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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL STRAIN SELF-REGULATION, AND INFORMAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR OTHERS

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the relationship between psychological strain, self-regulation, and informal accountability for others (IAFO). Our study attempts to enhance organizational research by demonstrating the moderating effect of self-regulation, a form of attention control, on the strain and IAFO relationship. We test hypotheses using data collected in an organizational sample of 105 working adults. Findings indicate that self-regulation moderates the strain – IAFO relationship for those who are not able to focus well on specific job tasks. The paper concludes with a discussion of managerial implications, the study’s relevant strengths, limitations and directions for future research.

JEL: M12, M14

KEYWORDS: stress, control, informal accountability for others

INTRODUCTION

As we come to the end of the first decade of the 21st century, considerable economic uncertainty exists. Along with this seeming chaos comes, for many individuals, unfortunate attendant strains. As the global economy worsens, many are facing increased sources of stress. As many as 80% of Americans reported recently that the economy is a significant source of stress, up from 66% a year earlier (Wilbert & Chang, 2008). These macroeconomic findings only compound the difficulties individuals face in daily organizational life.

These conditions are taking a toll on individuals’ health and overall senses of well-being. More people are reporting stress-related physical and emotional reactions, and nearly half of adult respondents indicate their stress is increasing as the economy worsens (Wilbert & Chang, 2008). In addition, more individuals reported stress-related burnout (53% vs. 51%), feelings of irritability or anger (60% vs. 50%), and insomnia (52% vs. 48%) since the onset of the sub-prime mortgage market meltdown and the attendant decline in markets worldwide.

The top stressors for Americans according to Wilbert and Chang (2008) and surveys administered by the American Psychological Association (APA) are: money (81%), the economy (80%), work (67%), and health problems affecting workers and their families (67%). In times of economic downturn, researchers consistently note increases in joblessness, layoffs, downsizing and concomitant erosions in traditional notions of job security (Baruch, 2004). These conditions, thus, bolster employee cynicism, anxiety, resentment, retribution and underperformance (Astrachan, 1995; Brockner, 1992; O’Neill & Lenn, 1995). Given the apparent ubiquitous nature of these circumstances and the desire of individuals to avoid involuntary separation, we consider what actions individuals (currently employed) take to alleviate these feelings of strain. Specifically, this paper examines whether or not being informally accountable for others (IAFO), when individuals have some sense of control, helps reduce strain.

Our paper will proceed as follows: we will review contemporary research, state our research hypotheses, discuss our data and methodology, demonstrate the results and make concluding comments. Our

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIALIZATION AGENTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES ON BRAND CONSCIOUSNESS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate how socialization agents—media, parents, and peers— influence on students' brand consciousness in apparel and influences differ according to students demographic characteristics. Participants were 230 students in second semester, who undertaking Bachelor of Business Administration in Universiti Utara Malaysia. Overall, peers exert the greatest influence. The results by using Pearson correlation coefficients analyses suggested that, the students' brand consciousness is, significantly correlated to each socialization factor. However, of the media related analysis, only movie viewing shows a significant correlation. The other two have significant correlation with parental influence and peer influence. Moreover, significant differences were found for socializations agents and brand consciousness across gender and ethnicity. Family and consumer educators should consider findings of this study as a guide to give better education to students as consumers.

JEL: M3

KEYWORDS: Brand consciousness, socializations agents, young customer, apparel

INTRODUCTION

Many consumers are interested in brand names when they buy products. Sproles and Kendall (1986) define brand consciousness as the need or desire to purchase well-known national brands, higher priced brands and/or the most advertised brands. In fact, well-known brand names often make a social statement about an individual's status, such as Rolex watches, BMW vehicles, Sony electronics, and GUCCI textiles (Wanke, Bohner, & Jurkowitz, 1997). This belief may or may not be accurate or realistic; however, it reflects a specific decision-making outcome for the consumers that purchase these items. This outcome consists partially of the positive perceptions of others about the consumer of expensive brand items; therefore, brand consciousness plays an important part in society, and breeds the belief that higher prices mean higher quality. Apart from this, it is widely believed that the teenage stage in which an individual's consumption leverage increases very rapidly in terms of financial resources and decision-making discretion (Shim & Gehrt, 1996).

Youth in Malaysia have rapidly come to represent one of the most lucrative market segments as this population shows a positive indication in recent decades. During the Eighth Malaysia's Plan period, the youth population, comprising those in the 15-24 age-group had been estimated to increase by 2.6 per cent per annum, from 4.37 million in 2000 to 4.98 million in 2005 (Economic Planning Unit, 2001). Yet, as the standard of living among Malaysians has improved significantly, further stimulated by changing lifestyles, teenagers today are granted freedom from their parents to make their own shopping and consumption decisions. As a result, teenagers' buying power has increased rapidly as more of them enter the marketplace. This is not surprising when considering that shopping has become one of the leisure activities most often participated in by young Malaysians (Othman & Sim, 1993).

WORK AND FAMILY CONFLICT: A COMPARISON BETWEEN AMERICAN AND MEXICAN WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Although many believe that work and family conflict (WFC) is a social issue, its scope is ample due to its causes and consequences. In the organizational ground, WFC has been found to affect important outcomes such as job satisfaction, commitment, and turnover. Additionally, there is a need to validate the structures that have been proposed and assess their validity in other settings. This study proposed a model where both dimensions of work and family conflict--work interfering with family and family interfering with work--mediated the effect of four life roles (i.e. career, parent, marital, and homecare) in three organizational outcomes (satisfaction, turnover intention, and commitment). The findings in this study give support to the relationship between the parental role and family interfering with work for the Mexican sample. In addition, homecare role was found to be related with family interfering with work (FIW) conflict in the U.S. sample. I also found support in the relationship between work interfering with family (WIF) and both turnover intention and commitment. On the other hand, the relationship between FIW and job satisfaction as well as turnover intention was supported in the Mexican sample.

JEL: M12, M14, M15, M54

KEYWORDS: work and family conflicts, organizational behavior, cross-cultural studies

INTRODUCTION

Demographic changes in the workforce, as well as greater family involvement by men have increased interest in employees' quality of life (Pleck, Lamb, & Levine, 1986). Specifically, and according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the participation of United States (U.S.) women in the labor force increased from 43.3% in 1970 to 63.1% in 2006. Similarly, more Mexican women have also been entering the workforce, with an increase in participation from 17.6% in 1970 to 37.5% in 2004 (e-mexico, 2008). This change translates into more employees having family responsibilities, not only women who enter the workforce, but also men who now share these responsibilities.

In light of these recent changes and their importance for both family and work life, there has been a great deal of research devoted to work to family conflict (WFC) (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005). Role conflict is a very important issue as it relates to individual productivity, job satisfaction, commitment, and employee turnover. These, in turn, directly and indirectly affect the productivity of organizations (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002).

While the majority of the research in work and family conflict has been conducted in the United States, globalization and the increasing diversity of the workforce reinforce the importance of considering cultural differences in the WFC model (Aryee, Fields, & Luk., 1999; Hill, Chongming, Alan, & Maria, 2004; Posthuma, Joplin, & Maertz, 2005). It is particularly worthwhile to study the WFC model in the U.S. and Mexico not only because of their geographical proximity, but also because they are members of the same trading bloc, and there are significant Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) interests between these two countries. In addition, even though the U.S. and Mexico are close in the feminism/masculinism dimension (Hofstede, 2001); there is evidence to support the idea that differences in the workplace between these two countries may be strong (Segrest, Romero, & Domke-Damonte, 2003).

DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING ORIENTATION IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES EVIDENCE FROM EASTERN EUROPE

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important aspects that determine an organization's market position is the entrepreneurs' approach to market orientation and marketing actions. The aim of this study was to investigate the process of marketing orientation development in SMEs in the country of Eastern Europe, where the economy changed from one of a central planning system to a "free" market economy. Authors investigated to what extent small firms that have survived long enough on the market are competitive because of their adoption of a marketing orientation. For research purposes authors used theoretical concepts that characterize marketing orientation using five attributes: customer orientation, integrated marketing functions, marketing information, strategic marketing planning and operational effectiveness. The empirical evidence presented in this article suggests that customer orientation is critical for SMEs. However, investigated SMEs often focus on the sales level, which is characteristic for organizations with sales instead of marketing orientation.

JEL: M13, M31, O52

KEYWORDS: marketing orientation, small business, SMEs in Poland

INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) play a major role in countries at all levels of economic development (Caniels and Romijn, 2005). Many acknowledge that developed economies have a high proportion of small businesses, and it is predicted that the number of such entities will continue to grow, due to declines in manufacturing and growth in the service sector (Burns, 1996; Carson, 1993).

As markets are becoming more global, many business opportunities are opening for small and medium-sized businesses, but competitive pressure is increasing at the same time (Caniels and Romijn, 2005). They need to adjust their actions to the environmental challenges through active market development, a continuous search for market opportunities and expansion of their customer base. There are many interesting aspects to marketing and small firms, and numerous authors deal with this in careful and expertly-written ways with numerous references to original literature. Many researchers and practitioners are looking to find the answer to the fundamental question as to why some organizations are profitable with good perspectives for growth (why they are successful), while others cannot achieve this state (Beverland and Lockshin, 2005).

One of the challenges that small firms are facing is that managers/owners often rely only on previous experience and common sense, because in their perception the boundary between marketing and selling becomes very blurred. One of the most important aspects that determine an organization's market position is the entrepreneurs' approach to market orientation and marketing actions. Small business managers' attitude toward a structured approach to marketing can be seen as a sign of maturity and responsible decision making that can lead to a positive business performance. Small business marketing strategies are very often described as a process of "crafting" (Beverland and Lockshin, 2005), where marketing tools are adapted to meet immediate needs and react to threats, rather than designed to achieve long-term goals.

PRODUCT INNOVATION BY SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED FIRMS THROUGH OUTSOURCING AND COLLABORATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper assesses the role of outsourcing and inter-firm collaboration to product innovation in Western New York's small and medium-sized firms (SMFs). Results of an exploratory survey of 100 small and medium-sized manufacturing firms are presented. A major finding of the paper suggests that SMFs are involved in external collaboration to support new product development. A large majority of these firms collaborate with networks of external partners for their core and non-core activities. A collaborative relationship with external entities was hypothesized to support product innovation; however this was not confirmed by the survey results. The results also indicate that in comparison to the levels ten years ago, outsourcing by SMF increased in all five categories of Research and Development (R&D), product development, manufacturing, marketing/sales, and distribution. Comparatively, medium-sized firms tend to outsource non-core activities while smaller firms tend to outsource their core organizational competencies.

KEYWORDS: SMFs, collaboration, outsourcing, innovation, R&D

JEL: M16

INTRODUCTION

A substantial body of literature now highlights that there has been a fundamental and systematic change in the way SMFs undertake product innovation activities. Furthermore, use of external networks through collaboration and outsourcing has witnessed a substantial growth by the SMFs (Hagedoorn, 2002). Increased competition in the global marketplace, the advancement of manufacturing technologies, and increasingly limited life cycle of products, have greatly impacted product innovation strategies of the small and medium-sized manufacturing firms. Duysters et al. (1999) indicate that external alliances and collaboration has become a cornerstone of the firm's product innovation strategy by which we refer specifically to the use of outsourcing and strategic alliances to undertake product innovation (Tidd and Trehwhella, 1997) and Narula (2002). The role of collaboration and outsourcing in the small and medium-sized manufacturing sector has been emphasized by several academic and professional studies (Powell et al, 1996; Staropoli, 1998). The importance of external alliances is discussed especially in relation to SMFs that lack the necessary resources and expertise to effectively manage the new product development process, from innovation to commercialization stages (Baum et al. 2000). Despite mostly having limited resources, SMFs have generally overcome external barriers to growth by using external alliances. This paper examines the role of collaboration and outsourcing in the innovation performance of Western New York (WNY) small and medium-sized manufacturing firms. The results of a recent telephone survey show that the propensity to successfully bring new products to the market place is often contingent upon the use of external expertise. The results also suggest that a firms' size can influence the depth and nature of its outsourcing activity.

Small firms tend to augment their internal competencies by engaging with networks of external innovation support (Howells, 2008). These networks are designed to access human knowledge and expertise, new processes and technologies, and manufacturing facility. In addition to strategic benefits

MOBILE ADVERTISING ENGINE FOR CENTRALIZED MOBILE COUPON DELIVERY

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ABSTRACT

During the past decade, the preferred medium for advertising has seen a dramatic shift away from print media and other traditional means of distribution. In 2009 alone, it is estimated that advertising spending dropped by between 10 and 20 percent for newspapers, consumer magazines, radio, and television while increasing an estimated 9.2 and 18.1 percent in Internet and mobile advertising respectively. Driven by the high cost of print media, lower redemption rates on print coupons, and correspondingly higher redemption rates for mobile and Internet coupons, companies are beginning to adopt and develop mobile campaign management strategies to adapt to the changing market. However, presently the majority of mobile and Internet campaign management platforms are developed on a merchant-by-merchant basis. Customers must either download a separate mobile phone app or visit and register at a different web site for each merchant to obtain their coupons. In this paper, we present a more centralized coupon distribution approach using a Mobile Advertising Engine that aggregates coupons from multiple corporations, tracks point of sales redemption, and reports campaign effectiveness using a mobile marketing and reporting platform.

JEL: M3; O3

KEYWORDS: Marketing, technologies

INTRODUCTION

We are living in an increasingly “smarter” mobile world. As will be shown in the next section, recent trends indicate that smartphone sales are on the rise, traditional forms of media (e.g. newspaper, magazines, and radio) are on the decline, users are becoming increasingly comfortable with accessing information and making purchases with their smartphones, and most major brands are moving towards mobile marketing. If the projected growth in mobile smartphone adoption and usage is realized, along with the expected increase in mobile marketing by businesses, care must be taken to provide customers with a superior user experience. With respect to mobile coupon delivery, which is the focus of this paper, providing the most appropriate coupons at the most appropriate times, and only in the quantity desired by the consumer, is vital to achieving this goal.

As more businesses move toward mobile marketing and couponing on a per-brand basis, a major issue arises; for consumers to take advantage of each brand’s coupons and offers, they must access each via a separate mobile web site or mobile application (or app). The users’ experiences are tarnished as they log on and register for each different site or download yet another app onto their phones, completing yet another registration in doing so. Likewise, each time they wish to search for coupons, compare offers, or redeem a coupon, they must access separate sites or apps to do so for different brands or merchants. Instead, should many brands and merchant coupons be accessible via a single app or mobile site at times when the users need them, consumer satisfaction should increase. Also, marketing programs must be able to target individualized preferences and behaviors and be able to measure the return on investment (ROI). With traditional marketing, companies target their advertising to broad geographic areas with a wide variety of demographics. There is no way of determining the effectiveness of the specific advertisement on a specific demographic.

AN ASSESSMENT OF VISITOR SATISFACTION WITH NATURE-BASED TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Nature-based tourism is an important component of the tourism industry and has experienced significant growth during recent years. Nature-based tourism attractions (NBTA) can provide substantial economic gains to both host communities and tourism businesses. To sustain the growth of NBTA and maintain its associated benefits, it is important to ensure that the visitors are satisfied with the experiences provided. Despite the importance of delivering visitor satisfaction for NBTA, there is scant literature available on visitor satisfaction with NBTA. The aims of this study is to identify the factors that influence visitor satisfaction with NBTA. The study also analyzes the relationship between NBTA, overall satisfaction and visitor loyalty. Visitor satisfaction was measured using a questionnaire which adopted the perceive-performance theory. The study area for this study was seven NBTA where convenience sampling was used for the selection of the attractions. Data was collected from the on-site survey method with a sample size of 600 NBTA visitors. Statistical analyses were used and hypotheses were tested. Based upon the results of this study, recommendations were made.

JEL: M31

KEYWORDS: Customer loyalty, Customer satisfaction, Mauritius, Nature-based tourism attractions, Willingness to recommend

INTRODUCTION

Nature-based tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry (Memetoglu, 2006). To match consumer demand, there is an increasing need to provide more nature-based tourism attractions to visitors. However, little has been done to analyze visitor satisfaction with these attractions. Satisfaction is recognized as one of the key judgments that consumers make regarding a tourism service (Yüksel and Yüksel, 2002). According to Walker (1995), satisfied customers are believed to affect the long-term viability of an organization through repeat purchase and positive word-of-mouth (WOM) communication. Therefore, it is imperative to evaluate satisfaction at NBTA to ensure the long-term survival of the organization in the competitive business environment and also for enhancing the experience of visitors with the attraction. The assessment of visitor satisfaction with NBTA may also assist in identifying the strong and weak attributes of these attractions and thus help in improving the services being provided. The aim of the study is to assess visitor satisfaction with NBTA. The objectives of the study are to identify the factors that contribute to visitor satisfaction with NBTA. The study also analyzes the relationship between NBTA, overall satisfaction and visitor loyalty.

Mauritius a developing island covering 1,860 square kilometres (720 square miles) with 1,227,078 inhabitants is a well-known holiday destination for beach-resort tourists. Today, tourism is one of the main pillars of the Mauritius economy. The growth of the tourism industry has occurred continuously from 27, 650 tourists in 1970 to 930, 456 in 2008 (Central Statistics Office). In 2008, gross tourism receipts amounted to USD\$ 1,338 million (41, 213 million rupees) and provided direct employment to 26, 322 individuals in 2007 (AHRIM, 2008). France is the leading market with 240, 028 tourist arrivals followed by the United Kingdom, Reunion island, Italy, Germany and India. Mauritius is mainly promoted as a beach resort destination; however, so as to gain competitive advantage, other features have

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