employer's brand via daily work? Examples.

请问酒店是如何通过日常工作去影响员工对雇主品牌的体验的？请举例说明。

- iv. can you share with me if this hotel has conducted any research on employees' perception of brand image? Examples.

请问酒店有没有对员工进行过有关对贵酒店品牌形象认知的调查？请举例说明。

III. Questionnaire evaluation (问卷评估):

➤ Explain the purpose; 陈述问卷目的
➤ Explain the process; 陈述问卷方法
➤ Explain the time needed. 需时约 15 – 20 分钟

IV. Wrap up (总结):

➤ Ask for questions/comments/suggestions if there is any;
  询问问题，意见及建议。

➤ Show appreciation;
  表示感谢。

Others （其他）:

Appendix II. Questionnaire Guide

尊敬的酒店领导：

您好！

　　我是陈夏颖(Rose)，现为香港理工大学酒店及旅游业管理学院博士研究生。此函之目的是诚挚地邀请您的酒店参加酒店内部品牌建设的问卷调研研究。

　　我的研究课题是内部品牌建设（亦称为"员工品牌建设"），尤其注重研究它对于酒店的意义。研究重点是企业文化如何对酒店内部品牌建设的过程产生影响。研究成果将为在中国的国际品牌酒店在品牌推广及员工培训方面提供依据。

　　我希望就此研究到贵酒店对<u>一线员工</u>（与酒店顾客有直接交流的员工）进行问卷调研，将会占用每位一线员工约 10 分钟的时间。调研执行期为 3 至 4 天。调研结果仅用于学术研究，将<u>不会</u>对外界公开任何与酒店相关的信息。

<div align="center">调研须知</div>

1. 调研对象必须为国际品牌酒店的员工；
2. 调研对象必须为酒店一线员工，即与酒店顾客有直接交流的员工；
（可参与部门有：前厅部，客房部，餐饮部，保安部，康乐部，娱乐部等）
3. 调研对象须完全填写每份问卷；
4. 调研对象应按个人意愿如实地回答问卷问题。

　　对您的大力支持再次表示衷心的感谢! 如有疑问，请致电（852）6573（香港）；1311899　　（内地）或发邮件到: rose.chen@＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

　　期盼回音!

　　此致

　　　　陈夏颖 Rose
　　　　2011 年 03 月 30 日

Appendix III. Main Survey Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY
香港理工大學

School of Hotel & Tourism Management
酒店及旅遊業管理學院

品牌酒店内部品牌化调研（主调研）

非常感谢您参与香港理工大学酒店及旅游管理学院的问卷调查。此项研究的目的是为了评估中国内地的国际品牌酒店一线员工对其就职酒店的组织文化，酒店内部品牌推广及工作满意度的了解及认知。研究的结果将为在中国的国际品牌酒店在品牌推广及员工培训方面提供依据。

本份问卷需时约 10 分钟，调研结果仅用于学术研究，您的回答我们将会以不记名方式严格保密。此问卷不存在正确或者错误的选择，我们唯一想了解的是您对每一个陈述的真实看法。如果您对本项研究有任何疑问，请联系调查负责人：陈夏颖 女士，香港理工大学酒店及旅游管理学院博士生。电话：(852)3400 2339；电子邮箱：rose.chen@_____

对于您的支持与合作，我们深表谢意！

此致

敬礼！

陈夏颖
2011 年 7 月

甄别问题 （请选择对你本人描述最准确的一项）			
S1. 您是酒店一线员工吗？	是___1	不是___2	（注：一线员工为与酒店顾客有直接接触员工）
S2. 性别：	男___1	女___2	
S3. 您的年龄属于：	18–24 岁___1　25–34 岁___2　35–44 岁___3　45–54 岁___4　55–64 岁___5　65 岁以上___6		
S4. 您接受过的最高教育：	小学及已下___1　初中或技校___2　高中或中专或职高___3　大学或大专___4　硕士研究生及以上__5		
S5. 您来自哪个地区：	华东___1　华南___2　华中___3　华北___4　西北___5　西南___6　东北___7　台港澳___8　海外___9		
S6. 您工作的部门是：	前厅部___1　客房部___2　餐饮部___3　保安部___4　康乐部___5　娱乐部___6　其他___7		
S7. 您在酒店行业里工作了多长时间？	少于 1 年___1　1 至 2 年___2　3 至 5 年___3　6 至 10 年___4　10 年以上___5		
S8. 您在当前工作的酒店里工作了多长时间？	少于 1 个月___1　1 至 3 个月___2　4 至 6 个月___3　7 至 12 个月___4　1 至 2 年___5　3 至 5 年___6　6 至 10 年___7　10 年以上___8		

请翻至背面开始作答 ……

第一部分： 组织文化

Q1. 自我评估 以下描述是关于您对自己的认识，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
在我当前工作的酒店里，								
1. 我是一名典型的高效率员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 我是一名典型的主动型员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 我是一名典型的有热情的员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 我是一名典型的直率的员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 我是一名典型的乐观型的员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 我是一名典型的穿戴整齐制服的员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 我乐于接受公司新员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 我能够自如应对工作。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. 我感到每天都有新的挑战。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. 我对目前的工作投入了最大的努力。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q2. 工作环境 以下描述是关于您对酒店的工作方式，以及整体工作环境的认识，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
在我当前工作的酒店里，								
1. 我通过非正式方式与其他员工沟通。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 我可以做重要的决定。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 我强烈地意识到竞争的存在。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 我需要严格遵守会议时间。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 我总是谈及酒店的历史。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 我总是认真地谈及我的工作和我工作的酒店。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 我具有节约成本的意识。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 我的私生活是我自己的事。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. 我作为新员工需要依靠自己去寻求适合自己的工作方法。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. 我作为新员工需要一年以上的时间才能感到工作自如。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q3. 酒店管理 以下描述是关于您对酒店的管理模式及形式的认识，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
在我当前工作的酒店里，								
1. 当我的工作做得好时，经理会告诉我。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 经理会帮助优秀的员工发展。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 经理可以容忍我的错误。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 各部门经理们将优秀的员工留在自己部门。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 各部门之间的合作和信任是良好的。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 管理层倡导并执行公司改革。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 管理层对待小事情上是吹毛求疵的。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 管理层集中制定所有决策。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. 工作结果比过程更重要。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q4. 酒店评估

以下描述是关于您对酒店的认识，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。

在我当前工作的酒店里，

	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
1. 酒店只关注我的工作。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 酒店与当地社区有紧密的联系。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 酒店很关心我的个人问题。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 酒店聘请我的唯一标准是看我的工作能力。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 酒店重视满足客户的需求。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 酒店很关注实际的工作环境。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 酒店在员工道德标准问题上注重实际效应而非教条。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 只有非常典型的人才能融入这个酒店。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

第二部分：内部品牌化

Q5. 员工对品牌信息的了解

以下描述是关于您对当前工作酒店的品牌信息的了解，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。

在我当前工作的酒店里，

	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
1. 我了解这家酒店的品牌内容及其含义。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 我了解谁是这家酒店的目标客户。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 我了解这家酒店的品牌对于顾客的意义。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 我了解这家酒店的服务质量水平。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 我了解我的工作对酒店成功的重要性。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 我了解我的行为是如何对酒店产生影响的。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 我了解自己在传递品牌信息中所扮演的角色。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 当顾客入住酒店后，我了解他们的期望。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q6. 员工对品牌的体验

以下描述是关于您对当前工作酒店的品牌在实际工作中的体验，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。

在我当前工作的酒店里，

	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
1. 我感受到经理在建立服务程序上所做出的努力。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 我感受到酒店管理层的领导力。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 我可以获得提高个人能力的培训以提供高品质的服务。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 酒店管理层对优质服务提供了各种奖励。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 酒店给予我一定程度的独立行事的权利，以便提高服务质量。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 酒店会对我公开信息。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 酒店会对我兑现承诺。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 酒店会了解我对工作的满意度。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. 酒店会解决我在工作上可能碰到的问题。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. 酒店提供在内部更换不同岗位的机会。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. 酒店提供在国外工作的机会。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. 酒店提供了与多国同事一起工作的机会。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q7. 员工对品牌形象的认知
以下描述是关于您对当前工作酒店的品牌形象的认知，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。

在我当前工作的酒店里，

	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
1. 酒店管理层对管理经营有远见。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 酒店有一种开放灵活的文化。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 酒店给顾客提供良好的服务质量。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 酒店品牌对顾客有重大的意义。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 酒店关心每位员工。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 酒店主动地解决我在工作上可能碰到的问题。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 酒店充分地发挥了我的特长，达到了学以致用。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 酒店为员工提供了良好的服务程序。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. 酒店为我提供了充分发挥创造力的空间。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. 酒店为我提供了一个无压力的工作环境。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. 酒店为我的长期职业发展提供了良好的机会。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. 酒店为我每日的工作提供了多样性。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

第三部分：员工满意度

Q8. 以下描述是关于您对当前工作酒店的评价，请根据您的实际工作情况，在最能反映您意见的方框内划圈（○），"7"代表"非常同意"，"1"代表"非常不同意"。

在我当前工作的酒店里，

	非常同意	同意	基本同意	中立	基本不同意	不同意	非常不同意	不确定
1. 我对我的同事感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. 我对我的上司感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. 我对酒店的顾客感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. 我对酒店的政策感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. 我对我的薪水感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. 我对酒店给我晋升的机会感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. 我对酒店提供给我的支持和帮助感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. 总体来说，我对我的工作感到满意。	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

问卷结束！

您提供的信息会被严格保密！

非常感谢您的参与！

Researcher Only	
Questionnaire Number：	Date：
Location：	Researcher：

International branded hotels' Internal Branding Survey
（Main Survey）

Thank you for participating in this questionnaire survey held by School of Hotel and Tourism Management in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The aim of this research is to examine the perception of front-line employees of international branded hotels that operate in China towards hotel's organisational culture, internal branding process, and their job satisfaction. The research results will provide evidence in promoting international branded hotels that operate in China and employees training.

This questionnaire will take about 10-15 minutes for you to complete. All data will be used by university for research purposes only and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. There is no right or wrong answers for this questionnaire and we would only like to know your truthful thought on each statement. If you have any hesitation about this research survey, please contact the researcher Ms. Rose Chen by phone (852) 3400 2339 or email: rose.chen@

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation!

Sincerely,
Rose Chen (PhD Student)
School of Hotel and Tourism Management
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
July 2011

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S1. Are you a front-line employee? Yes__1   No__2
(Note: Front-line employees interact with customers directly)

S2. Gender：Male__1   Female__2

S3. Age：18–24 __1   25–34 __2   35–44 __3   45–54 __4   55–64 __5   65 or above __6

S4. Highest education attained：Primary School or Under__1   Middle School__2
High School/Vocational School __3
Colleage/University__4   Master or Ph.D.__5

S5. Region：East__1 South__2 Central__3 North__4 North West__5 South West__6 North East__7
Taiwan/Hong Kong/Macau__8 Overseas__9

S6. Department：Front Office__1 Room Service__2 F&B__3 Security__4 Recreation__5 Entertainment__6
Others__7

S7. Years of working in the hotel industry? < 1 yr__1   1-2 yrs__2   3-5 yrs__3   6-10 yrs__4   > 10 yrs__5

S8. Years of working in the current hotel?   < 1 mth__1   1-3 mths__2   4-6 mths__3   7-12 mths__4
1-2 yrs__5   3-5 yrs__6   6-10 yrs__7   >10 yrs__8

Section I： Organisational Culture

Q1. Self-Evaluation
Below statements refer to your self-evaluation. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'.

In my current working hotel,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. I am a typically efficient employee.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I am typically initiative.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. I am a typically warm employee.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. I am a typically direct employee.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. I am a typically optimistic employee.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. I am a typically well-groomed employee.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. I am open to new comers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. I feel comfortable in unfamiliar situations at work.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. I feel each day brings new challenges.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. I put maximal effort into my current work.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q2. Work Environment
Below statements refer to your perception on overall work environment. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'.

In my current working hotel,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. I use informal style communicating with other employees.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I can make important decisions.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. I am strongly aware of competition.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. I need to keep meeting time punctually.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. I always talk about the history of the hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. I always speak seriously of my job and the hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. I am cost-conscious.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. my private lives are my own businesses.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. new employees are left to find their own ways of working.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. new employees need more than a year to feel comfortable with work.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q3. Hotel Management
Below statements refer to your perception on hotel management's style. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'.

In my current working hotel,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. I am told when a good job is done.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. managers help good staff to advance.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. my mistakes are tolerated.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. managers keep good staff in their departments.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. cooperation and trust between departments is well.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. management decree imposes changes.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. management is picky with trivial things.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. all decisions are centralised at top.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. results are more important than procedures.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q4. Hotel Evaluation
Below statements refer to your perception on the hotel. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'.

In my current working hotel,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. the hotel is only interested in work that I do.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. the hotel has close ties with the local community.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. the hotel concerns for my personal problems.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. job competence is the only criterion in hiring me.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. the major emphasis is made on meeting customer needs.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. much attention is put into the physical working environment.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. the hotel is pragmatic instead of dogmatic in matters of employee ethics.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. only very special people can fit in the hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Section II：Internal Branding

Q5. Employees' Perception on Brand Knowledge
Below statements refer to your perception on brand knowledge. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'.

In my current working hotel,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. I know the content and meaning of this hotel brand.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I know the target customers of this hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. I know the meaning of this hotel brand to customers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. I know the service level of this hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. I know the importance of my work to the success of this hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. I know how my behaviour can impact this hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. I know my role in delivering the brand message.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. I know customers' expectations when they stay at this hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q6. Employees' Experience about the Brand

Below statements refer to your experience on the hotel brand during your daily work. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'.

In my current working hotel,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. I experience manager's efforts to establish routines for giving good service.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I experience leadership provided from management.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. I receive training that enhances my ability to deliver high quality service.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. management provides rewards at all levels for service quality.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. management provides authority to employees to act independently in order to provide excellent service.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. the hotel keeps me well informed.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. the hotel delivers promise to me.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. the hotel is interested in my job satisfaction.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. the hotel solves problems that I may encounter at work.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. the hotel offers internal opportunity to work in different roles.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. the hotel offers the opportunity to work abroad.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. the hotel provides opportunity to work with an internationally diverse mix of colleagues.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q7. Employees' Perception on Brand Image

Below statements refer to your perception on the hotel brand image. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'.

In my current working hotel,

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. management has a forward-looking approach to its business.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. the hotel has an informal culture.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. the hotel provides good service quality to customers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. its brand has great significance to the customers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. the hotel cares about each employee.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. the hotel proactively solve problems that I might have with work.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. the hotel fully utilises my strength to the purpose of application.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. the hotel provides good service programme to employees.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

9. the hotel provides me with full scope for creativity.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. the hotel offers me a relatively stress-free working environment.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. the hotel offers clear opportunities for long-term career progression.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. the hotel offers variety in my daily work.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

Section III: Employee job satisfaction

Q8. Below statements refer to your satisfaction towards your job. Please circle the number that most appropriately describes the degree to which you agree with each statement, '7' being 'Strongly Agree' whilst '1' being 'Strongly Disagree'. *In my current working hotel,*	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
1. I am satisfied with my fellow workers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I am satisfied with my supervisor(s).	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. I am satisfied with my hotel's customers.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. I am satisfied with my hotel's policies.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. I am satisfied with my salary.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. I am satisfied with my opportunities for advancement with this hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. I am satisfied with the support provided by my hotel.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. I am satisfied with my overall job.	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

The END!

The data will be kept strictly confidential!

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

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