INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE, ORGANISATION CULTURE AND
PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS OF BRAND SUPPORT BEHAVIOUR
POLICY MEDIATED BY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY ADOPTION AMONG
MICROENTERPRISE EMPLOYEES IN MALAYSIA

By

NUR AFNI BINTI HALIL

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
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July 2022

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Social media is proven to provide a competitive advantage to organisations such as customer relations and service enhancement, cost reduction in marketing and customer service, improved information sharing and accessibility, improved brand visibility, and generated revenue. Nevertheless, organisations are prone to lose control over the dissemination of information through social media. Hence, the organisations will face potential risks, namely human error, processes, reputational, operation, regulatory compliance, and financial and information security. This study examined the influence of knowledge, organisation culture and perceived characteristics of the policy, which are the factors of social media policy adoption and also sought to explain the consequences of the adoption towards brand support behaviour among microenterprises employees in Malaysia. The study's objective was to analyse the direct effect of knowledge, organisation culture and perceived characteristics of policy towards brand support behaviour and the mediating effect of adoption of social media policy between knowledge, organisation culture, and perceived characteristics of policy towards brand support behaviour. The underpinning theory used to develop the framework was based on Roger's Diffusion of Innovation Theory. A total of 203 datasets were employed for the final analysis. SPSS and SmartPLS (Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling) were used in performing the analysis. All hypotheses are supported by the analysis results except two, which were rejected. The study confirmed the direct relationship between knowledge and organisation culture and the adoption towards brand support behaviour. Furthermore, this study established the

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mediating effect of adoption between knowledge and organisation culture on brand support behaviour. However, the perceived characteristics were insignificant to both direct and indirect relationships. The study also discusses the theoretical and practical contributions as well as the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research. This paper contributes to sustainability literature by developing a theoretical model that reflects brand support behaviour in the specific context of microenterprises employees. These findings also assist policymakers among microenterprises and SMEs in improving social media policy or strategies to manage their social media effectively. Therefore, this study suggests that it is vital for an organisation to consider adopting social media policy as it has contributed to brand support behaviour among employees.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

PENGARUH PENGETAHUAN, BUDAYA ORGANISASI DAN CIRI-CIRI POLISI TERHADAP TINGKAH LAKU SOKONGAN JENAMA DENGAN KESAN PENGANTARAAN PENGGUNAAN DASAR MEDIA SOSIAL DALAM KALANGAN PEKERJA PERUSAHAAN MIKRO DI MALAYSIA

Oleh

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Media sosial telah terbukti dalam memberikan kelebihan daya saing kepada organisasi seperti perhubungan pelanggan dan peningkatan perkhidmatan, pengurangan kos pemasaran dan khidmat pelanggan, peningkatan perkongsian dan kebolehcapaian maklumat, peningkatan jenama dan juga menjana pendapatan. Walau bagaimanapun, organisasi cenderung untuk hilang kawalan terhadap penyebaran maklumat melalui media sosial. Oleh itu, risiko yang berpotensi untuk berlaku seperti kesalahan manusia, proses, reputasi, operasi, pematuhan peraturan, keselamatan kewangan dan maklumat akan dihadapi oleh organisasi. Kajian ini meneliti pengaruh pengetahuan, budaya organisasi dan ciri-ciri polisi, yang merupakan faktor utama penerapan dasar media sosial; dan juga bertujuan untuk menjelaskan akibat penerapan terhadap tingkah laku sokongan jenama dalam dalam kalangan pekerja perusahaan mikro Malaysia. Objektif kajian adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh langsung pengetahuan, budaya organisasi dan ciri-ciri polisi terhadap tingkah laku sokongan jenama; dan kesan perantaraan penggunaan polisi media sosial antara pengetahuan, budaya organisasi, dan ciri-ciri polisi terhadap tingkah laku sokongan jenama. Teori utama yang digunakan untuk mengembangkan kerangka kajian ini adalah teori *Diffusion of Innovation Theory* oleh Rogers. Sebanyak 203 set data telah digunakan untuk analisis akhir. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) dan SmartPLS *(Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling)* telah digunakan untuk analisis. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahawa semua hipotesis disokong kecuali dua ditolak. Kajian ini mengesahkan hubungan langsung antara pengetahuan dan budaya organisasi dan penerapan terhadap tingkah laku sokongan jenama. Selanjutnya, kajian ini telah membuktikan kesan perantaraan penggunaan antara pengetahuan dan budaya organisasi terhadap perilaku sokongan jenama. Walau bagaimanapun, ciri-ciri polisi didapati tidak signifikan terhadap hubungan langsung dan tidak langsung. Kajian ini juga

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membincangkan sumbangan teori dan praktikal serta batasan kajian dan cadangan untuk penyelidikan masa hadapan. Kajian ini turut menyumbang kepada kemampanan literatur dengan membangunkan model teori yang mencerminkan gelagat sokongan jenama dalam konteks khusus pekerja perusahaan mikro. Penemuan ini juga membantu pembuat dasar dalam kalangan perusahaan mikro dan PKS dalam menambah baik dasar atau strategi media sosial untuk mengurus media sosial mereka dengan berkesan. Oleh itu, kajian ini mencadangkan bahawa adalah penting bagi sesebuah organisasi untuk mempertimbangkan untuk menerima pakai dasar media sosial kerana ia telah menyumbang kepada tingkah laku sokongan jenama di kalangan pekerja.

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PENGHARGAAN

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Finally, to my friends, thank you.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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Declaration by graduate student

I hereby confirm that:
- this thesis is my original work;
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Declaration by Members of Supervisory Committee:

This is to confirm that:
- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) are adhered to.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Preamble

This research focuses on knowledge, organisation culture, and perceived characteristics of social media policy as the factors of the adoption of social media policy and its consequences on brand support behaviour among microenterprises employee in Malaysia. This chapter initially introduces the background and problem statement of the study. The following section discusses the study's research objectives, scope, and limitations. Finally, it explains the expected research contributions, definitions of key terms and organisation of the thesis.

1.2   Background of the study

The advent of the democratic era, of course, requires the existence of a medium to conduct various critical discussions and discussions related to social life. Political change is the impact of the democratic system that requires the role of the media as a means for public discussion. The world is increasingly challenged due to the continuous advancement of information and communication technology in human society. In the changing global technology landscape, communication in human life is also changing (Lachica, 2015). As one of the new media in this modern era, social media can undoubtedly be the medium to carry out democratic activities. Social media is a medium that is free to conduct all forms of public discussion. Moreover, social media is not influenced by the government or the government in power. Therefore, all forms of critical discussion, information sharing, and communication with others can be done.

Social media has a more interactive nature when compared to traditional forms of media such as radio and television. Through social media, we can directly interact with others. Social media is a digital communication channel where users can share information, interact instantly, have two-way communication and send instant messages to multiple people simultaneously. Social media is becoming a platform that all its users like (Hudson et al., 2015).

The functions of social media, according to Elareshi et al. (2021), are as follows:

i)   Social media is used to help such as communicating with the public and friends or even helping with group members.

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ii)   Social media is used as a medium for information transfer: This means the acquisition of social media as an effort to connect ideas.

iii)   Social media is used to achieve goals: Getting what you want.

With the development of social media that is increasingly diverse, it is considered as one of the media that is quite good and wise when used as one of the public spaces. This public space will certainly provide a little freedom for individuals or groups to carry out democratic activities. Public space became known as a form of democratic space (Splichal, 2022). Paradigm public space is related to the discussion of democracy and its shortcomings. In particular, it connects with attempts to modify modern traditions in social and political theory (Smart, 2004).

From the view of Habermas and Democratic Theory, as one of the countries that embrace democracy, public space with absolute freedom is the answer. Not to mention the presence of social media in the community now. Social media is free to browse by anyone and do various activities ranging from public discussions and opinion formation to the distribution of information to all walks of life (Staats, 2004). Fan and Gordon (2014) added that social media has tremendous power in the era of communication and information technology. The various impacts of this social media presence are starting to provide a new atmosphere. Social media replaces the various roles of the old popular media of his time. Various social activities can be obtained from this social media. Thus, it was further noted that from the benefits of social media, this technology enhances not only business activities and growth but also social growth.

Although social media offers various benefits and opportunities (Curtis et al., 2010; Elefant, 2011), it does possess some risks in privacy, security, data management, accessibility, social inclusion and governance (Bertot et al., 2012). Many companies faced many crises due to social media. For instance, one Honda employee was suspended and sacked due to an inflammatory post on Facebook (Tee, 2018). In addition, Young (2010), in his study on the employee internet abuse, revealed that workers who misuse the internet during working hours affect the organisation's revenue. Due to this, Westphal and Towell (1998) suggested that the internet needs to be regulated. On the contrary, Linke and Zerfass (2013) found that only 3.1% of the organisations had a sophisticated regulatory framework, and 83.9% had a weak regulatory framework. It shows that the establishment of regulations for social media needs to be improved.

Recent studies on social media have largely ignored the adoption of social media policy. There have been some studies related to the regulatory framework on social media. However, virtually limited research has examined the process of social media policy adoption and its consequences towards brand support behaviour.

Various previous studies claimed that knowledge had become a prominent variable influencing innovation adoption. According to Mumtaz and Nalin (2017), knowledge/ readiness significantly influences the adoption of security innovation. Due to the lack of training and facilities relevant to information system usage, the respondent needs to gain knowledge of how-to to use the innovation (Mumtaz & Nalin, 2017). Besides knowledge, organisation culture has been claimed to influence innovation adoption. This can be seen through a study by Melitski et al. (2010), which revealed that a culture that promotes a supportive environment would significantly contribute to adopting technology among the employees. Another factor contributing to the adoption is the characteristics of the innovation. Rogers (2003) mentioned that the innovation attributes would be the determinant factors of innovation adoption. Past research has proved that perceived characteristics such as relative advantages, compatibility, observability and others were significant for e-banking products (Kolodinsky & Hogarth, 2004).

Brand support behaviour has become a significant concern due to a critical internal dimension in handling the organisation's reputation (Waraas & Dahle, 2020). Employees are the ones who put the brand's attributes into action, and their actions determine whether a consumer has a positive or negative experience. The conduct of employees should confirm the promises made by a company to its customers. Thus external stakeholders' impressions of an organisation are influenced by the role of organisational leaders and spokespersons in corporate reputation management (Berens, 2016). Therefore, policy should be implemented and adopted by strategising social media effectively. Abiding by good policies will enable the mission of the organisation to be carried out effectively (Fitzsimons & Finkel, 2018), and adopting a policy on social media may protect the organisation's reputation. Moreover, it further claimed that it is critical to create or search for constructs that can be the determinants in adopting social media policy on how it affects the brand support behaviour with the employee.

1.3   Statement of Research Problem

Social media is widely used by businesses today. Among the Southeast Asian organisations, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines have invested strongly in social media. Acknowledging the importance of social media, Malaysian organisations have created a social media presence and actively promoted their social media channels through their corporate websites (Parveen et al., 2014). The emergence of social media led to the discussion of this topic by many scholars, namely Li et al. (2021); Appel et al. (2020); Gao et al. (2020); Chatterjee et al. (2020); Choi et al. (2020); Kapoor et al. (2018); Kumar and Shah (2018); Voorveld et al. (2018); Alalwan et al. (2017); Allcot et al. (2017) and Shu et al. (2017).

Social media has been adopted in many fields, such as human resource management (HRM), health services, education and business, particularly SMEs. However, those studies focus only on the usage of social media in the organisation. For example, Elving and May Postma (2017) did a study on how organisations use social media for stakeholder dialogue, Scholtz et al. (2017) carried out a study on social media use for extra-curricular education while Floreddu and Cabiddu (2016) focused on communication strategies of social media.

Social media has been proven to provide tremendous benefits to organisations and businesses. The adoption of social media proved to have a positive effect on business performance (Yasa et al., 2021), and the adoption of social media proved to increase the role of customer orientation. Thus it improves business performance (Nurfarida et al., 2021). However, the challenges found in using social media are strategic mistakes and a need to understand social media, which can cause reputation damage and tarnish the reputation of the organisation. The use of social media in marketing and advertising is likely to take more time, and attention is expected. The next obstacle is that high understanding, focus and interest in social media is essential in choosing the staffing (employees) who manages social media to get the expected results from the organisation. Therefore, this can reduce employee productivity if all employees are allowed to use social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter. According to Ahmad Kamarulzaman (1997), an entrepreneur's reputation can also be threatened, making way for confidential information to leak to the public.

While social media is an advanced technological tool in business, it does have barriers. Among the obstacles that are happening now and primarily discussed is related to the problem of information intrusion. Such information usually consists of confidential and non-confidential information. The confluence of traditional media, the internet, and social media technology has suffocated our society's information flow. Increased media literacy skills and appropriate media policy are essential to cope with today's fast-paced environment. As mentioned earlier, new media, particularly social media, should not be disregarded, and an excellent social media policy is essential to combat the phenomenon. This ability needs to be instilled in social media users (Sukmayadi, 2019).

Although social media is widely used in the workplace, little is known about how businesses manage social media risk (Demek et al., 2018). Due to social media interactivity, spontaneity, and the possibility of unedited information, the usage within the organisation can bring more significant risks (Scott & Jacka, 2011). Furthermore, employee productivity is reduced, and reputational hazards are increased (Brivot et al., 2017; Khansa et al., 2017; Schaupp & Bélanger, 2014). When employees use social media, there is a potential of inadvertently or purposely exposing confidential information such as employee or customer data or proprietary intellectual property rises. Employees risk triggering regulatory, compliance, or legal challenges if they share private organisational information

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on social media platforms. (Ernst & Young, 2014b; Greene & O'Brien, 2013). For example, Heather Armstrong, the founder of dooce.com, was the first employee to be dismissed for making caustic statements and comments on her blog about her supervisor and co-workers (Waters, 2005). In Malaysia, a Honda Malaysia employee was suspended for misconduct after making an insensitive comment on social media about Muhammad Adib Mohd Kassim's death, who was a firefighter (The Star, 2018).

As a result, organisations must be proactive in combating these difficulties and establish social media governance to reduce the risks and potential liabilities, such as negative publicity, low employee morale, and lawsuits (Baker et al., 2011). Social media policy would influence employee behaviours (Vaast & Kaganer, 2013).

In addition, social media is a challenging norm concerning controlling the flow of information (McAfee, 2009). Although new technologies offer organisations opportunities to present their viewpoints directly to crucial constituents, they need to gain control over the dissemination of information. Social media usage is prone to human error, processes, reputational risk, operational risk, regulatory compliance risk, financial risk and information security risks (Haynes, 2016; Mennie, 2015; Belbey, 2015). In their study, Mohd Anuar Ramli et al. (2015) stated that the false spread of information would affect not only the products but also the consumers, entrepreneurs and the authority. Insufficient knowledge among the members of organisations to act responsibly on social media will lead to reputational damage (Gallaugher & Ransbotham, 2010) and affect the organisations' financials because the damage will increase turnover and decrease revenue.

Recent studies on social media have largely ignored the adoption of social media policy. There have been some studies related to the regulatory framework on social media, but virtually limited research has examined the social media policy adoption process.

Due to this, a few studies on social media governance exist. However, there needs to be more research on social media governance to date (Parker et al., 2019). One study used content analysis to examine how 20 major companies explain their social media policies to their employees (Fuduric & Mandelli, 2014). Another study on social media policy investigated the employees' understanding of their employer's social media policies, including the constraints for publishing on social media and the consequences of violating the policy (Cortini & Fantinelli, 2018). Linke and Zerfass (2013) studied the concept of Social Media Governance in German organisations, while Van Zoonen et al. (2016) performed a study on to what extent to which the presence of social media policies in organisations can mitigate the negative consequences of work-related social media usage. Besides that, Van der Berg and Verhoeven (2017) studied the motivation behind managers' attempts to govern sharing of work-related

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information behaviours among employees. Another research on social media policy was by Demek et al. (2018), where the study focused on how organisations use a formalised risk management process to address social media risk.

However, the author mentioned that the study shows that firms can adopt social media policies without adhering to traditional risk management procedures but still need to explain how or why this occurs. Most studies focused on social media generally and what factors contribute to the adoption of social media, and none looked into what factors and consequences of social media policy adoption towards brand support behaviour. Thus, it is essential to explore the factors that contribute to the adoption of social media policy, as there is a limited number of research on that particular topic. Furthermore, Ihlebaek and Larson (2018) suggest that more research on social media policies across countries is needed.

Next, research on social media policy, particularly within SMEs, is still being determined. Scholars primarily focus on consumer behaviour, halal certification, and halal logistics. Few studies have been discovered relating to social media, such as (Ahamat et al., 2017; Siti Zanariah Yusof et al., 2016). Most studies focused on the adoption and usage of social media within SMEs. As one of the contributors to the Malaysian economy, social media has been utilised to deliver their brand, products and services across the world. Social media awareness can be developed through social media as it can help improve brand visibility (Parveen, 2012) and help the Muslim community search for halal food information. With an annual export value of RM35.4 billion for halal products and contributing approximately 5.1% of total exports for the country, a halal brand should be delivered effectively and strategically. If social media is not correctly managed, it will affect the reputation. Thus, adopting social media policy could reduce the risk of a social media crisis. However, the literature on social media policy, particularly in Malaysian SMEs, still needs to be improved. Therefore, the issues of social media policy within Malaysian microenterprises will be explored.

Many scholars agree that internal branding activities influence brand support behaviour. For instance, (Punjaisri et al., 2009) did a study to investigate whether internal branding can influence employee brand performance. Their results revealed that internal branding has a significant effect not only on brand performance among the employees but also on their brand identification, commitment and loyalty. In addition, internal branding can also support the successful implementation of sustainability (Biedenbach & Manzhynski, 2016). Thus, internal branding can be effectively executed if the ideologies established by leaders and managers are clear and understandable. However, scholars on internal branding should have included policy as one of their tools in communicating the ideologies. Therefore, it is crucial to explore whether adopting a social media policy can help the organisation to instil brand support behaviour among the employees. Hence, from the brand support behaviour, the employee will deliver the organisation's brand promise via social media, which will help internal branding within the organisation be effectively executed.

However, literature on the consequences after adoption, specifically in policy adoption, is still lacking. Thus, a study on the relationship between the adoption of social media policy and its consequences towards brand support behaviour can be further explored.

Lastly, in the adoption of innovation, several theories can be applied in explaining the adoption process, namely, the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1986), the Diffusion of Innovation theory (Rogers, 1962) and also Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). However, those theories were mainly applied to technology. As Rogers (1983) defined innovation as an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption, the policy can be one of innovation. For instance, Rogers (2003) used the Diffusion of Innovation theory in various fields of innovations, such as agriculture, technology, fertility control methods, policy, consumer products, educational curricula, political reforms and health programs. Since there are limited studies on policy adoption based on the Diffusion of Innovation theory, this study will further examine and expand the theory.

1.4 Research Questions

Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following question:

How do knowledge, organisation culture, and perceived characteristics influence brand support behaviour with the mediation effect of social media policy adoption?

This question can be further divided into four sub-questions as follows:

i) How does knowledge, organisation culture and characteristics of social media policy influence the adoption of social media policy among microenterprises employee?

ii) What is the influence between knowledge, organisation culture, characteristics of social media policy influences and brand support behaviour among microenterprises employee?

iii) Does the adoption of social media policy influence brand support behaviour among microenterprises employees?

iv) How the mediating effect of the adoption of social media policy influence knowledge, organisation culture perceived characteristics and brand support behaviour among microenterprises employees?

1.5   Research Objectives

Specifically, the general objectives of this study are to empirically investigate the influential factors of knowledge, organisation culture and perceived characteristics towards brand support behaviour with the mediation effect of social media policy adoption.

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

i)   To empirically predict the influence of knowledge, organisation culture and perceived characteristics of social media policy towards adopting social media policy among microenterprises employees.

ii)   To identify the influence of the adoption of social media policy on brand support behaviour.

iii)   To examine the influence of factors, namely knowledge, organisation culture, and perceived characteristics towards the brand support behaviour among microenterprises employees.

iv)   To investigate the mediating effect of adoption of social media policy on the knowledge, organisation culture and perceived characteristics towards brand support behaviour among microenterprises employees.

1.6   Scope and Limitation of Research

Microenterprises were selected for this study as it holds 78.6% of Malaysian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in 2021. Microenterprises were prevalent, with more than 150,000 microenterprises have been added between 2016 and 2021, with an average annual growth rate of 5.6%. This study focused on Selangor, with the highest number of established enterprises. The employee of microenterprises was chosen as the sample. However, the limitation of this study is the method. This research is subject to the limitation of the quantitative method as it will not capture the complexity or depth of communication due to the restriction of focusing on only one variable at one time (Keyton, 2014). this research focused on only three variables: knowledge, organisation culture and perceived characteristics as the factors of social media policy adoption. Employees of microenterprises were selected as the sample.

1.7   Significance of The Study

This study seeks to contribute to organisational policymakers, organisation and also the existing theory. This framework was proposed to create a highly-graded adoption of a policy model that will benefit the organisational policymaker; this

model will provide an essential path for the future application of social media for corporate communications. Due to potential risks, a good governance structure will enable and limit individual actions and helps the organisation to manage its social media operation successfully (Mennie, 2015). Implementing social media guidelines or regulatory frameworks is required to protect the organisations' image and reputation.

Even so, to what extent the adoption of social media policy will lead to successful brand support behaviour remains to be determined. Many scholars emphasise the transformative impact of social media on organisations (Aral et al., 2013). Since social media provides numerous potential risks, it becomes necessary to attune staff to a learning process that exploits the opportunities provided by social media, reduces risks and ensures the growth of the organisation (Linke & Zerfas, 2013). The theory of this study can be extended and, hence, will help the organisation monitor and strategise social media use.

In conclusion, the finding will lead to more empirical evidence on factors and mediating impacts of brand support behaviour to both theory and practical.

1.8   Operational Definitions of variable

Several key terms were used throughout the study. The terms are defined as follows:

Table 1.1: Operational Definitions of Variables

Variables	Definition	Author
Knowledge	the data, information, comprehension and skills that you gain from education and life experience	Bolisani , 2018
Organisation Culture	a shared way of being, thinking and acting in a collective and coordinated people with reciprocal expectations	Serpa, 2016
Perceived Characteristics	Elements to contribute in the adoption of certain innovation which consist of five basic characteristics namely relative advantages, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability	Rogers, 2003
Adoption	a decision to use and implement a new idea	Rogers, 2003
Brand support behaviour	In role" and "extra-role" brand behaviour. In-role behaviour is required and expected, and is the basis of ongoing performance evaluation. If not	Garas et al., 2017

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Table 1.1: Continued

| | manifested, it affects the rewards provided and may lead to imposing sanctions. Meanwhile, extra-role behaviour or organisational citizenship behaviour is positive and discretionary behaviour characterised by being not specified in-role descriptions, not recognised by the formal reward systems and not a source of punitive consequences if not performed |

(Source: Developed for the study)

1.9 Organization of The Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters and is organized as follows. The introduction, background of the study, statement of the research problem, research questions, research objectives, significance of the research, definition of terms and organization of the thesis is presented in Chapter 1. Next, Chapter 2 focuses on the literature review, which includes conceptualization and empirical evidence. Meanwhile, Chapter 3 describes the research design, sampling, data collection technique, measurement and operationalization and preliminary analysis. Next, in Chapter 4, data analysis and findings, further explanations of analysis and discussion of the results are illustrated. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes the research, its limitations and recommendations for future research.

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