



Organisational citizenship and the morning after - A case of an acquisition of a local hotel chain by a global brand

Mr. Wayne Fisher
University of Johannesburg
Email: fisherwaynes@yahoo.com

and

Professor R.I.D Poee*
Faculty of Management
Department of Business Management
Johannesburg Business School
College of Business and Economics
University of Johannesburg, South Africa
Email: dpoe@uj.ac.za

Corresponding author*

Abstract

The hospitality industry has recent years seen a growing trend of acquiring brand portfolios through strategic investments by global and local investment companies to increase brand reach. The challenges associated with post acquisition integration remain consistently high and can consequently impact negatively on the organisation's performance. This study sought to determine the influence of organisational support, brand satisfaction, and brand trust on the organisational citizenship among the local hotel employees following an acquisition by a global hotel brand. The study employed a quantitative design involving a survey in which questionnaires were administered to a sample of 350 hotel employees. A probability sampling employing simple probability sampling methods was used. Confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling were employed to assess the psychometric properties of the measurement scale and to test hypotheses using the path modelling technique. The study found that organisational support was found to have a strong positive and significant linear relationship with brand satisfaction and brand trust. The study also found that both brand satisfaction and brand trust each have a weak positive influence on organisational citizenship. Finally, the study found that organisational support has a moderate positive influence on organisational citizenship. The study has hopefully shed some light in demonstrating the relationship between organisational support, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and organisational citizenship in a post-acquisition situation.

Keywords: Organisational support, brand satisfaction and trust, organisational citizenship, mergers and acquisitions, hotel industry.

Introduction and background

Globally, the hospitality industry has experienced rapid growth and serious brand competition, and brought about the need to accommodate the expansion and radical change in consumer expectations within substantially different social and economic environments (Thoumrungraje, 2004; Yaprak, Demirbag & Wood, 2018). In order to increase brand reach the hospitality industry has in recent years, seen a growing trend of acquiring brand portfolios through strategic investments by global and local investment companies (Jones Lang Laselle, 2014; Yu, Dang & Motohashi, 2018). Hence, globalising the industry through mergers and acquisitions (M&As) has become an ever-present process involving which has resulted in several changes to the business environment (Reuters, 2011; Deloitte, 2018).

Over the past few years, mergers and acquisitions (M&As) within the hospitality industry have been making headlines such as in the case of Marriott International's and HNA Tourism Group



Co.'s acquisition of huge hotel brands (Jones Lang Laselle, 2017). Since 2014, there has been large-scale acquisitions in the hospitality industry involving some one million hotel rooms (Schmidt, 2008). According to Jones Lang Laselle, (2017) hotel brands seem to have an insatiable appetite as the search for acquiring operators with management and franchise contracts continues. For example, Deloitte (2017) reports that in 2016, major hotel brands such as InterContinental Hotel Group, Hilton, and Marriott International were able to capitalise on a healthy travel demand, reaching high levels of occupancies that were used to leverage average room rates, resulting in steady earnings and revenue per available room (RevPAR), average daily rates (ADR) whilst other key performance indicators (KPI's) remained positive through the year.

Yet, Kanten and Ulkerb (2012) have observed that when strong brands merge into one entity, this often leads to problems such as brand identity, ranging from the new organisational brand to details about what to do with overlapping and competing product brands. One recent example of such a high profile acquisition which failed was between the two fast consumer moving goods (FMCG) companies, an acquisition of Unilever by Kraft Heinz. According to Rogers (2017), had this transaction succeeded, it would have been the second biggest acquisition in history. Clashing company cultures and struggles to retain brand identities have been advanced as the main reasons for the failure of the acquisition. Rogers (2017) concludes that in M&As, it is important for brands to tread carefully to ensure the objectives of all the different parties are met. In this regard, Gerds and Strottmann (2010) found that the challenges associated with post acquisition integration remain consistently high and consequently can impact negatively on the organisation's performance. A study by Foley (2014) shows the significance of the human factor in the process of post-acquisition integration (Foley, 2014; Faisal, Tarba & Glaister, 2016). This finding is supported by Gerds and Strottmann (2010) who also found that the human factor was an important differentiator between the acquiring and acquired business. Furthermore, a study by KPMG (2011) found that post M&A, people-related issues can start to surface in the early stages if not properly planned and accounted for. These issues may include retaining key talent, aligning leadership, getting the right mix of skills and competencies as well as managing change with employees and employee mobility (CFERF Executive Research Report, 2010; Younge, Tong & Fleming, 2014).

Since the hospitality industry is largely about people, employees contribute largely to the organisations through relationships, thus influencing success which may create brand trust and brand satisfaction (Bilgina & Demirerb, 2012; Faisal et al., 2016). The post-acquisition problems that arise are more than often ignored or disregarded completely (Lebedev, Mike, Peng, Xie & Stevens, 2014). What affects this change process is the inadaptability of the employees and managers of the acquired business, which is one of the most prominent reasons why acquisitions fail to meet the objective of becoming one organisation and reach expectations of shareholders (Deng & Yang, 2015). Employees of the newly acquired organisation's management team are the driving force that create the struggle with the acquiring organisation's direction, structure, expectations, culture and accountability (Lebedev et al. 2014). Consequently, it is the aptitude of these managers which makes the acquisition successful as leaders in the change process (Theodosiou, Kehagias & Katsikea, 2012).

Acquisition transactions often fail due to poor post acquisition integration (Teerikangas & Thanos, 2018). Yet there remains a lack of studies of the post-acquisition integration effects on the extent of support received from the new brand, the satisfaction and trust of the new brand, as well as the extent to which they feel at home with the new brand, especially in emerging economies such as South Africa. Thus, this study attempts to understand the ever-present reality of post-acquisition integration strategies of a global brand by determining the influence of organisational support, brand satisfaction, and brand trust on the organisational citizenship among the local hotel employees following an acquisition by a global hotel brand. The focal hotel group in this study is a property management company with a presence in Southern Africa and other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Following the acquisition in question



recently, the new hotel brand became a major player in the tourism and accommodation sector in Africa.

Literature review

Mergers and acquisitions

An acquisition is an amalgamation in which an acquiring firm buys and absorbs the operations of the acquired firm which now takes on the name and brand of the acquiring entity (Gamble & Thompson, 2009; Moran, McCourt & Cox, 2018). How quickly the M&A deal is concluded seems to be what generally preoccupies large corporate acquisitions (Bena & Li, 2014; Sekolah, Ilmu, & Wiyatamandala, 2018). Inasmuch as M&As are central to organisational growth strategies, they also tend to be disruptive for consumers, investors and employees to a point where they are forced to re-evaluate their relationship with the organisation's brand (Kabadayi & Alan, 2012; Deloitte, 2018).

Brand acquisition is an effective strategy for gained market power and cross-border selling of products and services which in addition sends a message of increased strength and power to competitors. However, Mizik, Knowles and Dinner (2011), posit that the possible downside to brand acquisition strategies of two strong brands is the possibility that it may disregard the original brand equity and its associated goodwill. Mizik et al., (2011) posit that unless the post-acquisition integration is managed well through the branding integration strategy, the brand runs the risk of unwittingly marginalising consumers and employees of the acquired organisation who may feel that their past history and relationship with the business or brand has been forgotten or wiped out completely.

Organisational support

Allen, Armstrong, Reid and Riemenschneider (2008) describe organisational support as the degree to which an organisation values the contribution of employees and cares about them. The notion and practice of organisational support has gained traction as more economies experience growth in the services industry (Riggle, Edmondson & Hansen, 2009). It has also been argued that organisational support has become increasingly important for the success of the services industry (Moran, McCourt & Cox, 2018; Batsakis, Wood, Azar & Singh, 2018) and this has become all the more so as employees have become more directly involved in the creation of perceived customer value. According to Riggle et al., (2009), superior levels of organisational support leads to increased job satisfaction. For employees, perceived organisational support is an assurance of support to perform or carry out their jobs effectively (Kim, Eisenberger & Baik, 2016; Denison & Ko, 2016).

Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) state that perceived organisational support focuses on the relationship between the employee and the organisation. Employees tend to form a perception of organisational support based on the kind of treatment they receive from management and the extent to which management values their involvement and cares about their well-being (Denison & Ko, 2016; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The more organisational support employees perceive they are receiving, the greater their motivation to assist the organisation to achieve its objectives and goals (Arshadi, 2011; Batsakis et al., 2018).

Perceived organisational support could include training and developmental opportunities made available to employees (Giorgi, Dubin & Perez, 2016). Organisational support builds on the foundation for the social exchange model of relations between employee and organisation (Pradesa, 2013; Francisco-Maffezzoli., et al., 2014; Reuters, 2018). The improved social exchange between employees and the organisation is important in determining the organisation's readiness to reward increased work effort and meet socio-emotional needs of (Pradesa, 2013).



Brand satisfaction

Branding is central to creating consumer value and can be used as a key instrument in creating and sustaining a competitive advantage (Namada, 2018). Branding also creates a relationship between an organisation's product and service with a view to developing satisfaction among employees (Deloitte, 2018). Managing satisfaction is an integral part in increasing the perceived brand value and building employee loyalty through positive associations of the brand image (Chovanová, Korshunov & Babčanová, 2015; Namada, 2018). Brand satisfaction can be described as the positive outcomes resulting from the customer's experience of a certain product and is a key factor in determining repeat business and in creating brand trust (Kasmer, 2005). Chinomona, Mahlangu and Pooe (2013) posit that satisfaction arises when the performance of a brand meets and often exceeds the expectation of the consumer. Chinomona et al., (2013) add that brand satisfaction is the cumulative satisfaction and the overall consumer's evaluation of their experience with a brand of product or service. The positive attitude a consumer develops as a result of evaluating an experience with a certain product is known as satisfaction and is the precursor of brand loyalty. This will be evident from the consumer's decision to repurchase (Kasmer, 2005; Deloitte, 2018:20). Satisfying customers is a difficult process if brand trust is not gained, as trust affects customer satisfaction (Erciş Ünal, Candan & Yıldırım, 2012).

Brand trust

Trust is described as the belief of reliability, integrity and honesty from one side to another (Riggle et al., 2009; Cho & Arthurs, 2018). Trust is based on the belief that the brand will fulfil certain functions for the consumer (Erciş et al., 2012; Cho & Arthurs, 2018) Moreover, Erciş et al., (2012) state that the factors include competence, philanthropy and morality as characteristics of trust. In this regard, Kabadayi and Alan (2012) define brand trust as the inclination of the consumer to depend on the ability of the brand to perform its quantified purpose. Thus brand trust is formed and established following the direct experiences and evaluation from the consumer. Trust builds an important bond between brand and consumer, which is also important for creating brand satisfaction (Riggle et al., 2009; Bansal, 2016). Saunders et al. (2009) believe that a consumer who trusts the brand will be satisfied and will be more prepared to commit to it. Brand trust provides an ideal quantifiable measure to examine the consumer's behavioural response and, in turn, brand satisfaction. A consumer who trusts the brand will show commitment to it and will be satisfied (Angulo-Ruiz & Pergelova, 2013; Bansal, 2016). As mentioned above, an employee who believes that the brand will fulfil and satisfy certain needs such as competence, compassion and morality will develop brand trust and this is important because it improves the relationship between the employer and employee.

Organisational citizenship

Ahmad et al., (2014) state that organisational citizenship refers to employees' attachment, identification with and involvement in the business. It is rooted from an individual employee's view and values of the business and how she/he can be associated with it. Organisational citizenship consists of three elements, which include acceptance of the organisation's value system; willingness to work for the organisation and remain within it (Galavotti, 2019). Organisational citizenship is a clear measure of employee authority and empathy, which he/she values in the organisation and continues to be involved in. It can also be an improved indicator of the employee's willing to stay at work or has the ability to change (Ahmad, Iqbal, Javed & Hamad, 2014; Bansal, 2016). The institutionalisation and strengthening of organisational citizenship principles can be influenced by job characteristics that promote a beneficial venture that contains individual, organisational and societal behavioural interests (Pouramini & Fayyazi, 2015; Galavotti, 2019; Kimberly, Ellis & Lamont, 2017; Gomes, Mellahi, Sahadev & Harvey, 2017). This means that the more employees feel that their jobs make a

positive contribution to their welfare as individuals and to that of the organisation and society as a whole, the more they identify and feel attached to the organisation.

Conceptual model and development of hypotheses

Conceptual framework

Figure 1 shows the hypothesised links between organisational support, brand satisfaction, brand trust and organisational citizenship. As shown, organisational support is the predictor variable, while brand satisfaction and brand trust are mediating variables. Organisational citizenship is the outcome variable for this study.

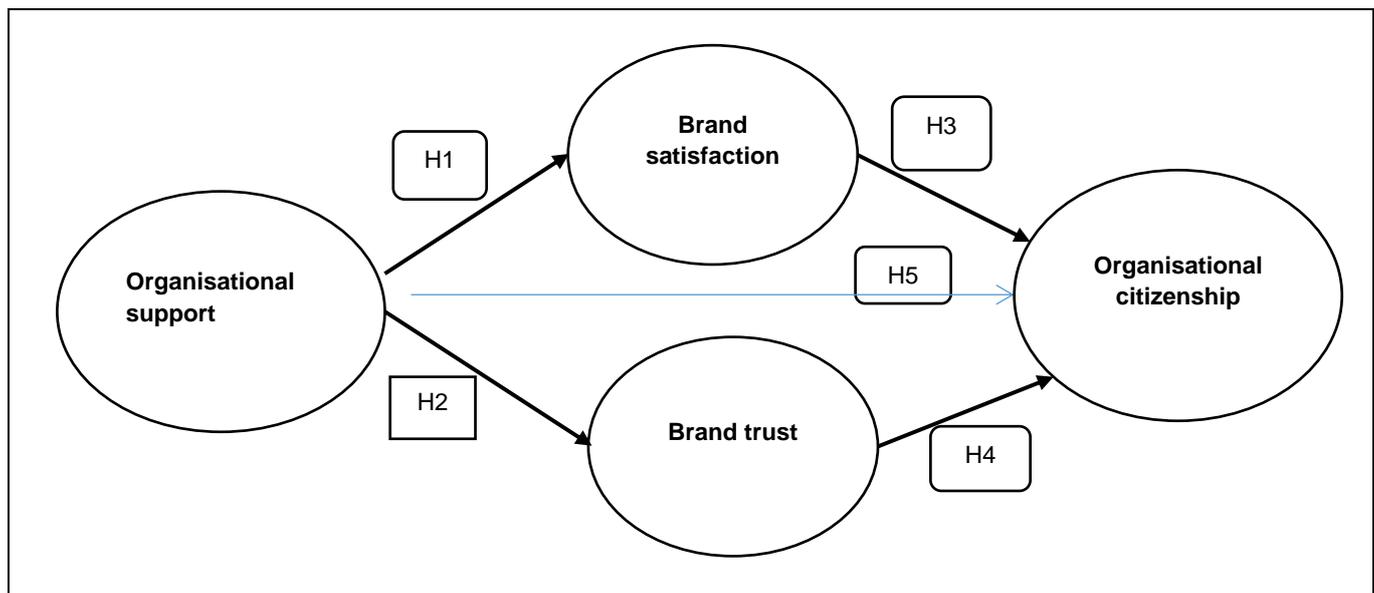


Figure 1: The Research Conceptual Framework

Organisational support and brand satisfaction

On the basis of social exchange theory, organisational support produces a felt obligation on the part of employees to assist the organisation achieve its objectives (Kim, Eisenberger & Baik, 2016; Goecke, Michaelis & Schweizer, 2018). Ordinarily, organisational support should strengthen employees' beliefs that the organisation recognises and rewards increased performance and that this is likely to leave the employee with increased satisfaction and positive mood (Kim et al., 2016; Lu & Seock, 2008; Boone et al., 2018). In this regard, Pradesa (2013) states that the general outcome of organisational support is satisfaction and trust, which adds to the perceived differences to both constructs. Social identity influences perceptions and evaluations of issues and events with employees increasingly identifying with the brand that can result in stronger loyalty (So, King, Sparks & Wang, 2013). There are limited studies of organisational support and brand satisfaction in the hotel industry, not to mention the post-acquisition experience. In their study, So et al. (2013) investigated the relationship between citizenship and satisfaction and found that when evaluating a hotel brand, the employee will be more satisfied with the brand when it enhances their positive image within a social group and contributes to a sense of belonging (So et al., 2013). Hence, this study hypothesise:

H1: Organisational support has a positive and significant influence on brand satisfaction.



Organisational support and brand trust

As noted earlier, Pradesa (2013) has observed that the general outcome of organisational support is satisfaction and trust. Brand trust is expressed by the employee who believes that the brand will fulfil and satisfy certain needs such as competence, compassion and morality (Riggle et al., 2009; Bansal, 2016). Brand trust is created and established by direct experiences from the consumer and arises after consumer evaluation. When employees identify with a brand that assists in satisfying one or more self-defined needs, they tend to develop brand trust (So et al., 2013). Brand trust is enhanced by the hotel's brand identity and serves as a significant determinant of brand loyalty, which leads to commitment and creates an exchange relationship. Therefore, according to So et al. (2013), loyalty and commitment motivate the progress to acquire and maintain an appreciated and significant relationship, created by trust within the organisation (So et al., 2013). Trust refers to an enduring desire to continue the relationship with the brand, allowing employees to develop an affective bond and attachment to the brand, representing a strong sense of personal identification based on shared values (Erciş et al., 2012). Hence, this study postulates:

H2: Organisational support has a positive and significant influence on brand trust.

Brand satisfaction and organisational citizenship

Organisational citizenship is of a discretionary nature that is not part of the employees' formal requirements but contributes to the effective functioning of an organisation and enables an organisation to have a decrease in employee turnover and a positive effect on employee satisfaction (Serpian, Swasto & Utami, 2016; Kim, 2009). It also refers to an employee's belief in the goals and values of the organisation and is an effective response to the degree of attachment and loyalty employees feel towards it (Serpian et al., 2016; Yeung & Cheng, 2012). Sadeghi, Ahmadi and Yazdi (2016), found that when employees enjoy their job there was a positive relationship between satisfaction and organisational citizenship; while job duplication has a negative relationship with organisational citizenship, ensuring the validity of improved productivity and efficiency. In light of this, the present study posits:

H3: Brand satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on organisational citizenship.

Brand trust and organisational citizenship

A study by Keh and Xie (2009) found that trust is an antecedent of an identified correlation as consumers tend to identify with trustworthy organisations or brands to prompt their self-definition as well as enhance their self-worth. Brand identification may provide a platform for brand trust as trust is developed predominantly from past experience (So et al., 2013; Yeung & Cheng, 2012). So et al., (2013) reiterate that when organisations performance exceeds expectation, consumers are reassured of their psychological attachment with the brand, which in turn helps the consumer reach satisfaction. Analogously, this relationship may extend to the process of organisational citizenship. A study conducted by Rampl and Kenning (2014) attempted to close the research gap between organisational citizenship in employer brand attractiveness and brand trust. The results specify that brand trust and organisational citizenship have a positive relationship. That said, the present study advance the hypothesis that:

H4: Brand trust has a positive and significant influence on organisational citizenship



Organisational support and organisational citizenship

According to Kumari and Thapliyal (2017), organisational citizenship is essential for the efficiency and effectiveness of a functioning organisation. However, it takes on a form that is discretionary in nature and is not driven by any formal reward system the organisation has in place. Singh (2013) conducted a study to examine the mediating role organisation support has on organisational citizenship. The research conducted surveyed 188 personnel to obtain validity and reliability. The results indicated that there is a significant and positive relationship between organisational support and organisational citizenship (Singh, 2013). A more recent study conducted by Anggraeni, Dwiatmadja and Yuniawan (2017) determined the influence of psychological contract and organisational support on the organisational commitment and organisational citizenship. The results showed that organisational citizenship is influenced by organisational support derived through the ability of the organisation's understanding of needs and expectations of employees' self-development (Anggraeni et al., 2017). Hence, the following hypothesis is postulated:

H5: Organisational support has a positive and significant influent on organisational citizenship.

Research methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach to examine the influence of organisational support, brand satisfaction and brand trust on organisational citizenship for employees in the post-acquisition integration of a global hotel brand. Quantitative research, usually descriptive, is employed in determining relationships of a causal nature between variables by means of statistical procedures and analysis (Berndt & Petzer, 2011). Since this study sought to investigate underlying relationships between the variables, descriptive analysis was consequently used (Cant, Gerber-Nel, Nel & Kotze, 2003).

A special effort was made to ensure that the study complied with all the ethical requirements of research. The researcher guaranteed the anonymity of all respondents and the focal hotel brand and assured them of ensuring the confidentiality of any information shared and that such information would be used for none other purpose than for research and academic. Participants were informed that they were under no obligation to participate in the study and that if at any point they wish to withdraw, they could do so.

The target population were all the hotel employees who were employed at the time the acquisition took place, specifically in hotels located in and around Southern Africa. For this study, the sample frame was a list of employees who were employed by the previous hotel brand at the time of the acquisition and who are still employed by the new brand, specifically the employees of the focal hotel group located in Southern Africa. A sampling frame is a list of all those within a population who can be sampled (Westfall, 2009). The presence of a sampling frame enabled the use of probability sampling since each unit in the population had a distinguishing common characteristic and had an equal chance of being included in the sample (Lathman, 2007). Hence this study employed simple random sampling as this technique generally reduces the chance of a sampling error. In this study, the common characteristic required is that the population were previous employed by the brand before the acquisition by the focal hotel group. The questionnaires were distributed to 350 employees, representing the sample of the study. The data collection process yielded a total 246 questionnaires of which 235 were usable, thereby representing a response rate of 67%. The 11 questionnaires were unusable either because there were not completed in full or not completed at all.

Measuring instrument and operationalisation

The measuring instrument used in the study was developed on the basis of validated ones used previously. These include organisational support adapted from Rhoades, Eisenberger



and Armeli (2001), brand satisfaction adapted from Salinas and Perez (2009), brand trust adapted from He, Li and Harris (2012). Finally, items on organisational citizenship were adapted from a study by Allen and Meyer (1990). A 5-point Likert-type scale was used where 1 represented strongly disagree to 5 which represented strongly agree.

Data analysis

In this study, the data was analysed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) techniques. CFA is a statistical technique that is used to verify the factor structure of the constructs and specifically deals with observed and latent variables (Tenenhaus, 2008). CFA attempts to confirm hypotheses and uses path analysis diagrams to represent variables and operates on the notion that measurable variables can be reduced to fewer latent variables that share a common variance, i.e. reducing dimensionality (Zelkowitz & Cole, 2016).

As a multivariate statistical analysis technique, SEM was used to analyse the structural relationships between measured variables and tested hypotheses (Tenenhaus, 2008). AMOS (The Analysis of Moment Structures) and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software package was used for the analysis. A model fit approach was used to test the overall model fit as well as validity and reliability (Zelkowitz & Cole, 2016).

Research findings

Table 1: Sample profile

Characteristic	Description	No.	%
Gender	Male	115	49
	Female	120	51
	Total	235	100.0
Age	18-25	45	19
	26-35	87	37
	36-45	68	29
	46-55	35	15
	56-older	0	0
	Total	235	100.0
Position	General staff	136	58
	Supervisor	40	17
	Junior manager	6	3
	Manager	47	20
	Executive	5	2
	Total	235	100.0

As noted earlier, all the 235 respondents worked for the company before the acquisition of the brand and now formed part of the new brand. Table 1 shows 51% of the respondents were females and 49% were males, indicating an even distribution between male and female respondents. The results also show that 56% of respondents were under the age of 35 years of age, 44% of respondents were older than 35.

Surprisingly, no respondent was over the age of 55 years old. This indicates that the focal hotel brand mainly employs a youthful workforce. The majority (78%) of respondents were of non-managerial general staff while only 22% were at managerial and decision-making levels.



Reliability

Reliability refers to the degree in which an assessment mechanism constructs stable and consistent results (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). SPSS version 24 was used in this study. Reliability was determined by using the Cronbach Alpha co-efficient, which provided a measure of the internal consistency of the scale and has been expressed as a number between 0 and 1. It is recommended that the co-efficient Alpha value be more than 0.70 to ensure internal consistency and overall reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Table 2 reports the results of the reliability tests.

Table 2: Accuracy analysis statistics: Reliability tests

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Factor loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand satisfaction	BS1	3.59	1.153	0.921	0.964	0.777
	BS2	3.51	1.182	0.951		
	BS3	3.54	1.152	0.911		
	BS4	3.34	1.207	0.892		
	BS5	3.41	1.164	0.878		
	BS6	3.52	1.087	0.843		
	BS7	3.60	1.071	0.878		
	BS8	3.22	1.224	0.765		
Brand trust	BT1	3.41	1.204	0.907	0.934	0.785
	BT2	3.37	1.087	0.895		
	BT3	3.55	1.113	0.888		
	BT4	3.43	1.194	0.854		
Organisational support	OS1	3.33	1.198	0.896	0.913	0.603
	OS2	3.24	1.224	0.903		
	OS3	2.97	1.228	0.552		
	OS4	3.21	1.182	0.885		
	OS5	3.43	1.131	0.862		
	OS6	3.45	1.162	0.867		
	OS7	3.38	1.197	0.698		
	OS8	3.23	1.204	0.371		
Organisational citizenship	OC1	3.29	1.205	0.858	0.918	0.666
	OC2	3.38	1.215	0.895		
	OC3	3.71	1.106	0.877		
	OC4	3.43	1.187	0.785		
	OC5	3.15	1.341	0.728		
	OC6	3.60	1.079	0.739		

Brand satisfaction has eight observed variables, represented in the table below. Cronbach Alpha is 0.964. Typically, Cronbach Alpha should be below 0.95 as a higher score is less desirable. However, Fraering and Minor (2006:300) state that if the AVE is acceptable it will give acceptability to this value. Brand trust has four observed items with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.934. This falls within the parameters and is now considered reliable. The Cronbach Alpha for organisational support is 0.913, indicating reliability. Finally, organisational citizenship has



six observed items and has a Cronbach Alpha of 0.918. This falls within the parameters and is now considered reliable.

Validity

The study used convergent and discriminant validity to determine the validity of the constructs. To demonstrate adequate and acceptable validity, standardised factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) were used. According to Kim, Ku, Kim, Park and Park (2016), the standardised factor loadings must be 0.40 or higher and, according to Tavakol and Dennick, (2011), the AVE values must be 0.50 or higher if need to be obtained. Factor loadings can be confirmed to be above the recommended threshold of 0.40 with the exception of OS8 which is slightly under at 0.37. However, this is not a problem as the convergent validity of each construct had AVE values of above 0.50 and can be seen in Table 2. Discriminant validity represents the degree to which two conceptually similar concepts are distinct from each other (Yong & Pearce, 2013). This figure should be below 0.85 (Fraering & Minor, 2006:302). Table 3 represents the correlation coefficients between the constructs are all in the range of 0.85, indicating that there is discriminant validity.

Table 3: Inter-construct correlations

Research constructs	Brand Satisfaction	Brand Trust	Org. Support	Org. Citizenship
Brand Satisfaction	1.000			
Brand Trust	.908**	1.000		
Org. Support	.849**	.862**	1.000	
Org. Citizenship	.854**	.849**	.845**	1.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows all the inter-correlation values for the paired latent variables to be all less than 1.0 and range between 0.80 and 0.95. This confirms that there is discriminant validity between the paired latent variables. However, the correlation value of brand trust (BT) and brand satisfaction of 0.908 is close to 1.0, thus necessitating a further test of the average variance extracted (AVE) to determine discriminant validity (Nunnally & Bernstein 1994). The AVE test was conducted and the results are also shown in Table 2, which shows all the AVE values range from 0.603 to 0.785 and are all well below 1. This is an indication that discriminant validity exist between the paired latent variable.

Model fit indices

In SEM, it is important to determine whether the conceptualised model fits the sample data, and if so, how well the fit is (Voorhees, Brady, Calantone & Ramirez, 2016). According to Hair, Celsi, Oritinau and Bush (2013) the following indices and their suggested preferable values should be used in determining model fit:

- Chi-Square (CMIN) < 3
- Goodness-of-fit statistic (GFI) > 0.9
- Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) < 0.08
- Bentler-Bonett Index or Normed Fit Index (NFI) > 0.90
- Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) > 0.90
- Comparative Fit Index (CFI) > 0.90
- p of Close Fit (PCLOSE)

The model was subjected to CFA to test each construct and their observed variables and the results are accordingly reported in Table 4.



Table 4: CFA Model fit indices results

FIT INDEX	Results	Rounded-off results
Chi-Square/ d. f.	3.33	3.3
GFI (Goodness of Fit Index)	0.79	0.8
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index)	0.73	0.7
RMR (Root Mean Square Residual)	0.06	0.06
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.91	0.9
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	0.10	0.10
NFI (Normal Fit Index)	0.88	0.9
TLI (Tucker Lewis Index)	0.89	0.9
IFI (Incremental Fit index)	0.91	0.9
RFI (Relative Fit Index)	0.86	0.9

According to Table 4, ratio of chi-square value to degree-of-freedom is 3.33. The literature recommends a threshold range of between 1 and 3. While measurement model reports a value of above 3, the difference of 0.33 is considered tolerable. Some authors such as Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) consider a ratio of chi-square to degrees-of-freedom of less than 5 to still provide a good model fit. Hence, the value of 3.33 in this study is acceptable, thus reflecting a good model fit.

Goodness-of-fit statistic (GFI) is slightly low at 0.8, GFI needs to be higher than 0.90, but Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2014), suggest that a goodness of fit above 0.1 variation is an acceptable value. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) is also slightly under at 0.8, which value should be greater than 0.90. Zelkowitz and Cole, (2016:127) recommended NFI values greater than 0.90 although also suggest that a slight variance is acceptable.

Table 5 also shows NFI, RFI, IFI, CFI and TLI values (0.90, 0.90, 0.90, 0.91 and 0.90 respectively) that are at or above the recommended threshold of 0.9, thereby reflect further reflecting a good model fit. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is high at 0.10, this should be below 0.08. According to Voorhees, Brady, Calantone and Ramirez (2016), this is an acceptable margin supported provided the PCLOSE is 0. Table 5 further reports RMR value of 0.06 which is below 0.08, indicating a reasonable model fit. Based on the model fit acceptability guidelines provided in Table 5 and the CFA results, the 10 selected indices shows an acceptable overall model fitness of the sample data.

Structural model and hypotheses testing

Since the model fit indices, reliability and validity of the measuring scales were all acceptable, the next step was to test the hypotheses. This section tested the corresponding path coefficients of the hypotheses and the structural model illustrate the relationships by path diagrams. Path analysis describes the relationships between measured variables and hypothetical paradigms (Zelkowitz & Cole, 2016). This study made use of (AMOS) Graphics version 24 software to determine the theoretical substructures of the model's hypotheses.



Table 5: Path coefficients and p-values

Structural paths		Path coefficients	p - values	Relationship	Results	Significance level	
OS	→	BS	0.915	***	Positive	Accept	0.01
OS	→	BT	0.947	***	Positive	Accept	0.01
OS	→	OC	0.454	0.016	Positive	Reject	p-value is greater>> than 0.01
BS	→	OC	0.276	0.005	Positive	Accept	p-value is less than 0.01
BT	→	OC	0.214	0.142	Positive	Reject	p-value is greater than 0.01

H1: Organisational support has a positive influence on brand satisfaction

Hypothesis 1 claimed a linear positive and significant relationship between organisational support and brand satisfaction. As Table 6 shows, the results show that indeed organisational support has a strong positive and significant linear relationship with brand satisfaction. This is supported by a high and positive path coefficient (0.915). According to Hair et al. (2006) hypothesised path coefficient of above 0.5 indicates a positive influence. Thus the study validates and supports H1.

H2: Organisational support has a positive influence on brand trust

The results also show a positive and significant influence of organisational support on brand trust. As Table 6 shows, organisational support has a positive (path coefficient of 0.947) and significant (C ***) influence on brand trust. Therefore, this study validates and supports the hypothesis that organisational support has a positive and significant influence on brand trust (H2).

H3: Organisational support has a positive influence on organisational citizenship

Organisational citizenship was posited to have a positive influence on organisational commitment. The path diagram presented in Table 5 show that organisational support has a moderate positive (path coefficient of 0.45; $p > 0.01$) influence on organisational citizenship. The positive path coefficient of 0.45 is less than the acceptable threshold value of 0.5 suggests a moderate influence. Therefore, on the basis that $p > 0.01$ the hypothesis that organisational support has a positive influence on organisational citizenship (H3) is not validated and supported.

H4: Brand satisfaction has a positive influence on organisational citizenship

Table 6 depicts that brand satisfaction has a weak positive (path coefficient of 0.276) ($p < 0.01$) influence on organisational citizenship. The path coefficient of 0.276 (<) acceptable threshold value of 0.5) suggests a weak positive path. Thus, the results makes the hypothesis that brand satisfaction has a positive influence on organisational citizenship, albeit weakly valid, and therefore supported.



H5: Brand trust has a positive influence on organisational citizenship

Finally, the study conjectured that there is positive relationship between brand trust and organisational citizenship. The results from Table 6 depicts weak positive (path coefficient of 0.214) and insignificant ($p > 0.01$) relationship between brand trust and organisational citizenship. With a path coefficient of less than the acceptable threshold value of 0.5, a moderate influence is thus suggested by one of 0.214. Therefore, this study does not validate and support the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between brand trust and organisational citizenship (H5).

Discussion

In the main, the present study sought to examine the influence of organisational support, brand satisfaction, and brand trust on the organisational citizenship among the local hotel employees following an acquisition by a global hotel brand. Whilst some studies have confirmed the relationship between organisational support and job satisfaction (Ahmad & Yekta, 2010; Pradesa, 2013; Zumrah & Boyle, 2015), this is one of the few that have confirmed a positive and significant influence of organisational support on brand satisfaction following an acquisition by a global hotel brand. Since the acquiring brand depends on the existing staff of the acquired hotel, it is important that they offer as much support as possible to the employees during and immediately after the acquisition if the acquiring brand is to count on the trust of the existing employees of the new brand. The study also showed a positive and significant relationship between organisational support and brand trust. The marketing literature has established trust as a key ingredient of brand attachment and that the more consumers interact with the brand the higher the trust and the love for the brand. In this study, higher levels of organisational support during and after the integration process of the hotel brands resulted in higher brand trust by the employees. This indicates that the provision of support for employees during this period of uncertainty provides some reassurance which results in earning the much-needed trust of the brand by the employees. This is essential especially in the hotel business, which is in a service industry where intangibility is critical.

The findings of the study invalidates hypotheses 3 and 5. Hypothesis 3 postulated that organisational support has a positive influence on organisational citizenship even though there is a moderate positive influence. This may indicate that organisational support needs to complement other factors to improve organisational citizenship. It could also suggest the presence of a mediation effect between organisational support and organisational citizenship. Hypothesis 5 posited that brand trust has a positive influence on organisational citizenship. Equally, this may indicate that brand trust also needs to complement other factors to improve organisational citizenship. Since organisational citizenship involves acceptance of the organisation's values and the motivation to remain within the organisation (Galavotti, 2019), it is evident that unlike brand satisfaction and brand trust, the feeling of organisational citizenship requires more time as employees settle and become comfortable with the new brand. The weak positive path between brand satisfaction and organisational citizenship suggests a weak influence. These findings suggest that, on its own, brand satisfaction cannot always be associated with organisational citizenship. Other factors beyond the scope of the scope may be necessary mediators between job satisfaction and organisational citizenship. For example, job characteristics, such as job identity and level of autonomy, among other things, could well serve as such mediators.

Conclusion and direction for future research

This study shows the important role of organisational support in brand satisfaction and brand trust on the part of employees of an acquired hotel brand. Therefore the acquiring of brands in M&A do well to do everything possible to ensure organisational support. Yet, the study also found that for employees to gain organisational citizenship, organisational support is



necessary but not sufficient. In other words, for employees to eventually 'feel at home' with the new brand, more is required than merely organisational support. It is argued that more time is required to gain organisational citizenship than to earn brand trust and brand satisfaction on the part of employees. In addition, the acquiring brand should not be fooled by brand satisfaction and brand trust and think that this means the same thing as organisational citizenship. It is hard at this point to try and guess what else needs to be done to improve organisational citizenship. In light of this, as some possible direction for future research it is suggested that perhaps a longitudinal study should be carried out to see if the passage of time will have any influence on organisational citizenship as argued in this paper. Furthermore, to determine what else is require, an exploratory qualitative study is suggested to determine those factors.

In the meantime, the study has hopefully contributed to knowledge in the field of mergers and acquisitions, joining studies that show the value of considering human factors as vital in during and after the M&A process. The study also proved empirically that organisational support during and after M&As is not something that should be taken likely especially in brand conscious industries like the hospitality and hotel industry where brand satisfaction, brand trust, and organisational citizenship are vital.

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