

Full length article

Corporate identity management: A study of employees' perceptions in the context of the retail and the hospitality and tourism sectors

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A B S T R A C T

This research delves into the evolving landscape of corporate identity and its interplay with corporate reputation. To construct a relevant corporate identity scale, we relied on the existing literature and conducted comprehensive interviews with personnel in the hospitality and tourism, and retail sectors. We then gathered survey responses from 690 individuals in hospitality and tourism, and 649 in retail, to evaluate the corporate identity scale's dimensions and its link to corporate reputation. Our findings validate the proposed model, highlighting that corporate reputation is significantly shaped by various facets of corporate identity. Notably, empowerment directly influences corporate reputation, while elements like corporate purpose, strategy, culture, and a climate fostering inclusion and diversity have an indirect impact. The study underscores the importance of cultivating an inclusive, supportive workplace that prioritizes employee well-being and empowerment, thus underscoring employees' pivotal role in enhancing an organization's reputation.

1. Introduction and Background

The idea of corporate identity is a well-established concept in the fields of marketing and management, as is evident from various studies (Balmer and Greyser, 2003; Foroudi et al., 2014; 2019a,b; 2020; 2021; He and Balmer, 2007; Melewar et al., 2017). This concept pertains to the qualities, characteristics, traits, or attributes of a company that are assumed to be fundamental, unique, and long-lasting. It is defined as how an organization presents itself to all its stakeholders (He and Mukherjee, 2009, p. 2). Corporate identity encompasses various aspects, including an organization's design, communication, culture, structure, behavior, and strategy, and its role within the industry. As noted by Melewar et al. (2017), a more comprehensive approach to corporate identity becomes essential in the context of global marketing, where factors beyond corporate identity should be considered alongside the understanding of its guiding and enduring nature (p. 1).

Corporate identity is the distinguishing factor that sets an organization apart from others. This concept has garnered significant interest from both scholars and professionals since the 1950s, driven primarily by shifts in technology, market dynamics, and changes in consumer values and behavior. Karaosmanoglu and Melewar (2006) conducted research that highlighted organizations' recognition of the importance

of communicating effectively and aligning the core values of the organization with its communication strategies and actions to achieve a positive public image. Despite the considerable attention devoted to the concept of corporate identity, to date, there is still no universally accepted definition or standardized measurement scale available. This is not only because corporate identity involves a multi-disciplinary approach (Devereux et al., 2020; Melewar et al., 2018; 2020; 2021) but also because corporate identity as a concept often has different meanings for different stakeholders (Tourky et al., 2020a). The reason for this is that corporate identity involves managing numerous elements (Flint et al., 2018; He and Balmer, 2007) and touches upon a broad range of business functions including strategy, leadership style, corporate culture, behavior, and corporate design, which are unique to each organization (Foroudi et al., 2017a; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; 2017). As a result, there is often a lack of clarity regarding the theoretical foundations of corporate identity — in other words, 'What does corporate identity mean?' — which leads to limitations regarding the theoretical and managerial implications of the concept. This lack of clarity and consensuality is also reflected in the business world. While executives consider corporate identity to be very important, many admit to having little knowledge of how to manage, control, or even explicitly define it (Karaosmanoglu and Melewar, 2006). This fact is crucial for companies

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especially where the cost is concerned (Melewar et al., 2017). Until its key properties are identified and operationalized, the concept will remain underdeveloped. It is insufficient to advise practitioners that corporate identity is key to successful brand distinctiveness without providing specific information on what corporate identity involves and what dimensions constitute corporate identity. This is therefore a gap that needs to be filled.

Additional complexity has been brought into the concept of 'corporate identity', where it has been widely discussed in specific contexts such as SMEs (Foroudi et al., 2018), higher education (Melewar et al., 2017), and hospitality (Foroudi, 2020; Foroudi et al., 2021; 2022). It is essential to elicit how and where issues of corporate identity are discussed within a company and how the results of these discussions are fed into the management structure. Also, corporate identity must be considered a constructive tool that can be effectively applied to managing an organization's reputation. Although the importance of the concept of corporate identity has long been recognized in marketing and management, it remains understudied from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Also, despite this pragmatic need, little research attention has been devoted to exploring and measuring corporate identity in a scientific manner.

Approaching this research from a multidisciplinary perspective, the current study brings attention to aspects of corporate identity that have been relatively understudied. The primary goal of this research is to gain insights into how corporate identity can be employed to initiate and sustain change. In line with this objective, the research addresses two key questions: (i) What are the dimensions that constitute corporate identity? and (ii) What is the influence of corporate identity on corporate reputation, and how can organizations leverage corporate identity to cultivate a positive corporate reputation? The study emphasizes that corporate identity should be regarded as a valuable tool with the potential for effective use in shaping and managing the reputation of any organization.

The study carries several academic implications. Notably, this research makes a significant contribution to the corporate identity literature by refining, specifying, and providing a clear definition of the corporate identity concept and its constituent elements. In addition, using insights from different disciplines, the study proposes and empirically validates a measurement scale of corporate identity, considering a range of elements not previously empirically measured together. The integration of these elements into a single model, even though it increases the complexity of the measure, provides a clearer and more comprehensive picture of the corporate identity concept. Besides its academic value, the study is useful to practitioners. The findings of this research have relevance to communication professionals responsible for an organization's corporate identity, branding, and communications. It can assist them in enhancing the consistency of both written and visual messages within their organizations. In addition, using data from the hospitality, tourism, and retail sectors, the study offers a psychometrically strong measurement instrument for corporate identity that managers can apply across different markets. Meanwhile, firms can use the proposed scale as a useful self-diagnostic tool to track changes in the firm-related activities that drive the corporate identity process and to identify areas where further improvement is needed to increase the effectiveness of their corporate identity and its effect on corporate reputation.

2. Background

Having a corporate identity is accepted as a vital element for every organization's survival, but there is little agreement regarding the boundaries of this concept (Cornelissen et al., 2012; Staub et al., 2016). Corporate identity lacks any universally accepted definition; hence, the literature provides varying corporate identity models (Cornelissen et al., 2007; Devereux et al., 2020; Melewar, 2003). The corporate identity model introduced by Van Riel and Balmer (1997) encompasses

behavior, communication, and symbolism. In contrast, Stuart (1999) extended this model to include behavior, management, symbolism, and communication. Melewar and Jenkins (2002) presented a model that covers communication and visual identity, behavior, corporate culture, and market conditions. Ludlow and Schmidt (2002) proposed a holistic identity model that encompasses culture, behavior, market and customers, products and services, communication, and design. Corporate identity, in essence, refers to an organization's core values and the combination of elements that distinguish it and give it a competitive advantage in the marketplace (Balmer, 1998, 2008; Flint et al., 2018; Wernerfelt, 2014).

Lastly, Tourky et al. (2020a) conceptualized corporate identity as an intangible asset that comprises values, behavior, and communication. Corporate identity plays a pivotal role in differentiating an organization, influencing not only its image and reputation but also its financial outcomes, as noted by Bravo et al. (2016) and Tourky et al. (2020a). It is defined as the array of features, characteristics, traits, or attributes that are central, distinctive, and enduring to a company (He and Mukherjee, 2009; Melewar et al., 2018). This identity encompasses various aspects of an organization, including its communication, visual design, culture, behavior, structure, purpose, and strategy, all collectively contributing to its uniqueness (Melewar et al., 2018). Therefore, corporate identity, as a strategic administrative tool, encompasses the organization's essence, objectives, desired identity, and approaches to achieve these aims. It includes all visible management activities and the overall perception of the organization (Csordas, 2008; Olins, 1990; Staub et al., 2016).

Corporate culture provides the context for the organization to establish and maintain its identity. It entails the corporate purpose, history, management behaviors, corporate strategy, and the climate for inclusion to signal who the organization wants to be. Thus, corporate culture represents the tacit social order of an organization, and so it shapes attitudes and behaviors in various ways. Cultural norms that are embedded in the culture define what is encouraged and discouraged within an organization (Groysberg et al., 2018). When there is value congruence within the members, and employees identify their personal values, drives, and needs with those of the organization, corporate culture can unleash tremendous efforts and energy toward achieving a shared purpose and so enhance an organization's capacity to be successful (Groysberg et al., 2018). Corporate culture plays a pivotal role in shaping the corporate structure, corporate behaviors, and the implementation of diversity management practices. These, in turn, contribute to employee empowerment and the establishment of a favorable corporate reputation. Corporate identity, on the other hand, serves as a representation of "what we do," "what we stand for," and "how we are perceived." It evolves as a result of the ongoing processes within the organizational culture, as described by Hatch and Schultz (1997).

In this context, a culturally ingrained corporate identity provides the symbolic communication material that forms the basis for constructing organizational images. These images are then projected outwardly as corporate reputation and, in turn, are incorporated back into the cultural framework as cultural artifacts. These artifacts are symbolically used to convey the corporate identity (Hatch and Schultz, 1997). Consequently, we contend that corporate culture, corporate image, corporate reputation, and corporate identity are interconnected and mutually influence one another in a continuous and cyclical manner. In the following section, we review the literature on various dimensions of corporate identity and then propose a model linking those dimensions as antecedents of corporate reputation. We then outline our methodology for testing the model, using a structured questionnaire addressed to employees in two exemplar industries, namely, hospitality and tourism, and retail. The following sections report and discuss the results and hypotheses tests. The final sections suggest managerial implications and summarize our overall conclusions.

3. Literature review, hypotheses developments and conceptual framework

3.1. Corporate purpose and corporate strategy

Despite significant attention focusing on the topic of corporate culture, the extant literature does not sufficiently document the explicit process by which corporate purpose and strategy (i.e., the foundational building blocks of corporate culture) translate into observable desired corporate behaviors. This current research highlights how a climate for inclusion can be embedded alongside corporate purpose in the corporate culture to deliver positive corporate behavior and diversity management outcomes. First, corporate purpose is an essential element of an organization's signal of who the organization wants to be, helping to provide the norms of corporate culture that shape behavior (Hackman, 2002; Jackson et al., 2003; Joshi and Roh, 2009). Shared purpose enhances an organization's corporate strategy (Groysberg et al., 2018), which leads to our first hypothesis:

H1. : Corporate purpose is positively associated with corporate strategy.

3.2. History, management behaviors, and climate for inclusion

Building on previous research, we argue that a climate for inclusion needs to be conceptualized as an antecedent in the formation of the corporate culture. Companies will not receive benefits from diversity unless they build a culture that nurtures a climate for inclusion (Ely and Thomas, 2001). Cultural identities of the workforce include race, ethnicity, sex, social class, religion, nationality, and sexual identity (Ely and Thomas, 2020). Previous research attention has been more on studying the outcomes of diversity than on the organizational context and on understanding the factors that influence the adoption and implementation of diversity (Farashah and Blomquist, 2021). Unfortunately, research remains limited regarding the interrelationships between elements of a climate for inclusion and organizational culture, and little theoretical development exists regarding the strength of the association between diversity management and corporate culture in an organization. Therefore, to shed light on the antecedents of diversity in an organization, we first examine the antecedents of the climate for inclusion such as history and management behaviors. Drawing a parallel with Galbreath's (2010) finding that beliefs and values define the extent to which business is conducted responsibly, we expect that historical and managerial core values positively influence the climate for inclusion and inclusive decision making. The above argument leads to our next two hypotheses:

H2. : History is positively associated with the climate of inclusion in an organization.

H3. : Management behaviors have a direct relationship with the climate for inclusion.

3.3. Corporate culture

The objectives of an organization need to include creating an organizational culture characterized by minimal institutional bias and the maximum integration of differences and equitable employment practices to achieve a context in which differences are acknowledged and valued, and intergroup conflict is minimized (Cox, 1993). Corporate strategy is one of the elements of corporate identity that make an

organization unique (Melewar et al., 2018), and it influences the philosophy, mission, and values of the corporate culture (Cameron and Quinn, 2011). Therefore, we hypothesize as follows:

H4. : Corporate strategy is positively related to corporate culture.

Next, the connection between climate for inclusion and corporate culture is investigated, and then how corporate culture creates the right context for corporate behavior and diversity management is examined. We argue that diversity dynamics are shaped by the organizational culture in which the climate for inclusion is embedded.

In the literature, the concept of a climate for inclusion is diverse and multifaceted. Shore and colleagues (2011) noted that defining this climate is complex. Roberson (2006, p. 217) described inclusion as removing barriers that hinder full employee participation and contribution in organizations. Similarly, Lirio et al. (2008, p. 443) viewed inclusion as creating a sense of belonging, where everyone's contributions are sought and valued daily. Avery and others (2008, p. 6) defined it as the degree to which employees feel their organization actively involves everyone in its mission and operations, considering their unique talents. Wasserman and team (2008, p. 176) described an inclusive culture as one where people from all social identity groups have opportunities to be present, heard, appreciated, and involved in key activities. A climate for inclusion is characterized by employment practices and procedures that ensure fair and equal treatment of all social groups, recognizing and integrating their differences into organizational tasks. This inclusion is facilitated by embracing diversity in decision-making (Mor Barak et al., 1998; Nishii, 2013), establishing equitable employment practices, and resolving conflicts effectively (Janssens and Zanoni, 2007; Roberson, 2017, 2019). Building on Rink and Ellemers's (2007) Norm Congruity Principle, it is believed that emphasizing a common identity, through integrating differences and encouraging decision-making participation, enhances group cohesion and collaboration regarding achieving a shared corporate goal and strategy.

Hence, a corporate culture in which a climate for inclusion is embedded will act as a normative order and guide for corporate behavior and for how diversity is achieved (O'Reilly, 2008; Ravasi and Schultz, 2006). The inclusion climate in an organization emphasizes the effective integration of all employees' diverse skills and insights (Nishii, 2013). We believe that only when an inclusive climate is embedded in the corporate culture can an organization ensure the fair treatment of diverse groups and, hence, create a diverse climate. Furthermore, focusing only on fair treatment is not sufficient to maximize the synergies among employees if the climate for inclusion is not a core element of the corporate culture. Employees in an inclusive climate satisfy both employees' belongingness and their need for uniqueness, thus unlocking their full potential within their organization (Shore et al., 2011). We argue that a corporate culture in which a climate for inclusion is embedded can create the context for fair treatment of all the employees and hence enhance the diversity climate in an organization. Thus, we hypothesize as follows:

H5. : Climate for inclusion is positively associated with corporate culture.

3.4. Corporate structure

Corporate culture is a set of shared values and perceptions that influence all aspects of the organization, including corporate structure, corporate behavior, and processes (Farashah and Blomquist, 2021; Hartnell et al., 2019). It forms the context within which cultural identity

is established, maintained, and changed (Balmer, 2017; Hatch and Schultz, 1997). Thus, how organizational members construct their sense of identity and interpret and respond to the deliberate creation of corporate identity needs to be studied in detail. Since values are embedded in social identity, Chao and Moon (2005) adopted a cultural mosaic perspective to capture the dynamism of multiple cultural identities and their effect on individuals and organizations. Gibson, Ivanovich and Donnelly (1991, p. 46) described corporate culture as the ‘personality or feel’ of the firm, which influences behavior. The personality of the firm and its beliefs, values, and assumptions define the extent to which business is conducted responsibly or irresponsibly (Galbreath, 2010; Schein, 1992). Cultural norms deeply embedded in an organization dictate what actions and behaviors are encouraged or discouraged. Consequently, these norms significantly impact the organization’s structure and overall corporate conduct. Specifically, the cultural norms of an organization positively influence perceptions of the organizational and brand corporate structure (Chatman and Cha, 2003). Therefore, we hypothesize as follows:

H6. : Corporate culture is positively related to corporate structure.

3.5. Corporate behavior

When there is alignment of values among members and employees identify their personal values, motivations, and needs with those of the organization, the corporate culture can significantly mobilize efforts and energy towards achieving a common goal, thereby enhancing the organization’s potential for success (Groysberg et al., 2018). For example, a corporate culture that emphasizes inclusion shapes corporate behavior and practices by ensuring fair treatment of employees and customers, and recognizing diversity as a valuable asset. This congruence not only strengthens the organizational structure but also drives collective efforts towards shared objectives, ultimately boosting the organization’s overall performance and success. When employees feel that their values are in sync with the corporate culture, it fosters a sense of belonging and commitment. This sense of belonging can lead to increased job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and higher levels of employee engagement. Employees are more likely to go above and beyond their basic job requirements, contributing innovative ideas and taking ownership of their work. This intrinsic motivation can lead to higher productivity and improved morale across the organization. Therefore, we hypothesize as follows:

H7. : Corporate culture is positively related to corporate behavior.

3.6. Diversity climate

The modern workforce is becoming increasingly heterogeneous, and research suggests that this trend for greater diversity will continue to be prevalent in the workforce of the future (Hopkins and Hopkins, 2002; Pugh et al., 2008). Therefore, organizational efforts and investments in the management of diversity will continue to grow (Herdman and McMillan-Capehart, 2010; Rosenauer et al., 2016); however, establishing a diversity program is not enough, and the determinants of a diverse climate need to be explored. Diversity climate covers employee perceptions of an organization’s diversity-related policies, practices, and procedures (Gelfand, Nishii, Raver, and Schneider, 2005; Pugh et al., 2008; Ziegert and Hanges, 2005). We argue that corporate culture plays a critical role in the formation of diversity climate perceptions. Reichers and Schneider (1990) defined diversity climate as the “shared perceptions of the way things are around here” (p. 22). Climate perceptions are formed as a result of salient stimuli experienced by employees regarding their work environment, workplace conditions, informal values, and social integration of underrepresented employees (Dwertmann et al., 2016). Nishii (2013) argued that “diversity climate simply focuses on the fair treatment of historically disadvantaged groups, whereas inclusion climate emphasizes the effective integration of all employees’

diverse skills and insights” (p. 1361). However, while managers focusing mainly on creating a diverse climate might reduce bias in the organization, that does not necessarily create an atmosphere that enables new capabilities and synergies among employees (Holmes et al., 2019; Nishii, 2013). The corporate culture positively influences perceptions of the positive workforce diversity climate (Roberson, 2006). We therefore expect that:

H8. : Corporate culture is positively related to diversity climate.

The leadership of an organization can promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by providing opportunities for employees to contribute and succeed regardless of their background or identity (Nishii and Mayer, 2009). A well-designed structure that empowers employees, eliminates hierarchies, and promotes collaboration can positively affect the diversity climate and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace. In a case study of a particularly diverse organization, Groggins and Ryan (2013) found that the corporate structure is strongly linked to the climate of diversity. Therefore, we expect that:

H9. : Corporate structure is positively related to diversity climate.

3.7. Benefits of empowerment

Nishii and Mayer’s (2009) findings highlight the important role leaders play. A positive corporate behavior can create an empowering work environment where employees feel valued, supported, and motivated to contribute to the organization’s success. The better the perceived relationship of employees with their leader, the more they will feel empowered and hence motivated and responsible (Nishii and Mayer, 2009). Similarly, Lamm et al. (2015) found that perceived organizational support towards the environment is positively related to empowerment. These studies suggest that corporate behavior can have a positive impact on the benefits of empowerment. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H10. : Corporate behavior is positively related to benefits of empowerment.

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) suggests that there are a series of social exchanges in the interaction of employees and employers and that these are governed by the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960; Holmes et al., 2021). Employees reciprocate in kind the treatment they perceive they receive from an organization, such as the firm’s actions being a personification of its goodwill toward them. When employees perceive their organizations as fair and supportive through maintaining a positive diversity climate, they are more committed and satisfied, which results in higher employee retention and improved job performance (Holmes et al., 2021; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Hence, we argue that an organization’s efforts to maintain a positive diversity climate are reciprocated by the employee as the benefits of empowerment. Thus:

H11. : Diversity climate is positively related to the benefits of empowerment.

3.8. Corporate reputation

Balmer (2001) described the relationship between corporate identity and corporate reputation as ‘foggy’. Indeed, although they are two distinct concepts, corporate identity and reputation are closely related, and we consider corporate reputation as the useful dependent variable from the corporate identity dimensions. Focusing on a company’s reputation and determining how it deals with all of its constituents is also focusing on a company’s character or identity (Walsh et al., 2009). Walsh and Beatty (2007) described corporate reputation as the ‘customer’s overall evaluation of a firm based on his or her reactions to the firm’s goods, services, communication activities, interactions with the firm and/or its representatives (e.g., employees, management) and/or

known corporate activities’ (p. 129). It has also been defined as “a perceptual representation of a company’s past actions and future prospects that describes the firm’s overall appeal to all of its key constituents when compared with other leading rivals” (Fombrun, 1996, p. 72; Foroudi, 2019; 2023).

Corporate reputation has the following two components: (i) brand reliability and (ii) brand benevolence. Brand reliability refers to “the ability of an existing brand name to act as a heuristic to reduce consumers’ perceptions of risk when evaluating a brand extension in a particular product category” (DelVecchio, 2000, p. 463), while brand benevolence is an affect-oriented reputation that is based on the functional capability of a brand to perform non-profit actions for its customers (Oh, 2002; Wang et al., 2014). Empowered employees are more motivated and responsible (Nishii and Mayer, 2009; Lamm et al., 2015), which we consider will lead to better employee performance and hence an enhanced corporate reputation (Das et al., 2023). Therefore:

H12. : Benefit of empowerment is positively related to corporate reputation.

The conceptual model is presented in Fig. 1. In the following section, we detail our methodology for testing the hypotheses.

4. Methodology

4.1. Developing the corporate identity scale

In our study, we adopted a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach to address the complexities inherent in our research objectives, which focused on corporate identity and its impact on corporate reputation. This methodological choice began with a quantitative phase aimed at establishing a broad empirical foundation. Although this phase provided valuable baseline data, its scope in capturing the nuanced influences of corporate identity was limited, necessitating a follow-up qualitative phase for deeper exploration. The sequential explanatory design was critically selected for its robust ability to link and elucidate the ‘what’ (the measurable aspects of corporate identity) and ‘how’ (the mechanisms by which corporate identity affects reputation). Initially, we developed and validated a corporate identity scale quantitatively. This phase was instrumental in setting parameters for our investigation but faced limitations in terms of interpreting complex behavioral data and underlying motivations; these were subsequently addressed in the qualitative phase. This second phase provided critical insights into the

contextual and processual dynamics shaping corporate reputation, offering a richer, more nuanced understanding that the quantitative data alone could not provide.

This approach facilitated a layered analysis—first capturing the extent and then exploring the essence of corporate identity’s influence on reputation. The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods not only supported the validation of our scale but also enhanced the depth of our insights into the strategic implications of corporate identity within the business sector.

Constructing the corporate identity scale involved drawing from an extensive array of literature across tourism, hospitality, management, organization, design, and marketing. The interdisciplinary approach was necessitated by a scarcity of studies focusing on corporate identity, prompting a broad and critical examination of the relevant literature to ensure the scale’s comprehensive applicability. Despite the strengths of this mixed-methods design in facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the underlying mechanisms, challenges in integrating the qualitative and quantitative findings remained. Specifically, aligning the interpretive qualitative data with the statistically driven quantitative results required meticulous methodological rigor to maintain coherence and validity. The triangulation of data types aimed to produce more robust conclusions and involved a critical demonstration of how qualitative insights either confirmed or challenged the assumptions or results of the quantitative analysis.

In our study, the triangulation process was meticulously structured to ensure both transparency and rigor. We clearly documented each step of data collection and analysis for both qualitative and quantitative methods. Integration occurred primarily at the analysis stage, where quantitative data provided a broad understanding of trends, which were then deeply explored and contextualized through qualitative interviews. The rigor of our triangulation process was upheld by cross-verifying findings across methods. For instance, quantitative patterns in corporate identity metrics were explored in interviews to understand the reasons behind these patterns, thus validating the quantitative data through qualitative insights. Discrepancies between the data sets were critically examined to uncover underlying causes, ensuring a comprehensive analysis that goes beyond surface-level observations (Turner and Turner, 2009).

Initially, in Phase 1, we gathered insights through detailed interviews with both managers and employees within the hospitality and tourism industry, as well as within the retail sector. Hospitality (e.g., hotels) and retail are major service-oriented commercial sectors that

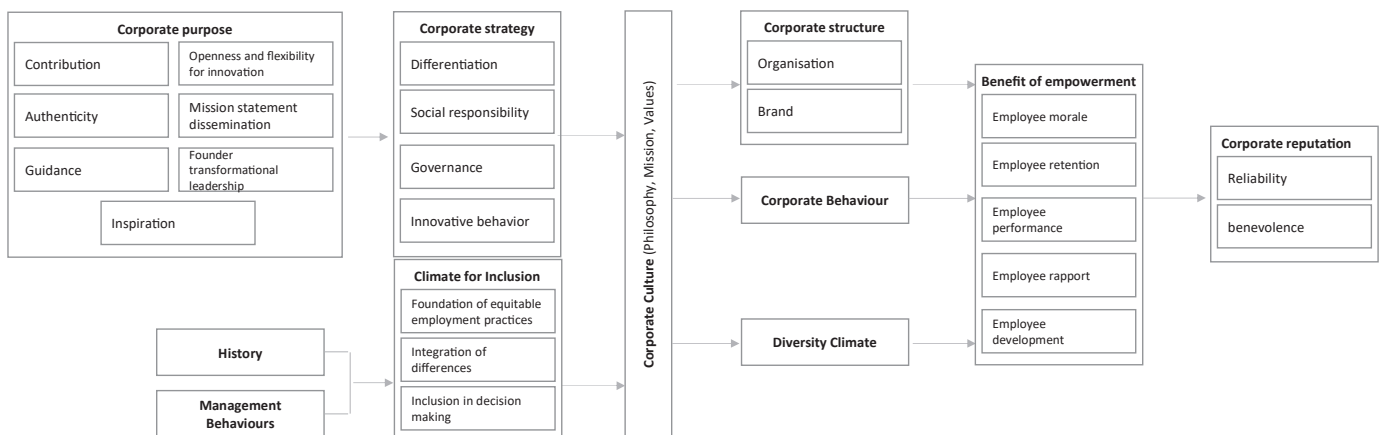


Fig. 1. The Research Conceptual Model.

contribute significantly to global economic development. While the former sector stresses the social exchange between the service provider and customers and requires personnel with special qualities (González-Rodríguez et al., 2018), the latter sector emphasizes the selling activity itself. However, both sectors would seem to have dynamic environments, as they face a high rate of technological disruptions, competitive intensity, and consumer behavioral changes (Cheah et al., 2018; Foroudi and Dennis, 2023; Marvi et al., 2023). Also, both sectors include well-known, established companies that can influence consumers' perception associated with their brand identity (e.g., large hotel chains). Hence, in line with relevant studies in corporate identity, corporate reputation, and corporate branding (e.g., Foroudi et al., 2021; Melewar et al., 2017; Simões and Sebastiani, 2017), we focused on managers and employees from the hospitality and tourism and retail sectors.

Following this, Phase 2 involved a pilot study aimed at verifying the clarity and validity of our measurement tools. Subsequently, we collected survey responses from managers and employees in both the hospitality and tourism, and retail industries. This data collection was crucial for assessing the structure of the corporate identity scale and its association with corporate reputation. We employed methods like exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze this relationship.

4.2. Phase 1: Item generation and selection

The main aim of the first study was to develop a scale for measuring "corporate identity." To this end, we embarked on an extensive literature review and complemented it with qualitative research. This approach, as highlighted by Foroudi et al. (2023; 2024) and Patton (1990, p. 406), was aimed at uncovering significant patterns, themes, and categories within the data. Drawing from established definitions, an interview protocol was crafted, leading to 64 detailed interviews with directors and managers in marketing, branding, and communications across the hospitality and tourism (totaling 1827 minutes, averaging 60 minutes each, involving 24 males and 18 females), and retail sectors (totaling 2391 minutes, averaging 47 minutes each, involving 37 males and 8 females).

This extensive data collection provided deeper insights into the subject, helping to "uncover new evidence and reveal new dimensions of the problem" as per Yin (1984), and to gather comprehensive, accurate, and personal experience-based accounts, in line with Foroudi et al. (2018). To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, a two-stage triangulation method was used, as recommended by Creswell and Miller (2000). This involved identifying and coding key constructs and research questions initially. Following this, NVivo software was employed for data storage, management, and retrieval. We meticulously analyzed significant statements related to the research questions. Additionally, they thoroughly evaluated responses to open-ended questions, connecting them directly with the research questions to facilitate theory development.

Our process began by examining past studies and definitions and then integrating validated item measurements from previous research with qualitative analysis. This approach yielded an initial batch of 167 item measurements. To further refine these, we consulted a judgement sample of eight academics and field experts. They evaluated the face and content validity of each item to ensure each item's applicability across different contexts. After this item analysis, we narrowed down the list to 151 items for the final version, details of which, along with their references, are available in Appendix 1. For further evaluation, the (re) developed items were presented to seven academics and experts. They were tasked with rating how accurately each item represented various dimensions on a scale where 1 signifies 'clearly representative', 2 indicates 'somewhat representative', and 3 means 'not at all representative'. We decided to retain only those items that were deemed 'clearly representative', adhering to the criteria set by previous research

(Bearden et al., 2001; Tian et al., 2001; Zaichkowsky, 1985).

4.3. Phase 2: item reduction and dimensionality of corporate identity' scale (Pre-Study)

Phase 2 aimed to reduce the number of items and evaluate the dimensionality of the corporate identity scale before conducting the main studies. Additionally, we sought to investigate the relationship between corporate identity and corporate reputation in line with our research question. To achieve this, we conducted a pre-study, which involved collecting data from managers and employees in the hospitality and tourism retails located in the UK. Despite the importance of corporate identity in creating and maintaining a competitive advantage, there is a lack of research on this topic within the hospitality and the retail industries in the UK. While some studies have examined corporate identity in other sectors, there is a need to investigate the specific challenges and opportunities faced by hospitality and tourism businesses. Therefore, there is a research gap in understanding the role and impact of retail identity on the performance of hospitality and tourism as well as retail businesses in the UK.

Based on prior research and qualitative analysis within a specified framework, we created multi-item Likert scales. These scales required respondents to express their level of agreement using a 7-point scale, where the options ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Additionally, a separate section of the survey was dedicated to collecting demographic information from the respondents. To streamline the scale item measurements, we conducted an EFA utilizing an orthogonal Varimax rotation. This approach was instrumental in determining the number of factors to extract, guided by the latent root criterion (eigenvalue greater than 1.00). We initially applied principal component analysis and EFA to 127 items related to our research constructs. This process effectively reduced the variables to 28 theoretically established constructs, each with an eigenvalue exceeding 1.00. The significance of these factors was further confirmed through a scree-plot analysis. Cross-loading and low reliability led to the exclusion of 27 items, leaving 107 items for the next stage. The Cronbach alpha, meeting Nunnally's criterion of 0.7, was considered satisfactory (Appendix 2).

4.4. Managers and employees perceptions of corporate identity

For the main study, we made some changes to our approach by removing certain item measurements and conducting exploratory and confirmatory analyses. Our objective was to enhance the robustness of the scales, augment the amount of variance observed, and boost the applicability of the findings across different settings, as emphasized by Morgan et al. (2004). We collected data for our study from two industries, specifically, hospitality and tourism (690 participants) and retail (647 participants) using MTurk. This method was chosen for its ability to rapidly and affordably provide a diverse pool of participants suitable for inferential analysis. We followed the approach of other researchers by eliminating items that were not understood well by participants, i.e., those that were not rated by more than 10 % of respondents. Most of the participants were employees, with 57.4 % working in hospitality and tourism and 44.5 % in retail. The gender mix was 57.8 % male in hospitality and tourism and 59.5 % in retail. The mode age range was 40–59 (37.2 %) in hospitality and tourism and 35.2 % in retail. Consistent with a worldwide trend towards professionalization, 61.3 % of participants in hospitality and tourism and 60.4 % in retail held postgraduate degrees. In the hospitality and tourism sector, 32.0 % of participants had been working for between six and ten years, while in the retail sector, 30.9 % had been working for two years. Most participants worked in private companies, with 84.6 % in hospitality and tourism and 86.4 % in retail. In the hospitality and tourism sector, most participants (50.0 %) worked in companies with 50–249 employees, while in the retail sector, 38.8 % worked in companies with 250 or more employees (Appendix 4)

We also checked for non-response bias and found that both early and late participants had equivalent responses (see [Brakus et al., 2009](#); [Thomson et al., 2005](#)). We examined items with loadings of 0.7 or higher to better understand our results. We also tested for internal reliability, which yielded satisfactory results of above 0.761, based on standards set by [Hair et al. \(2010\)](#) and [Nunnally and Bernstein \(1994\)](#). Moreover, the AVEs (hospitality and tourism: 0.563 and 0.801; retail: 0.632 and 0.913) and CR (hospitality and tourism: 0.795 and 0.941; retail: 0.836 and 0.972) of the research variables went beyond this, respectively, indicating the existence of discriminant reliability and validity (Appendix 3a and b).

Additionally, we employed CFA to assess the 12 factors and 43 items linked to three key marketing assets, which were straightforward to understand. The results, depicted in, include information regarding model fit statistics, factor loadings, and the relevance of modification indices for primary constructs and their sub-constructs. The results indicate that the model is well-suited, with a Chi-square of 6905.739 for hospitality and tourism and 9607.331 for retail, a comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.966 for hospitality and tourism and 0.939 for retail, a Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) of 0.962 for hospitality and tourism and 0.933 for retail, an incremental fit index (IFI) of 0.966 for hospitality and tourism and 0.940 for retail, and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.023 for hospitality and tourism and 0.037 for retail.

Common method variance assessment – To assess the presence of common method bias, we applied Harman's one-factor analysis and juxtaposed it with a common-latent-factor approach, evaluating the chi-square difference between a fully constrained model and the original one. This methodology follows the guidelines proposed by [Lindell and Whitney \(2001\)](#), [Malhotra et al. \(2006\)](#), and [Podsakoff et al. \(2003\)](#). The analysis indicated that while the two models shared some variance, they yielded statistically distinct results. Furthermore, in line with the recommendations of [Podsakoff et al. \(2003\)](#), we investigated four potential sources of common method variance and analyzed the outcomes of both models without the influence of method biases.

5. Results

To evaluate our model, we employed SEM with maximum likelihood parameter estimation to analyze our data. The use of latent difference SEM was particularly beneficial, as it enabled us to distinguish between random errors and effects specific to indicators, thereby facilitating a more thorough analysis. The results indicate a strong fit (hospitality and tourism: RMSEA=.035; CFI=.912; TLI=.909; IFI=.912; retail: RMSEA=.041; CFI=.922; TLI=.920; IFI=.923), denoting the high convergent validity of our constructs.

Regarding Hypothesis 1 on the influence of corporate purpose and strategy, the results suggest a positive association (hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=1.494$, $t=10.346$; retailing: $\gamma=.874$, $t=3.279$), supporting H1. Hypothesis 2 examining the association between history and climate for inclusion also shows a positive relationship (hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=.085$, $t=2.319$; retailing: $\gamma=.076$, $t=2.015$), supporting H2. For Hypothesis 3, investigating the link between management behaviors and climate for inclusion, the results indicate a positive association (hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=.084$, $t=2.538$; retail: $\gamma=.043$, $t=1.993$). Similarly, Hypothesis 4, which examines the impact of corporate strategy on corporate culture, is supported for both the hospitality and tourism sample ($\gamma=.157$, $t=2.423$) and the retail sample ($\gamma=.820$, $t=3.110$).

Both samples showed a significant association between climate for

inclusion and corporate culture (H5: hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=.563$, $t=4.594$; retail: $\gamma=4.949$, $t=2.005$). Corporate culture was also significantly related to corporate structure (H6: hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=.098$, $t=3.063$; retail: $\gamma=.157$, $t=4.434$) and diversity climate (H8: hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=.121$, $t=3.702$; retail: $\gamma=.185$, $t=3.622$) in both samples. However, Hypothesis 7, proposing a direct effect of corporate culture on corporate behavior, showed markedly different results between the two samples. The hospitality and tourism participants demonstrated significant impact ($\gamma=.18$, $t=4.799$), while the results were non-significant for the retail participants ($\gamma=-.057$, $t=-1.088$, $p=.277$).

For Hypothesis 9, examining the association between corporate structure and benefit of empowerment, both samples showed a significant relationship (hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=.081$, $t=2.244$; retail: $\gamma=.729$, $t=5.900$). However, there were no significant relationships between corporate behavior and benefits of empowerment (hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=-0.002$, $t=-0.326$, $p=.744$; retail: $\gamma=-.004$, $t=-.172$, $p=.863$), rejecting Hypothesis 10. Hypothesis 12, examining the impact of benefits of empowerment on corporate reputation, yielded significant results for both samples (hospitality and tourism: $\gamma=3.673$, $t=5.344$; retail: $\gamma=.136$, $t=2.053$). Please refer to Appendix 5 for the t-values and structural path coefficients for each relationship.

6. Discussion

The results mainly support our proposed model. First, in line with prior research indicating that shared purpose enhances an organization's corporate strategy ([Groysberg et al., 2018](#)), we find that an organization's corporate purpose in seeking positive change and benefits for the common good positively influences corporate strategy in terms of differentiation and innovation as well as social responsibility and governance ([Bauer et al., 2023](#)). Second, consistent with [Galbreath's \(2010\)](#) finding that beliefs and values define the extent to which business is conducted responsibly, we find that historical and managerial core values positively influence the climate for inclusion and inclusive decision making. Third, we confirm that both corporate strategy (as suggested by [Cameron and Quinn, 2011](#)) and the climate for inclusion (as argued by [Nishii, 2013](#)) influence the philosophy, mission, and values of the corporate culture. Fourth, as argued by [Chatman and Cha \(2003\)](#), the corporate culture positively influences perceptions of the organizational and brand corporate structure and, as suggested by [Roberson \(2006\)](#), the positive workforce diversity climate. In line with [Al-Swidi et al. \(2021\)](#), corporate culture also influences an organization's corporate behavior in support of social and environmental issues but only for the hospitality and tourism sample, and not the retail sample. This could be because the retail industry may be under less pressure to be environmentally friendly than is the hospitality and tourism industry; evidence is sparse, but the retail industry has consistently been the worst sector for sustainability reporting (KPMG Impact, 2022).

Corporate structure and a positive diversity climate both significantly enhance employee morale and retention, contributing to the benefits of empowerment. Contrary to expectations, corporate behavior does not influence the benefits of empowerment. This is a surprise, when we consider the positive benefits that result from corporate structure and (indirectly through diversity climate) corporate culture. In effect, we find that there is indeed a positive benefit of empowerment arising from corporate culture (as found by [Ashikali and Groeneveld, 2015](#)), but

this arises through the mechanism of diversity climate (similar to the findings of Holmes et al., 2021) rather than being mediated by corporate behavior. Finally, consistent with Das et al. (2023), the benefits of empowerment positively influence corporate reputation in terms of reliability and benevolence.

In sum, corporate reputation is influenced directly by empowerment and indirectly by corporate purpose, strategy, culture, and climate for inclusion and diversity. Empowerment can directly influence corporate reputation by improving employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance, which can result in higher quality products or services, increased customer satisfaction, and a positive reputation as a reliable and customer-oriented company. This can also be explained by the specific characteristics of the hotel and tourism industry, such as the lack of inventory and the significant level of interaction between customers and employees, which drives companies to make immense efforts to ensure that the employees possess the necessary special capabilities (González-Rodríguez et al., 2018).

On the other hand, corporate purpose, strategy, culture, and climate for inclusion and diversity can indirectly influence corporate reputation by creating a positive work environment that supports empowerment and values employee well-being. When employees feel valued, supported, and empowered, they are more likely to be motivated and committed to the organization's goals, which can lead to higher productivity, quality, and customer satisfaction. This is in line with the servuction framework that recognizes explicitly the inseparability of production and consumption in services and the customer role in service production (Eiglier and Langeard, 1987). The servuction process highlights both employees and customers as determinants of the service experience and is applicable to the hospitality and tourism sector (e.g., Akarsu et al., 2020; 2023; González-Rodríguez et al., 2018) and the retail sector (e.g., Davies et al., 1999; Foroudi et al., 2020; Mahavarpour et al., 2023) mainly due to the high degree of interaction between customers and employees, and the customers themselves, that characterizes these sectors, especially the hospitality sector. Service quality and customer experience highly depend on what happens while the service is being offered, and hence the service provider must demonstrate excellence each time the service is produced and delivered (Zha et al., 2020; 2023a,b; 2024a,b; Foroudi et al., 2021). Also, since customers play a key role in the servuction process, the employees need a wide range of capabilities, so it is important to train all of them in the best way to play their role and/or tackle potential disruptions in the servuction process caused by problematic customers. It can be argued, therefore, that in these sectors, the personnel and their qualities make a special contribution to business success. As a result, diversity and a climate of inclusion will contribute to better customer service, a stronger corporate identity, and therefore, a better corporate reputation.

Additionally, a positive corporate reputation can be built by demonstrating a commitment to inclusion and diversity. A culture of inclusion and diversity can help to attract and retain top talent, improve employee engagement and morale, and foster innovation and creativity. A commitment to inclusion and diversity can also help to build a positive reputation as a socially responsible and ethical organization. Overall, the research suggests that corporate reputation is influenced by the dimensions of corporate identity, both directly by empowerment and indirectly by corporate purpose, strategy, culture, and climate for inclusion and diversity. A positive reputation can be built by creating a supportive and inclusive work environment that values employee well-being and empowers employees to be successful in their roles.

6.1. Theoretical implications

The study makes several theoretical contributions to the literature on corporate identity. First, through empirical research, it develops and validates a corporate identity scale in the hospitality and tourism and the retail industries in the UK. To the best of our knowledge, our research is the first to provide comprehensive and sound conceptualizing and valid measurements of corporate identity in the hospitality and tourism context. Previous studies have examined corporate identity in other sectors, but the studies focusing on hospitality businesses have been either conceptual or exploratory and based mainly on qualitative data (e.g., Martínez, Pérez, and Rodríguez del Bosque, 2014). There is no broad-based empirical work that allows generalizations to be made regarding how corporate identity is being managed in this industry. Based on a multi-disciplinary approach, the current study provides empirical evidence on the corporate identity scale that is both reliable and valid. This provides deeper insights into how corporate identity is perceived by managers and employees in the hospitality sector.

Second, we model the mechanism by which dimensions of corporate identity influence the useful output variable of corporate reputation. The study provides insights into how firms can develop an effective and comprehensive reputation management program. By expanding prior corporate identity studies (Cornelissen et al., 2007; He and Balmer, 2007; Melewar et al., 2017) and linking them to corporate reputation (Fombrun, 1996; Walsh and Beatty, 2007; Foroudi, 2019), we respond to Walsh et al.'s (2009, pp. 20–21) call to examine the corporate reputation across 'highly individualized and interactive services', such as the hospitality and retail sectors, and expand the drivers of corporate reputation beyond the customer level, incorporating intra-firm factors and assessing the relative importance of other stakeholder groups such as senior managers, employees, and the public.

Third, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to account for the roles of climate for inclusion and diversity in a global model of corporate identity and corporate reputation. The current study builds on the emerging body of research that aligns the corporate identity, culture, image, and strategy with social responsibility (e.g., Galbreath, 2010; Martínez et al., 2014), indicating that by engaging in ethical and sustainable practices, companies will be able to communicate to their relevant internal and external stakeholders the valuable characteristics of their corporate identity, thereby building an attractive organizational image and corporate reputation. This finding suggests that socially responsible initiatives such as establishing a climate for inclusion and diversity should not be managed by or restricted to a specific area of the organization (e.g., communication department). Instead, socially responsible management behaviors should be integrated into the entire organization, ensuring all areas of the firm are in alignment. We present an integrated conceptualization of corporate identity that positions social issues at the centre of the company's efforts to build a favorable corporate image and corporate reputation.

Fourth, on a broader level, our study aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 Agenda in tourism and hospitality. SDG 8 focuses on the promotion of "sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth" (UN, 2019). While ongoing economic development is essential for people to attain a decent standard of living and growth is viewed as 'success', an addiction to growth has been identified as a central problem in tourism (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018). Tourism appears to be less sustainable than ever with respect to resource use (Hall, 2021). In this context, SDG 8 identifies the need to "endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation" (UN, 2019) encouraging developed countries to take the lead. Along the same

lines, there have been calls from researchers about the need to downsize global patterns of consumption and production (e.g., Büscher and Fletcher, 2017; Boluk et al., 2019). The current study posits that a climate for inclusion should be embedded in the corporate culture of an organization, providing insights into the mechanisms of governance that are essential to shape tourism's future into a form that is fair, inclusive, and thereby sustainable. Of note, sustainability objectives are often reflected in the Non-Financial Information Statements (NFS) of many hotel companies, mandatory in some cases and voluntary in others, which also demonstrates the role of organizations' contributions to achieving the SDGs (Sierra-García et al., 2022). The study concurs with the emerging viewpoint that there is a need to reconsider human–environment relations and adopt social responsibility practices given the mistaken belief that greater efficiency alone will solve the problems of sustainable tourism (e.g., Hall, 2021; Boluk et al., 2019; Dias et al., 2023).

6.2. Managerial implications

The managerial implications of the relationship between corporate reputation, empowerment, and corporate purpose, strategy, culture, and climate for inclusion and diversity are significant. The results are expected to have a substantial impact by influencing the corporate identity policies, strategies, and tactics of organizations. First, managers should consider emphasizing employee empowerment. They should focus on empowering employees by giving them the autonomy to make decisions, providing them with the necessary resources and support, and recognizing their contributions. This is key in the hospitality sector, which is characterized by seasonality, intangibility, and perishability, and thus, the role of the employees is crucial to improve market performance (González-Rodríguez et al., 2018). Empowered employees are more likely to be motivated and engaged, which can positively affect corporate reputation. Second, managers can foster a culture of inclusion and diversity. They should create a work environment that supports inclusion and diversity by valuing differences, promoting collaboration, and providing opportunities for growth and development. A culture of inclusion and diversity can attract top talent, improve employee engagement and morale, and enhance corporate reputation. Third, managers should align their organization's purpose and strategy with social responsibility by identifying and addressing social issues that are relevant to their business. This can improve corporate reputation and demonstrate a commitment to ethical and sustainable practices. Fourth, managers should regularly monitor and measure corporate reputation to identify areas for improvement and to ensure that their actions and decisions have a positive impact on reputation. This can involve using surveys, social media listening tools, and other metrics to track reputation and identify potential risks or opportunities. Fifth, managers should communicate effectively with employees, customers, and other stakeholders to build trust and demonstrate a commitment to transparency. Effective communication can help to shape perceptions of the organization and its reputation. Fluid communication across departments through different internal communication channels is particularly important to hotels since employees constitute the main internal stakeholder group (González-Rodríguez et al., 2019).

By implementing these managerial recommendations, managers can positively influence corporate reputation and create a more inclusive

and empowered workplace that supports employee well-being and engagement.

7. Limitations and future research

The study has some limitations that offer opportunities for future research. First, data for this research are based on the managers' and employees' perspective of corporate identity. Future research exploring different stakeholders' perspectives will help identify potential gaps/overlaps between managers and, for example, customers regarding the evaluation of corporate identity, image, and reputation. Second, although the study reports empirical data from hospitality and retail businesses in the UK, caution should be taken before making any generalizations. It is likely that the perceptions of key constructs such as diversity climate, corporate culture, and reputation are different in other sectors and countries. Future research is needed to test the applicability of the corporate identity scale across different industries and cultural contexts. Third, while the findings have offered a plausible basis for the understanding of key dimensions of corporate identity and relationships with corporate reputation in the hospitality and retail industries, further, more complex, research could examine the perceptions of corporate identity in association with leadership styles and organizational personality types. Fourth, and in line with the previous suggestion, researchers could expand the corporate identity agenda by assessing the scale's influence on additional areas of performance, e.g., market or financial performance. Finally, future research can examine the corporate identity elements in association with recent advancements in the business environment, such as digitalization or social media, for example, research on how managers can utilize social media to enhance corporate identity and reputation (e.g., eWOM). Considering the growing importance of innovation in service-oriented industries such as retail and hospitality (Cheah et al., 2018), this research direction will be particularly relevant for theory and practice alike.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Pantea Foroudi: Validation, Software, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Ceyda Paydas Turan:** Visualization. **TC Melewar:** Supervision. **Charles Dennis:** Writing – original draft. **Nektarios Tzempelikos:** Writing – original draft, Conceptualization.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

Data Availability

Data will be made available on request.

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Appendix A. : Measures of Model Constructs

Construct	References	References
History	<p>In my company</p> <p>The character of the founder(s)has formed the building blocks of our core values</p> <p>core values are established on its history</p> <p>the corporate history is aligned with our corporate identity</p> <p>I like our corporate history</p> <p>The history of our company reflects on its</p> <p>The history of our company reflects on its Longevity</p> <p>The history of our company reflects on its core values</p> <p>The history of our company reflects on its product and service brands</p>	<p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2020); Hakala et al. (2011; 2015)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2020); Hakala et al. (2011; 2015)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2020); Hakala et al. (2011; 2015)</p>
Management Behaviours	<p>Our management</p> <p>has directive (guiding) leadership</p> <p>has supportive leadership</p> <p>has participative leadership</p> <p>takes every chance to highlight the company’s core values in public occasions</p> <p>demonstrates similar values to the company’s core values in their lives</p> <p>highlights our company’s core values in internal meetings</p> <p>their behaviour sets a fundamental standard for employee behaviour</p> <p>are considered as the role model for our employees</p> <p>their behaviours towards employees and outsiders are the embodiment of our company’s core values</p>	<p>Harris and Ogbonna (2001)</p> <p>Harris and Ogbonna (2001)</p> <p>Harris and Ogbonna (2001)</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p>
Corporate purpose	<p>Contribution</p> <p>The company aims to contribute to the common goods</p> <p>The company seeks to create a positive change in the world</p> <p>The company aims to achieve something that goes beyond its own benefits</p> <p>Authenticity</p> <p>The company remains true to its core values even when conflicts occur</p> <p>The company is fully committed to its overarching goals</p> <p>The company’s credibility embodies its core values</p> <p>Guidance</p> <p>The company’s overarching goals provide orientation in a complex situation</p> <p>The company’s higher goals guide decisions and actions</p> <p>The company’s overarching goals provide stable guidance in times of rapid change</p> <p>Inspiration</p> <p>The company unites by inspiring higher goals</p> <p>The company conveys the idea of being part of something bigger</p> <p>The company inspires by providing a higher cause</p> <p>Openness and flexibility for innovation</p> <p>The company expects employees to be open to new ideas and responsive to them.</p> <p>The company expects employees to be flexible in dealing with new ideas and in their approach to solving problems. A willingness to try new ideas is encouraged within this firm.</p> <p>Mission Statement Dissemination</p> <p>There is a clear concept of who we are and where we are going.</p> <p>Senior management shares the corporate mission with employees.</p> <p>Organization’s values and mission are regularly communicated to employees.</p> <p>There is agreement on our mission across business levels and units.</p> <p>Founder transformational leadership</p>	<p>Jasinenko and Steuber (2022)</p> <p>Hogan and Coote, (2014)</p> <p>Tourky et al., (2020b)</p> <p>Tourky et al., (2020b)</p>

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Construct	References	References
	<p>The approach our organization founder used to help employees to develop their strengths continues to be an important part of who we are</p> <p>The approach our organization founder used to generate respect continues to be an important part of who we are.</p> <p>The approach our organization founder used to suggest ways to get at the heart of complex problems continues to be an important part of who we are.</p> <p>The approach our organization founder used to encourage employees to rethink their ideas continues to be an important part of who we are</p>	
Corporate Strategy		
Differentiation	<p>Our company is customer focus</p> <p>Our company has a strong unique selling point</p> <p>Customer knowledge Our company has a strong customer knowledge</p> <p>Our company has a strong customer satisfaction</p>	<p>Foroudi et al. (2017); Kaplan and Norton (2001); Simoes et al. (2005)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2017); Foroudi (2020); MacMillan and McGrath (1997); Slater and Olson (2000)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2017); Foroudi (2020); Xu and Walton (2005)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2017; 2020JBR); Foroudi (2020)</p>
Social Responsibility	<p>Our company values social participation</p> <p>Our company is ethical</p> <p>Our company is honest/Truthful</p> <p>Our company is transparent</p> <p>Our company is responsible</p>	<p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR); Porter and Kramer (2006)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR)</p> <p>Mohr and Webb (2005)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR)</p> <p>Mohr and Webb (2005)</p> <p>Dahlsrud (2008); Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR)</p> <p>Garriga and Melé (2004); Foroudi et al. (2016)</p>
Corporate governance	<p>The corporate governance policies of our company are strong</p> <p>Our company has strong corporate governance procedures/processes</p> <p>The corporate governance standards at our company are strong</p> <p>Our company's corporate governance is accountable</p> <p>In our company, corporate governance is based on equality and egalitarianism</p>	<p>Foroudi et al. (2016)</p> <p>Haniffa and Cooke (2002)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR)</p> <p>Aguilera and Jackson (2003)</p> <p>Foroudi et al. (2016; 2020JBR)</p> <p>Pagano and Volpin (2005)</p> <p>Hogan and Coote, (2014)</p>
Innovative behavior	<p>Our company provides clients with services/products that offer unique benefits superior to those of competitors.</p> <p>Our company solves clients' problems in very innovative ways.</p> <p>Our company provides innovative ideas and solutions to clients.</p> <p>Our company presents innovative solutions to our clients.</p> <p>Our company seeks out novel ways to tackle problems.</p>	
Climate for Inclusion		Nishii 2011
	Foundation of equitable employment practices	
	<p>This company has a fair promotion process</p> <p>The performance review process is fair in this company.</p> <p>This company invests in the development of all of its employees.</p> <p>Employees in this company receives equal pay for equal work.</p> <p>This company provides safe ways for employees to voice their grievances</p>	
	Integration of differences	
	<p>This company is characterized by a non-threatening environment in which people can reveal their "true" selves.</p> <p>This company values work-life balance.</p> <p>This company commits resources to ensure that employees are able to resolve conflicts effectively</p> <p>Employees of this company are valued for who they are as people, not just for the jobs that they fill.</p> <p>In this company people often share and learn about one another as people.</p>	
	Inclusion in decision making	
	<p>In this company employee input is actively sought</p> <p>In this company everyone's ideas for how to do things better are given serious consideration.</p> <p>In this company employees' insights are used to rethink or redefine work practices.</p>	

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Construct	References	References
Corporate Culture (Philosophy, Mission, Values)	<p>Top management exercises the belief that problem-solving is improved when input from different roles, ranks, and functions is considered.</p> <p>The company's values and mission are regularly communicated to employees.</p> <p>All employees are aware of the relevant values (norms about what is important, how to behave, and appropriate attitudes).</p> <p>Employees view themselves as partners in charting the direction of the company.</p> <p>There is a clear concept of who we are and where we are going.</p> <p>Managers periodically discuss the company's mission and values</p> <p>Senior management shares the corporate mission with employees/students.</p> <p>The company has a well-defined mission.</p> <p>There is total agreement on our mission across all levels and the company areas.</p> <p>All employees are committed to achieving the company's goals.</p>	Foroudi et al. (2018)
Corporate structure	<p>Organisational structure</p> <p>Our company I like our organisational structure its organisational structure is well designed to follow by stakeholders its organisational structure is recognisable its organisational structure is aligned with our company's identity</p> <p>Brand structure</p> <p>Our company I like our brand I like the services and product the company provides to the customers Our unique services/product are part of the company's brand Our company has a well structure brand Our company has a recognisable brand compares to our competitors Our company has a traditional brand</p>	<p>Qualitative study</p> <p>Qualitative study</p>
Company's corporate behaviour	<p>In my company The involvement in social and environmental issues is driven by its core values The support for social and environmental matters is a part of company's culture The company communicates its core values through supporting social and environmental actions The company takes part in social and environmental events which show consistency with its core values The social and environmental events that the company supports demonstrate what we stand for.</p>	Qualitative study
Diversity Climate	<p>The company makes it easy for people from diverse backgrounds to fit in and be accepted Where I work, employees are developed advanced without regard to the gender or the racial, religious, or cultural background of the individual Managers demonstrate through their actions that they want to hire and retain a diverse workforce I feel that my immediate manager/supervisor does a good job of managing people with diverse backgrounds (in terms of age, sex, race, religion, or culture)</p>	Pugh et al. (2008)
Benefit of empowerment	<p>Employee morale</p> <p>Employees experience a boost to their morale. Employees feel more valued. Employees feel more involved.</p> <p>Employee retention</p> <p>Employee turnover is decreasing. Employee retention rates are increasing</p>	Han et al. (2022)

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Construct	References	References
Employee performance	There is a reduction in turnover.	
	Employees are able to work more efficiently	
	Employee's productivity is increasing	
	Employee's overall performance is improving.	
Employee rapport	There is trust between my employees and me.	
	There is a more trusting relationship with my employees.	
	There is a better relationship with my employees	
Employee development	Employees learn how to work more independently	
	Employees develop work-related skills	
	Employees experience greater professional development.	
Corporate Reputation		
Reliability	The company has reliable promises for future performance	Delgado-Ballester and Luis Munuera-Alemán (2001) ; DelVecchio (2000) ; Foroudi (2019)
	Based on my experience, I trust this company	
Benevolence	The company has reliable services and products	Alqayed et al. (2022) ; Foroudi et al. (2019) IJHM ; Lombart and Louis (2016) ; Sirdeshmukh et al. (2002) ; Spears and Singh (2004) ; Xie and Peng (2009) ; Zhao and Roper (2011)
	Staying in this company would help me avoid the problems I may have if I move to another company	
	The company constantly tries to improve its services and products to better satisfy its consumers and employees	
	The company renews its services and products to meet the expectations of its customers	
	Judging from the company's response, I am confident that when customers have problems, the management will respond constructively and with care	
	Judging from the company's response, I believe the company has a great deal of benevolence	
	The company treats customers with respect in responding to negative publicity	
	Judging from the company's response, I rely on the company to favour the customer's best interest	
This company is concerned about consumers.		

Appendix B. : Measures of model constructs - EFA, means, Standard Deviation, and Cronbach alpha: Revealed corporate identity dimensions

Constructs and Items		Study 2 (N=174)				Study 3 – Hospitality and Tourism (N=690)				Study 4 – Retailing (N=647)			
		Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @
History													
core values are established on its history	HIS2	0.785	5.4425	1.25142	.892	0.720	5.5652	1.39123	.892	0.821	5.0510	1.52752	.943
the corporate history is aligned with our corporate identity	HIS3	0.651	5.3563	1.29897		0.744	5.6507	1.24317		0.838	5.0170	1.56728	
The history of our company reflects on its	HIS5	0.624	5.2874	1.38036		0.641	5.6522	1.29335		0.854	4.9505	1.56610	
The history of our company reflects on its Longevity	HIS6	0.784	5.4483	1.29703		0.668	5.7348	1.30560		0.827	4.9768	1.63488	
The history of our company reflects on its core values	HIS7	0.710	5.4885	1.28908		0.672	5.5116	1.40516		0.854	5.0773	1.58267	
Management Behaviours													
Our management													
has directive (guiding) leadership	MBEH1	0.750	5.2931	1.43863	.921	0.754	5.5971	1.48919	.921	0.890	5.3740	1.60180	.973
demonstrates similar values to the company's core values in their lives	MBEH5	0.850	5.3161	1.37613		0.734	5.5986	1.52378		0.915	5.3833	1.68445	
highlights our company's core values in internal meetings	MBEH6	0.701	5.3793	1.33205		0.742	5.5826	1.51422		0.890	5.3369	1.68243	
their behaviours towards employees and outsiders are the embodiment of our company's core values	MBEH9	0.850	5.2414	1.43423		0.733	5.3667	1.50771		0.924	5.3756	1.64201	
Corporate purpose													
Contribution													
The company aims to contribute to the common goods	CPC1	0.795	5.4770	1.38407	.903	0.635	5.3667	.903		0.866	5.5317	1.68544	.822
The company seeks to create a positive change in the world	CPC2	0.809	5.3966	1.57956		0.663	5.3362			0.842	5.3539	1.72307	
The company aims to achieve something that goes beyond its own benefits	CPC3	0.823	5.3563	1.52419		0.658	5.1739			0.571	5.4776	1.63714	
Authenticity													
The company remains true to its core values even when conflicts occur	CPA1	0.835	5.3908	1.43737	.886	0.794	5.2928	.886		0.887	5.3091	1.69509	.888
The company is fully committed to its overarching goals	CPA2	0.837	5.5000	1.31136		0.840	5.5507			0.848	5.2643	1.64015	
The company's credibility embodies its core values	CPA3	0.879	5.5345	1.36279		0.809	5.4435			0.880	5.2782	1.60972	
Guidance													
The company's overarching goals provide orientation in a complex situation	CPG1	0.768	5.3103	1.34560	.881	0.838	5.2652	.881		0.803	5.3833	1.71180	.901
The company's higher goals guide decisions and actions	CPG2	0.881	5.4713	1.33723		0.840	5.5406			0.913	5.3570	1.70799	
The company's overarching goals provide stable guidance in times of rapid change	CPG3	0.858	5.3563	1.32976		0.847	5.3275			0.918	5.2087	1.69722	
Inspiration													
The company unites by inspiring higher goals	CPI1	0.861	5.3506	1.54623	.905	0.703	5.4261	1.54409	.905	0.878	5.2473	1.64892	.925
The company conveys the idea of being part of something bigger	CPI2	0.848	5.4138	1.52476		0.753	5.3609	1.51966		0.875	5.2257	1.67159	
The company inspires by providing a higher cause	CPI3	0.861	5.2931	1.57666		0.755	5.1783	1.60509		0.803	5.2813	1.61399	
Openness and flexibility for innovation													
The company expects employees to be open to new ideas and responsive to them.	OFI1	0.791	5.5690	1.39087	.884	0.842	5.6812	1.34685	.884	0.893	5.2875	1.59553	.919
The company expects employees to be flexible in dealing with new ideas and in their approach to solving problems.	OFI2	0.760	5.4885	1.37163		0.817	5.7116	1.32389		0.900	5.2612	1.59859	

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Constructs and Items		Study 2 (N=174)				Study 3 – Hospitality and Tourism (N=690)				Study 4 – Retailing (N=647)			
		Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @
A willingness to try new ideas is encouraged within this firm.	OFI3	0.664	5.4138	1.37737		0.801	5.5000	1.42061		0.817	5.3447	1.59340	
Mission Statement Dissemination													
There is a clear concept of who we are and where we are going.	MSD1	0.821	5.3966	1.37618	.893	0.665	5.4986	1.52126	.893	0.910	5.3509	1.68464	.956
Senior management shares the corporate mission with employees.	MSD2	0.867	5.4023	1.37239		0.702	5.4928	1.52124		0.904	5.1716	1.68583	
Organization’s values and mission are regularly communicated to employees.	MSD3	0.815	5.2759	1.40757		0.678	5.5638	1.39754		0.865	5.2179	1.67954	
There is agreement on our mission across business levels and units.	MSD4	0.833	5.3851	1.40848		0.687	5.4870	1.43983		0.928	5.2674	1.68436	
Founder transformational leadership													
The approach our organization founder used to help employees to develop their strengths continues to be an important part of who we are	FTL1	0.859	5.1954	1.49635	.827	0.742	5.2667	1.55915	.927	0.925	5.1839	1.80690	.968
The approach our organization founder used to generate respect continues to be an important part of who we are.	FTL2	0.866	5.2989	1.54032		0.719	5.3638	1.57525		0.919	5.2380	1.84431	
The approach our organization founder used to suggest ways to get at the heart of complex problems continues to be an important part of who we are.	FTL3	0.874	5.0977	1.51932		0.736	5.2652	1.55334		0.925	5.1592	1.85654	
The approach our organization founder used to encourage employees to rethink their ideas continues to be an important part of who we are	FTL4	0.883	5.1149	1.56866		0.697	5.1812	1.60657		0.876	5.2164	1.86947	
Corporate Strategy													
Differentiation													
Our company is customer focus	CSD1	0.761	5.6724	1.47489	.830	0.724	5.9522	1.28259	.830		5.1082	1.76061	.969
Our company has a strong unique selling point	CSD2	0.714	5.2931	1.55078		0.663	5.6145	1.40467			5.1051	1.79216	
Customer knowledge Our company has a strong customer knowledge	CSD3	0.810	5.4540	1.31495		0.782	5.8957	1.24879			5.1870	1.72505	
Our company has a strong customer satisfaction	CSD4	0.744	5.6264	1.23700		0.684	5.8290	1.26228			5.1298	1.77578	
Social Responsibility													
Our company values social participation	CSSR1	0.825	5.4080	1.49378	.918	0.688	5.3609	1.60512	.918	0.882	5.3849	1.59098	.961
Our company is ethical	CSSR2	0.835	5.4540	1.51129		0.832	5.7029	1.49702		0.865	5.4096	1.50873	
Our company is honest/Truthful	CSSR3	0.850	5.4828	1.50807		0.830	5.6957	1.54003		0.858	5.3864	1.54969	
Our company is transparent	CSSR4	0.833	5.1092	1.51472		0.799	5.3797	1.57747		0.863	5.3323	1.59603	
Our company is responsible	CSSR5	0.864	5.4770	1.50799		0.788	5.7841	1.38875		0.860	5.4343	1.55147	
Corporate governance													
The corporate governance policies of our company are strong	CSCG1	0.843	5.3966	1.43377	.920	0.788	5.6029	1.39935	.920	0.917	5.2906	1.54367	.971
Our company has strong corporate governance procedures/processes	CSCG2	0.814	5.3563	1.37674		0.800	5.6232	1.36408		0.923	5.3601	1.53952	
The corporate governance standards at our company are strong	CSCG3	0.870	5.3793	1.38315		0.790	5.5986	1.39759		0.914	5.2767	1.56365	
Our company’s corporate governance is accountable	CSCG4	0.795	5.4023	1.35970		0.772	5.6087	1.43376		0.925	5.2998	1.55589	
In our company, corporate governance is based on equality and egalitarianism	CSCG5	0.816	5.0345	1.61244		0.661	5.3290	1.53163		0.944	5.3338	1.53286	
Innovative behavior													
Our company provides clients with services/ products that offer unique benefits superior to those of competitors.	CSIB1	0.673	5.3103	1.33265	.905	0.640	5.6043	1.25604	.905	0.903	5.3107	1.83049	.969

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Constructs and Items		Factor	Mean	Std.	Cronbach	Factor	Mean	Std.	Cronbach	Factor	Mean	Std.	Cronbach
		Loading		Deviation	@	Loading		Deviation	@	Loading		Deviation	@
		Study 2 (N=174)				Study 3 – Hospitality and Tourism (N=690)				Study 4 – Retailing (N=647)			
Our company solves clients' problems in very innovative ways.	CSIB2	0.817	5.2471	1.40678		0.739	5.4957	1.36645		0.908	5.1345	1.85767	
Our company provides innovative ideas and solutions to clients.	CSIB3	0.837	5.3103	1.40033		0.765	5.5391	1.32051		0.931	5.1947	1.85523	
Our company presents innovative solutions to our clients.	CSIB4	0.796	5.3161	1.41343		0.761	5.5290	1.33281		0.913	5.1886	1.86586	
Our company seeks out novel ways to tackle problems.	CSIB5	0.702	5.2011	1.38104		0.674	5.4435	1.34169		0.916	5.1638	1.83896	
Climate for Inclusion													
Foundation of equitable employment practices													
The performance review process is fair in this company.	CIF2	0.854	5.1322	1.57282	.897	0.779	5.3870	1.53038	.897	0.856	5.2380	1.78632	.914
This company invests in the development of all of its employees.	CIF3	0.840	5.0057	1.65000		0.776	5.4928	1.47670		0.860	5.2056	1.79769	
Employees in this company receives equal pay for equal work.	CIF4	0.832	5.0517	1.68045		0.752	5.4435	1.59748		0.915	5.3060	1.77330	
This company provides safe ways for employees to voice their grievances	CIF5	0.880	5.1667	1.63093		0.739	5.4855	1.48937		0.909	5.2612	1.76869	
Integration of differences													
This company is characterized by a non-threatening environment in which people can reveal their "true" selves.	CI1	0.811	5.1437	1.51182	.890	0.767	5.4507	1.50414	.890	0.918	5.2998	1.60968	.961
This company values work-life balance.	CI2	0.798	5.3161	1.53498		0.773	5.3696	1.54505		0.905	5.2859	1.63746	
This company commits resources to ensure that employees are able to resolve conflicts effectively	CI3	0.832	5.3218	1.39358		0.763	5.3986	1.58613		0.907	5.3153	1.63915	
Employees of this company are valued for who they are as people, not just for the jobs that they fill.	CI4	0.842	5.0862	1.65125		0.743	5.4681	1.42025		0.905	5.3076	1.60485	
Inclusion in decision making													
In this company employee input is actively sought	CIID1	0.825	5.1322	1.56175	.941	0.892	5.2739	1.61328	.941	0.741	5.2488	1.61884	.949
In this company everyone's ideas for how to do things better are given serious consideration.	CIID2	0.865	5.0345	1.59078		0.894	5.3000	1.61223		0.782	5.4080	1.62521	
In this company employees' insights are used to rethink or redefine work practices.	CIID3	0.819	5.1207	1.53281		0.897	5.2986	1.57654		0.776	5.0711	1.67144	
Top management exercises the belief that problem-solving is improved when input from different roles, ranks, and functions is considered.	CIID4	0.798	5.1954	1.57171		0.903	5.3899	1.57637		0.788	5.4884	1.54181	
Corporate Culture (Philosophy, Mission, Values)													
The company's values and mission are regularly communicated to employees.	CC1	0.831	5.3621	1.48244	.932	0.886	5.4609	1.59072	.932	0.796	5.3802	1.55322	.901
There is a clear concept of who we are and where we are going.	CC4	0.843	5.3736	1.51050		0.865	5.5812	1.58913		0.844	5.4250	1.54805	
Senior management shares the corporate mission with employees/students.	CC6	0.751	5.2414	1.47790		0.897	5.3377	1.61915		0.814	5.4019	1.52863	
There is total agreement on our mission across all levels and the company areas.	CC8	0.726	5.2241	1.56600		0.869	5.2725	1.62830		0.757	5.4745	1.58619	
Corporate structure													
Organisational structure													
Our company													
I like our organisational structure	CSOS1	0.737	5.2874	1.62643	.910	0.834	5.3014	1.67423	.910	0.903	5.0371	1.71729	.948

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Constructs and Items		Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Study 2 (N=174)			Study 3 – Hospitality and Tourism (N=690)			Study 4 – Retailing (N=647)		
						Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	
its organisational structure is well designed to follow by stakeholders	CSOS2	0.778	5.2069	1.37809		0.834	5.1913	1.61845		0.876	5.0448	1.73638		
its organisational structure is recognisable	CSOS3	0.802	5.2874	1.40114		0.844	5.4478	1.50694		0.881	5.0402	1.67616		
its organisational structure is aligned with our company's identity	CSOS4	0.825	5.2989	1.39043		0.851	5.4391	1.52766		0.823	5.1252	1.73601		
Brand structure														
Our company														
I like the services and product the company provides to the customers	CSBS2	0.738	5.5287	1.49248	.889	0.816	5.6884	1.48920	.889	0.867	5.3138	1.66428	.961	
Our unique services/product are part of the company's brand	CSBS3	0.736	5.5115	1.46929		0.840	5.6681	1.39406		0.890	5.3369	1.60038		
Our company has a well structure brand	CSBS4	0.748	5.6149	1.27945		0.862	5.6667	1.35624		0.872	5.3138	1.59202		
Our company has a recognisable brand compares to our competitors	CSBS5	0.759	5.5460	1.33675		0.828	5.5899	1.40852		0.896	5.3509	1.60753		
Company's corporate behaviour														
In my company									.902					
The support for social and environmental matters is a part of company's culture	CB2	.823	5.5632	1.42805	.902	0.889	5.7174	1.48426		0.963	5.3632	1.77950	.969	
The company communicates its core values through supporting social and environmental actions	CB3	.819	5.4828	1.44943		0.891	5.7116	1.55013		0.969	5.3849	1.71461		
The social and environmental events that the company supports demonstrate what we stand for.	CB5	.815	5.6092	1.49261		0.879	5.3391	1.62019		0.968	5.3586	1.73777		
Diversity Climate														
The company makes it easy for people from diverse backgrounds to fit in and be accepted	DC1	0.818	5.4195	1.40267	.893	0.772	5.7130	1.36788	.761	0.892	5.4019	1.69753	.959	
Where I work, employees are developed advanced without regard to the gender or the racial, religious, or cultural background of the individual	DC2	0.784	5.3621	1.47854		0.756	5.6652	1.44651		0.846	5.4621	1.65659		
Managers demonstrate through their actions that they want to hire and retain a diverse workforce	DC3	0.809	5.3678	1.46729		0.749	5.4580	1.49079		0.869	5.4405	1.69933		
I feel that my immediate manager/supervisor does a good job of managing people with diverse backgrounds (in terms of age, sex, race, religion, or culture)	DC4	0.758	5.4713	1.50020		0.766	5.6261	1.48994		0.856	5.4189	1.69204		
Benefit of empowerment														
Employee morale														
Employees experience a boost to their morale.	BEEM1	0.894	4.9943	1.60381	.920	0.813	5.2420	1.52511	.920	0.927	5.6476	1.56671	.906	
Employees feel more valued.	BEEM2	0.888	5.1724	1.53726		0.839	5.3406	1.53855		0.840	5.4621	1.62451		
Employees feel more involved.	BEEM3	0.905	5.1379	1.57416		0.830	5.3623	1.53120		0.914	5.5471	1.58569		
Employee retention														
Employee turnover is decreasing.	BEE1	0.808	4.3908	1.75596	.877	0.891	4.5507	1.85181	.877	0.853	5.4111	1.38134	.889	
Employee retention rates are increasing	BEE2	0.784	4.7011	1.69061		0.782	4.8913	1.69129		0.918	5.3972	1.34746		
There is a reduction in turnover.	BEE3	0.841	4.5115	1.70256		0.912	4.6101	1.81596		0.924	5.2983	1.40511		
Employee performance														
Employees are able to work more efficiently	BEEP1	0.797	5.0460	1.70960	.896	0.839	5.3652	1.44365	.896	0.915	5.4930	1.42061	.950	
Employee's productivity is increasing	BEEP2	0.742	4.8908	1.71178		0.811	5.3232	1.43304		0.892	5.4884	1.42276		
Employee's overall performance is improving.	BEEP3	0.789	4.8736	1.74571		0.854	5.3812	1.42074		0.912	5.5363	1.34975		
Employee rapport														
There is trust between my employees and me.	BEER1	0.834	5.2414	1.72010	.890	0.788	5.7101	1.32193	.890	0.860	5.5131	1.48138	.983	

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Constructs and Items		Study 2 (N=174)				Study 3 – Hospitality and Tourism (N=690)				Study 4 – Retailing (N=647)			
		Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @	Factor Loading	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach @
There is a more trusting relationship with my employees.	BEER2	0.835	5.0920	1.68044		0.778	5.5739	1.33759		0.851	5.6538	1.40898	
There is a better relationship with my employees	BEER3	0.850	5.1552	1.63914		0.806	5.5290	1.34257		0.796	5.4776	1.48127	
Employee development													
Employees learn how to work more independently	BEED1	0.832	5.1839	1.61660	.793	0.804	5.7087	1.21101	.793	0.852	5.3524	1.70396	.917
Employees develop work-related skills	BEED2	0.819	5.3391	1.55254		0.831	5.8101	1.17924		0.839	5.3462	1.70069	
Employees experience greater professional development.	BEED3	0.820	5.1667	1.67981		0.830	5.5377	1.32713		0.864	5.3416	1.67087	
Corporate Reputation													
Reliability													
The company has reliable promises for future performance	CRR1	0.718	5.2069	1.48704	.865	0.776	5.4014	1.50075	.865	0.833	5.6600	1.39836	.920
Based on my experience, I trust this company	CRR2	0.784	5.3793	1.53375		0.799	5.5710	1.52722		0.917	5.4730	1.37834	
The company has reliable services and products	CRR3	0.717	5.5920	1.33002		0.744	5.8855	1.25544		0.910	5.4111	1.39028	
Staying in this company would help me avoid the problems I may have if I move to another company	CRR4	0.701	5.0632	1.58443		0.751	5.4087	1.52614		0.914	5.5255	1.30332	
Benevolence													
The company constantly tries to improve its services and products to better satisfy its consumers and employees	CRB1	0.752	5.4080	1.52442	.902	0.689	5.5014	1.50976	.902	0.908	5.3354	1.44680	.951
The company renews its services and products to meet the expectations of its customers	CRB2	0.840	5.6207	1.47222		0.766	5.8116	1.31394		0.876	5.2859	1.47848	
Judging from the company's response, I am confident that when customers have problems, the management will respond constructively and with care	CRB3	0.901	5.5690	1.48338		0.788	5.8014	1.39759		0.923	5.2890	1.43213	
Judging from the company's response, I believe the company has a great deal of benevolence	CRB4	0.805	5.2471	1.46712		0.723	5.4159	1.49194		0.907	5.2736	1.41124	
This company is concerned about consumers.	CRB7	0.874	5.6437	1.50895		0.767	5.8449	1.27974		0.899	5.2983	1.45171	

Appendix C(a). : Discriminant validity, CR, AVE, and Correlation Matrix (Hospitality and Tourism - N=690)

	CR	AVE	MSV	Integration of differences	Contribution	Authenticity	Guidance	Inspiration	Openness and flexibility for innovation	Mission statement dissemination	Founder transformational leadership	History	Management Behaviours	Organization	Brand	Corporate Behaviour	Diversity Climate	Employee morale	Employee retention	Employee Performance	Employee rapport	Employee Development	Reliability	Benevolence	Differentiation	Social responsibility	Governance	Innovative behaviour	Foundation of equitable employment practices	Integration of differences	Corporate Culture		
Integration of differences	0.941	0.801	0.089	-0.895																													
Contribution	0.904	0.758	0.388	-0.116	0.871																												
Authenticity	0.886	0.722	0.162	-0.061	0.326	0.850																											
Guidance	0.881	0.712	0.140	-0.133	0.129	0.210	0.844																										
Inspiration	0.905	0.761	0.388	-0.067	0.576	0.284	0.151	0.872																									
Openness and flexibility for innovation	0.885	0.720	0.194	-0.164	0.334	0.199	0.168	0.319	0.849																								
Mission statement dissemination	0.893	0.677	0.425	-0.111	0.539	0.395	0.207	0.590	0.346	0.823																							
Founder transformational leadership	0.928	0.762	0.437	-0.093	0.518	0.359	0.146	0.576	0.381	0.628	0.873																						
History	0.894	0.629	0.437	-0.093	0.623	0.394	0.195	0.623	0.339	0.652	0.661	0.793																					
Management Behaviours	0.921	0.744	0.306	-0.096	0.482	0.355	0.221	0.415	0.256	0.621	0.565	0.557	0.863																				
Organization	0.911	0.719	0.127	-0.198	0.084	0.138	0.124	0.048	0.148	0.009	0.079	0.030	0.105	0.848																			
Brand	0.890	0.670	0.203	-0.014	0.088	0.063	0.040	0.021	0.023	0.037	0.022	0.046	0.186	0.255	0.819																		
Corporate Behaviour	0.904	0.759	0.067	-0.079	0.023	0.013	0.167	0.051	0.107	0.042	0.090	0.067	0.166	0.259	0.197	0.871																	
Diversity Climate	0.894	0.678	0.288	-0.137	0.189	0.184	0.070	0.187	0.026	0.158	0.188	0.197	0.088	0.256	0.013	-0.018	0.823																
Employee morale	0.920	0.794	0.493	-0.134	0.090	0.150	0.374	0.052	-0.019	0.140	0.092	0.167	0.192	0.007	0.136	0.070	0.110	0.891															
Employee retention	0.882	0.715	0.089	-0.069	0.118	0.109	0.093	0.107	0.050	0.096	0.142	0.150	0.148	0.025	0.046	-0.008	0.183	0.067	0.846														
Employee Performance	0.897	0.743	0.203	-0.066	0.122	0.174	0.131	0.140	0.098	0.166	0.163	0.189	0.102	0.033	0.451	0.002	0.301	0.143	0.251	0.862													
Employee rapport	0.890	0.730	0.225	-0.101	0.110	0.236	0.107	0.141	0.174	0.175	0.183	0.230	0.154	0.205	0.056	-0.010	0.474	0.099	0.272	0.304	0.855												
Employee Development	0.795	0.564	0.042	-0.186	0.072	0.092	0.097	0.087	-0.033	0.117	0.132	0.160	0.151	0.035	0.136	0.019	0.156	0.128	0.095	0.204	0.198	0.751											
Reliability	0.869	0.626	0.258	-0.116	0.189	0.199	0.169	0.265	0.103	0.235	0.230	0.259	0.193	0.272	0.056	-0.009	0.508	0.062	0.298	0.289	0.464	0.172	0.701										
Benevolence	0.907	0.663	0.489	-0.105	0.129	0.403	0.144	0.124	-0.031	0.138	0.120	0.166	0.143	0.065	0.009	0.053	0.216	0.107	0.208	0.148	0.172	0.165	0.142	0.814									
Differentiation	0.836	0.563	0.306	-0.204	0.439	0.369	0.223	0.431	0.357	0.551	0.535	0.578	0.497	0.020	0.041	0.059	0.196	0.145	0.169	0.183	0.219	0.159	0.287	0.168	0.751								
Social responsibility	0.920	0.698	0.489	-0.082	0.146	0.401	0.131	0.138	0.021	0.135	0.117	0.180	0.177	-0.003	0.065	0.019	0.138	0.177	0.142	0.107	0.086	0.158	0.152	0.699	0.145	0.836							
Governance	0.923	0.705	0.415	-0.127	0.474	0.317	0.118	0.534	0.376	0.640	0.620	0.644	0.532	0.004	-0.039	0.005	0.137	0.122	0.179	0.104	0.210	0.098	0.226	0.114	0.519	0.137	0.840						
Innovative behaviour	0.907	0.663	0.417	-0.107	0.528	0.354	0.172	0.535	0.441	0.588	0.641	0.646	0.599	0.074	0.029	0.014	0.154	0.143	0.159	0.146	0.175	0.158	0.227	0.144	0.629	0.169	0.587	0.814					
Foundation of equitable employment practices	0.898	0.688	0.493	-0.198	0.072	0.099	0.242	0.031	-0.046	0.081	0.081	0.110	0.173	0.015	0.042	0.035	-0.007	0.702	0.042	0.073	0.053	0.068	0.030	0.100	0.096	0.103	0.088	0.144	0.829				
Integration of differences	0.891	0.671	0.288	-0.195	0.083	0.049	0.055	0.172	0.030	0.103	0.146	0.130	0.068	0.347	0.032	-0.030	0.537	0.240	0.050	0.146	0.271	0.073	0.444	0.131	0.140	0.090	0.100	0.161	0.377	0.819			
Corporate Culture	0.932	0.775	0.089	-0.298	0.177	0.184	0.094	0.105	0.227	0.092	0.166	0.108	0.086	0.276	0.046	0.193	0.141	0.028	-0.015	0.070	0.262	0.029	0.034	0.073	0.101	0.067	0.088	0.076	0.123	0.141	0.880		

Appendix C(b). : Discriminant validity, CR, AVE, and Correlation Matrix (Retailing - N=649)

	CR	AVE	MSV	Inclusion in decision making	Contribution	Authenticity	Guidance	Inspiration	Openness and flexibility for innovation	Mission statement	Founder/ transformational leadership	History	Management Behaviours	Organisation	Brand	Corporate Behaviour	Diversity Climate	Employee morale	Employee retention	Employee performance	Employee rapport	Employee Development	Reliability	Benevolence	Differentiation	Social responsibility	Governance	Innovative behaviour	Foundation of equitable employment practices	Integration of differences	Corporate Culture			
Inclusion in decision making	0.949	0.822	0.359	0.907																														
Contribution	0.838	0.652	0.236	0.346	0.807																													
Authenticity	0.878	0.706	0.061	0.135	0.153	0.540																												
Guidance	0.900	0.754	0.051	0.095	0.051	0.078	0.888																											
Inspiration	0.920	0.795	0.151	0.037	0.023	0.023	0.223	0.892																										
Openness and flexibility for innovation	0.915	0.782	0.091	0.068	0.006	0.003	0.197	0.292	0.884																									
Mission statement	0.954	0.838	0.076	0.276	0.142	0.247	0.013	0.046	0.050	0.915																								
Founder/ transformational leadership	0.966	0.876	0.151	0.028	0.025	0.033	0.226	0.389	0.301	0.122	0.936																							
History	0.943	0.767	0.359	0.599	0.325	0.179	-0.065	-0.077	0.036	0.239	0.013	0.876																						
Management Behaviours	0.972	0.898	0.196	0.405	0.321	0.135	-0.037	0.034	0.008	0.181	-0.017	0.305	0.948																					
Organisation	0.947	0.818	0.184	0.225	0.086	0.022	-0.040	-0.019	0.077	0.121	0.082	0.277	0.116	0.905																				
Brand	0.962	0.863	0.221	0.103	-0.125	0.061	0.033	0.054	-0.021	0.065	0.101	0.070	0.156	0.315	0.929																			
Corporate Behaviour	0.969	0.913	0.004	0.030	0.006	0.043	0.009	0.029	-0.032	0.052	0.041	0.006	0.006	0.031	0.012	0.955																		
Diversity Climate	0.960	0.857	0.221	0.200	-0.163	0.067	0.034	0.088	0.003	0.149	0.095	0.154	0.191	0.429	0.470	0.020	0.926																	
Employee morale	0.911	0.778	0.046	0.172	0.136	0.070	0.022	-0.021	-0.069	0.053	0.021	0.095	0.080	0.162	-0.215	0.005	0.208	0.882																
Employee retention	0.892	0.735	0.014	0.057	0.045	0.033	-0.018	0.007	-0.057	-0.029	0.023	-0.025	0.056	0.016	0.057	0.035	0.103	0.012	0.857															
Employee performance	0.951	0.866	0.169	0.254	-0.141	0.041	0.015	-0.067	-0.031	0.112	-0.053	0.223	0.258	0.154	-0.162	0.011	0.198	0.107	0.094	0.931														
Employee rapport	0.836	0.632	0.169	0.208	0.122	0.066	-0.011	0.029	-0.067	0.034	-0.013	0.154	0.208	0.140	0.100	0.057	0.181	0.049	0.068	0.411	0.795													
Employee Development	0.920	0.795	0.216	0.208	0.095	0.078	-0.017	0.009	0.054	0.066	0.061	0.165	0.181	0.402	0.300	0.034	0.465	0.169	0.050	0.205	0.165	0.892												
Reliability	0.921	0.746	0.013	0.069	0.089	0.003	-0.017	0.046	0.096	0.012	-0.008	0.104	0.036	0.046	0.071	0.054	0.113	0.038	0.022	0.047	0.020	0.053	0.863											
Benevolence	0.946	0.777	0.042	0.147	0.187	0.082	-0.004	0.011	-0.008	0.069	-0.010	0.121	0.084	0.116	-0.052	0.015	0.060	0.103	0.013	0.115	0.128	0.205	-0.006	0.882										
Differentiation	0.968	0.883	0.298	0.546	0.243	0.147	-0.030	-0.043	0.031	0.208	0.052	0.397	0.185	0.216	0.063	0.025	0.116	0.169	0.052	0.156	0.122	0.066	0.011	0.134	0.940									
Social responsibility	0.957	0.816	0.179	0.423	0.364	0.084	-0.010	0.052	0.077	0.256	0.145	0.374	0.368	0.178	0.169	0.064	0.195	0.150	0.042	0.285	0.194	0.120	0.049	0.125	0.274	0.903								
Governance	0.968	0.859	0.089	0.045	0.018	0.009	0.174	0.299	0.233	-0.010	0.206	0.038	0.000	0.071	0.032	0.024	0.011	0.019	0.023	0.006	0.078	0.077	-0.036	-0.051	0.041	-0.037	0.927							
Innovative behaviour	0.967	0.853	0.104	0.215	0.046	0.033	-0.015	-0.013	0.028	0.020	-0.037	0.172	0.155	0.279	0.267	0.036	0.308	0.184	0.028	0.151	0.105	0.322	0.042	0.095	0.114	0.154	-0.007	0.924						
Foundation of equitable employment practices	0.912	0.723	0.019	0.020	0.076	0.139	0.078	-0.041	0.077	0.033	-0.030	0.032	0.053	0.004	0.062	0.033	0.029	0.061	0.036	0.017	0.060	0.064	0.000	0.033	0.038	0.004	0.009	0.074	0.850					
Integration of differences	0.960	0.856	0.162	0.249	0.250	0.123	-0.041	-0.014	0.035	0.111	0.048	0.137	0.111	0.140	0.403	0.013	0.183	0.102	0.046	0.198	0.147	0.139	0.006	0.116	0.172	0.282	0.003	0.111	0.109	0.925				
Corporate Culture	0.904	0.704	0.236	0.379	0.406	0.199	0.035	0.106	0.113	0.182	0.086	0.447	0.443	0.114	0.119	0.047	0.132	0.135	0.119	0.144	0.130	0.135	0.072	0.128	0.192	0.338	0.005	0.110	0.047	0.169	0.839			

Appendix D. : Demographic profile of respondents

	# of Responses		Percentage		# of Responses		Percentage	
	(Hospitality and Tourism N=690)		(Retailing - N=647)		(Hospitality and Tourism N=690)		(Retailing - N=647)	
Gender								
Male	399	57.8	262	40.5	584	84.6	559	86.4
Female	291	42.2	385	59.5	106	15.4	88	13.6
Age								
18–23	13	1.9	6	.9	24	3.5	30	4.6
24–30	160	23.2	189	29.2	127	18.4	155	24.0
31–39	210	30.4	190	29.4	258	37.4	211	32.6
40–59	257	37.2	228	35.2	281	40.7	251	38.8
60+above	50	7.2	34	5.3				
Degree								
High School	72	10.4	80	12.4	222	32.2	225	34.8
Undergraduate	193	28.0	176	27.2	34	4.9	27	4.2
Postgraduate and above	423	61.3	391	60.4	13	1.9	17	2.6
How long have you been with this Company?								
One year	30	4.3	62	9.6	25	3.6	90	13.9
Two Years	52	7.5	200	30.9	396	57.4	288	44.5
Between Three years and Five Years	210	30.4	89	13.8				
Between Six years and Ten Years	221	32.0	48	7.4				
Between Eleven years and Fifteen Years	41	5.9	128	19.8				
Between Fifteen years and Twenty Years	92	13.3	78	12.1				
More than Twenty Years	44	6.4	42	6.5				

Appendix E. : Structural equation modelling results

Hypotheses			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
			(Hospitality and Tourism N= 690)				(Retailing - N= 649)			
H1	Corporate purpose	Corporate strategy	1.494	0.144	10.346	***	.874	.267	3.279	.001
H2	History	Climate for inclusion	0.085	0.037	2.319	0.02	.076	.038	2.015	.044
H3	Management Behaviours	Climate for inclusion	0.084	0.033	2.538	0.011	.043	.021	1.993	.046
H4	Corporate strategy	Corporate Culture	0.157	0.065	2.423	0.015	.820	.264	3.110	.002
H5	Climate for inclusion	Corporate Culture	0.563	0.122	4.594	***	4.949	2.468	2.005	.045
H6	Corporate Culture	Corporate structure	0.098	0.032	3.063	0.002	.157	.035	4.43 4	***
H7	Corporate Culture	Corporate Behaviour	0.18	0.038	4.799	***	-.057	.053	-1.088	.277
H8	Corporate Culture	Diversity Climate	0.121	0.033	3.702	***	.185	.051	3.622	***
H9	Corporate structure	Benefit of empowerment	0.081	0.036	2.244	0.025	.729	.123	5.900	***
H10	Corporate Behaviour	Benefit of empowerment	-0.002	0.007	-0.326	0.744	-.004	.024	-.172	.863
H11	Diversity Climate	Benefit of empowerment	0.135	0.025	5.365	***	.226	.028	8.107	***
H12	Benefit of empowerment	Corporate reputation	3.673	0.687	5.344	***	.136	.066	2.053	.040

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