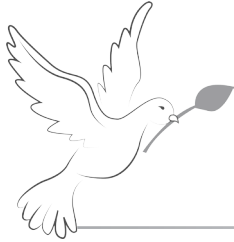


Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path Approach in the Study of Consumer and Organizational Behaviors*



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Abstract

This article underpins on a literature review i.e. of the Buddhist Canons of knowledge, that traces the roots of the study of people's behaviours back to 2500-plus years old, and empirically shows the intellectual and utility power of the Noble Eightfold Path, represented as a process configuration framework, to guide the study of organizational and consumer behaviours. This article also shows how the model embraces and integrates well-known contemporary theories of behaviours, owed to the works of Schwartz and Howard's (1981) Norm Activation Theory (NAT) and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour. Three broad-based hypotheses are posited for questionnaire-based empirical validation purposes. The five cases include a social enterprise case in Indonesia, branded coffee chain study in Thailand, hospital patient perceptions of the services, employee perceptions in a construction material trading organization in Chiang Rai, and the construction industry in Chiang Rai. Specifically, this research conceptualizes and empirically validate a model of Buddhist epistemological base for modelling behavioural processes, and provides a bridge to connect the disciplines of organizational and consumer behaviours, and psychology to Buddhism. Three significant patterns of the structural relationships linking the behavioural units of interest, both for consumer and organizational behavioural dynamics, and their flows, are explained and empirically supported by use of multiple regression techniques. First, based on behavioural encounters, by either the consumers or the employees, the perceptions, affection and experiences formed are shown statistically significant able to influence the view-formation (i.e. manifested either in terms of personal norm, brand image, brand trust, or attitude), and in turn, on the second, the various facets of the views formed, in relevant to the researched phenomena and the application context, are shown statistically significant able to influence thought or



intention (i.e. loyalty, commitment), and behaviours (i.e. characterized by the continuing purchase of consumers, or corporate citizenship behaviours or engagement of the employees in organization). Third, the multiple regression analysis supports the dynamic interactions or correlational relationships among the variables of the perceptions and affections of the experiences encountered.

Keywords: Noble eightfold path; Buddhism; norm activation theory; theory of planned behavior; consumer behavior; organizational behavior

Introduction

The study of consumer behavior examines the dynamic interaction (Bennett, 1989) of perceptions, attitudes (formed of cognition, affection and conation or intended behaviors), and the activities the consumers undertake in their purchasing, consuming and disposing of products and services (Blackwell, Miniard and Engle, 2001), which also involves the influence of environmental events, personal factors, and the marketing-mix initiatives of the organizations (Booms and Bitner, 1982). The study of organizational behaviors also can be seen from the same line of conceptions except that it addresses the perceptions, feelings, thoughts and behaviors of the employees (Schermerhorn, Osborn, Uhl-Bien and Hunt, 2012). Both disciplines aim, eventually, to make a real difference in how the business (or the organizations) and people in them perform and how the customers react to the products and services offered. This research is an attempt to show that the studies of both consumer and organizational behaviors can be guided by a broad-based theoretical model that has its roots dated back to 2500-plus years ago, which belong to the Buddhist bodies of knowledge. The variants of the model are opened to flexibility as both disciplines face different contextual environments and concerns of perceptions, such as in organizational behavioral study, the research can aim to study the perceptions of the employees towards cultural values (Hofstede and Bond, 2001) and the ways the employees identify with in-group or out-group memberships (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Thus, the research objective is: To take the bodies of knowledge back to 2500 + years ago, based on the Buddhist Canons of teachings, in suggesting a broad-based, Noble Eightfold Path-driven process-oriented framework, in the study of consumer and organizational behaviors, and from which, five empirical cases are used to provide the validity supports to the proposed framework through the statistical evidences rendered to the three broad-based hypotheses posited.

The ability of the proposed Noble Eightfold Path-driven and process-oriented framework,



to capture the nuances and complexity of organizational and consumer behavioral psychology and dynamics processes, provides the significant simplification to behavioral studies. To put into Karimi, Holland and Papamichail (2018) 's understanding, the framework is demonstrated to “identify the behavioral units of interest and models the relation and flow of those units, identifies groups of related actions, and provides a visual presentation of process flow, which can indicate patterns and variations within and between consumer archetypes”. In addition, a comprehensive review of the literature conducted by Mick (2016) indicates that most of the Buddhism-rooted research works on consumer behaviors are “eclectic, intermittent, and unconnected, leading Buddhist psychology to be mostly overlooked by consumer psychologists and unapplied in a more systematic manner”. Not only in the context of Buddhism, Mathras, Cohen, Mandel and Mick (2015) reiterate that the effects of religion on consumer psychology and behavior are scattered and have yet to be systematized. For instance, Minton and Kahle (2013) note of many religion-rooted consumer behavioral research publications are related to segmentation-driven halal or kosher products which is based on religious affiliation. None in the extant literature provides a model of Buddhist epistemological base for modelling behavioral processes that cover relatively broad spectrum of cognitive, affective, behaviors and a host of perceptual variables in simple structural manner. This research thus provides a means to enable consumer and organizational psychologists and strategists to tap on the abundant Buddhist intellectual repertoires, and the model also provides a means to enact the theory building and testing in areas relating to behavioral studies.

Literature Review

The traditional Buddhist teaching stresses, for instance, on wisdom-based virtue development and the cultivation of the mind driven by the mindfulness and contemplation of the reality of phenomena, such as in the dependent origination script, in order to counteract ignorance, undesirable human behaviours and consequences (cf. Johansson, 1979; Yeung, Gimello, and Lai, 2008). Dependent origination is fundamentally a scientifically verifiable model, which provides a different perspective to the understanding of the Buddhist's Noble Eightfold Path. The ability to provide empirical evidences to support the validity of dependent origination provides the convincing ground to influence the others to participate in the mind-cultivation process that is based on facts-driven rather than blind faith. Dependent origination reinforces that there is no independently existing world. As it is understood by Johansson (1979), “the world is a dynamic process, constantly being produced and deliberately constructed by our senses, our

thoughts, and our desires.” Specifically, the views people hold will eventually influence their activities, efforts, aspirations, psychological accumulation and also, will condition their perceptions and habitual tendencies, which can be seen in Fig. 1. Intentional scopes can have six types: the will for form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and for mental images. As it is shown in the process configuration, in Fig. 1, the activity or intention is caused and conditioned, such as by the views and the perceptions and feelings (i.e. satisfied or unsatisfied) formed. This phenomenon, in the view of the Buddhist literature, illustrates that people, whether in organizational or product/service consumption contexts, are stimulated by sensation that is born of the impact of views and desires. The desires, manifested in terms of thoughts or intentions, lead to behaviours and engagement, which subsequently produce the levels and scopes of performances accordingly, including the states of the mind, i.e. of tranquillity and insightfulness. In conditioned worlds, the creative processes and the activities that are manifested through thought, intention or behaviours mean the initiation of karma, i.e. a volitional act, to lead to uprising there, i.e. performance in terms of the state of mind or quality of life. This research deals with the mundane world although the same model shown in Fig. 1 can ultimately be exploited for the advantage to cause the destruction of intentions or karmic activities and thus, help one to arrive at the un-created transcendental state of mind.

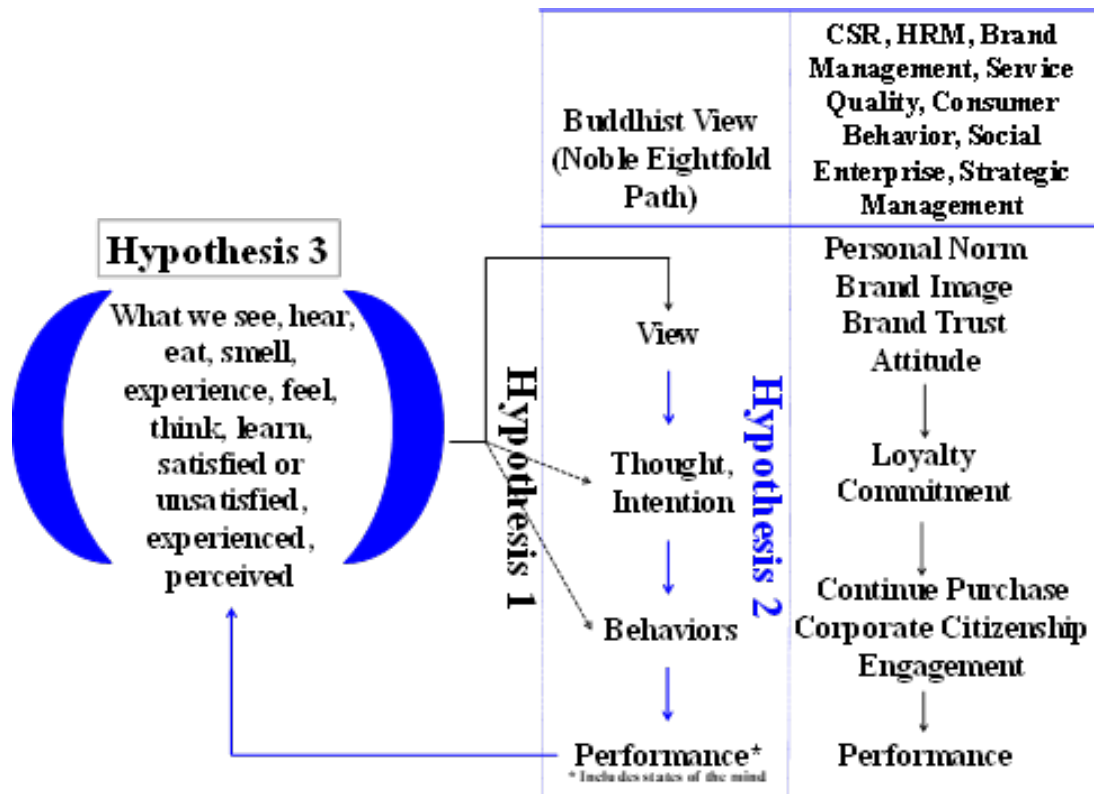


Fig. 1. A Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path-Driven and Process-Oriented Framework



In the Buddhist teaching, ultimately, virtue is inseparable from the state of mind or cognition, or affection. In this way, by virtue, there are cognitive virtue, behavioural virtue, and also the virtue-outcome that reflects the stable or tranquil states of the mind. The cognitive aspect of virtue involves discerning rightly, viewing justly or looking impartially, without favour or disfavour (Gopalakrishna and Datta, 2011), of the variables and their web of relationships shown in the left-hand-side of Fig. 1, which is capable to stimulate the changes to the views one stubbornly hold as defensive cognitive mechanism that could prevent one from unlearning and learning effectively. That is, through cognitive virtue development, one can change one's behavioural intentions (known as decisional forgiveness) as well as replace negative and unforgiving emotions with positive or other-oriented emotion (Worthington, 2005). This cognitive learning process essentially drives consumer and employee behaviours, including the future learning tendency (stated in the Law of Primacy, that early learning about a product will affect future learning, Hoch and Ha, 1986), as depicted in the cyclical process shown in Fig. 1.

The Noble Eightfold Path-guided process model embraces the concepts individually discussed in Schwartz and Howard's (1981) Norm Activation Theory (NAT) and Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). NAT argues that people behaviours, such as altruistic or pro-social environmental behaviours, can be influenced and predicted by their perceptions caused by awareness of the needs to perform the tasks, the commitment to accept the responsibility for their actions, and the views and beliefs underlying the motives. Similarly, through contacts with the senses, Tan (2018a, 2018b) demonstrates that people develop views, attitudes, and confidence (efficacy), which further influence their intentions and behaviours, which reflects TPB advocated in Ajzen (1991). Based on these theoretical concepts, Tan (2016) applies to integrate concepts of CSR1 (i.e. views of CSR), CSR2 (responsive behaviours), CSR3 (the rectitude and integrity established from the evidences of the behaviours), and CSP (Corporate Social Performances) (cf. Buchholtz and Carroll, 2008). The theme of CSR is applicable to the service industry as CSR can be referred to as actions that appeal to further some social good (Fombrun and Vasquez-Parraga, 2013; Lee, Seo and Sharma, 2013), which brings value-benefits to relevant stakeholders (Kok, Weile, McKenna and Brown, 2001).

The cyclical process shown in Fig. 1 shares as well the theme of action research, which incorporates putting right the view (driven by knowledge) in guiding strategic and operational intentions for better results (Stephens, 2011). Three broad-based hypotheses are targeted from the Noble Eightfold Path framework in Fig. 1 for empirical validation purposes:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): What one perceives, feels or experiences influences one's view (i.e. manifested either in terms of personal norm, brand image, brand trust, or attitude), thought or

intention (i.e. loyalty, commitment), and behaviours (i.e. characterized by the continuing purchase of consumers, or corporate citizenship behaviours or engagements of employees).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Views (i.e. personal norm, brand image, brand trust, attitude) influences thought or intention (i.e. loyalty, commitment), which in turn influences behaviours (i.e. continue purchase of consumers, or corporate citizenship behaviours of employees), and then causes the performances.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There are dynamic interactions or correlational relationships among the variables of the perceptions and affections of the experiences encountered (as indicated inside the thick bracket in Fig. 1).

Research Method

A deductive approach is used to guide the design of the research process. First of all, literature reviews, extracted mainly from the behavioral sciences and the Buddhist Canons, provide the intellectual bases for the model and constructs generations. The literature review, which has rich empirical supports and theoretical explanations, also provide the definitional and contextual guidelines in the design of questionnaires.

The application context is not constrained to Buddhist region. For instance, in the first case, which deals with social enterprises in Indonesia, it has valuable implication to the development of Islamic marketing, based on a logical proposition that religions can often exert significant influences to people and the societies, including consumer behavior (Hassan, 2011), through two forms: the first is through the direct effect of religious codes of conduct on personal choice, and the second is indirect, relating to religion's influence on attitude and value formation. For instance, consumer behavior is influenced by the code of conduct in the Islamic scripts, as "Eat of what is lawful and wholesome on the earth" (Qur'an, 2: 168), within the constraints of Halal and Haram in the food consumption. Not only religious marketing is guided by value and its perceptions, the commercial but non-religious cases are abundantly sharing similar themes. For instance, the Carrefour organization has used its core values as retail benchmarking motive to provide consumers with food that is healthy and safety, while protecting the environment (Yusof, Everett, and Cone, 2011).

The data collection method is questionnaire-based survey, which the student researchers help to collect the data from the various locations. The questionnaires were pilot-tested based on seeking the opinions of various knowledgeable respondents, and the reliability index, represented by Cronbach's Alpha, is beyond 0.8 (the threshold). The validities of the constructs are also obvious in the aspect of construct validity (in that the operational procedures deliver the



intended meaning of the construct), which carefully considers, as inclusive as possible, the domains illuminated in the definition of the construct, leading to content validity. In a carefully scrutinized manner, ultimately, the measurement instrument also shows evidences of both convergent and discriminant validities.

The preliminary inferential statistical methods employed are, first of all, the factor analysis, to ensure unitary dimension of the constructs, and having met the validity and reliability criteria, as stated earlier, the correlations and multiple regression methods are used. The empirical models presented in the following section summarize the structure of the multiple regression analyses of the five empirical cases, which ultimately support the three broad-based hypotheses stated in the literature review section.

Data Analysis and Discussion

This section presents the results of the five empirical cases, separately addressed in each subsection. The empirical model, which represents the outcome of the multiple regression analysis, is used as the structure of evidence for supporting the three broad-based hypotheses.

Case 1: Indonesia Data (H1 and H2 are supported)

Eighty-two donors to the social enterprise, Rumah ZAKAT in Indonesia (RZ), are sought. RZ is a social enterprising institution, which is positioned as Amil ZAKAT or ZAKAT collector. In Indonesia, there are formal ZAKAT collectors appointed by the government, but people also are attracted to non-government organizations, like RZ, for their visions and mission. ZAKAT, among the Islamic values, is one of the five pillars of Islamic virtue development, which stands equal in priority and importance to professing the faith (shahadah), prayer (salah), pilgrimage (haji), and fasting (saum) (Thibos and Gillespie, 2011), and is a tax mandated by Islam for charitable purposes (Zorzopolous, 2006).

This case creatively presents and integrates the concepts of CSR1, CSR2, CSR3 and CSP. The perceptions of the donors, both in terms of how the brand presents to the ZAKAT donors, as brand identity (symbolizing CSR1) and how the brand has served them and the societies, represented by brand integrity (delineating CSR2 and CSR3), can contribute to explain the variance in both brand image of the social enterprise (a CSP) and brand trust of the donors, at 89.1% and 54.8%, respectively. This supports the H1 structure, which state the role of perceptual domains in influencing the views of consumers of ZAKAT represented by images and trust being associated. Both brand trust (with Beta of 0.326) and brand image (with Beta of 0.516) provide the base of positive view for enacting behavioural loyalty, at 49.7% of the variance, leading to the support

for H2. It is noted that all the constructs are measured by self-developed questionnaires of multi-items which indicate robust inter-item reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) in the range of 0.924 to 0.977, that also passes the examination of unitary factor analysis. For instance, brand identity (Alpha = 0.965) is measured by, for instance, "RZI is a very professional institution, can be trusted with a mission to help the Muslim community, has a tight correlation with Islam value, etc.," and brand integrity (Alpha of 0.977) is measured by, for instance, "RZI program is solving the current issue of Muslim world, has made huge contribution in the Islamic world, is honest in a professional way, has a transparent system," and brand image (Alpha of 0.975) is measured, for instance, by "RZI name is aligned with their vision, mission and practice in the field, has proven that Islamic value can be combined with modern lifestyle, and RZI projects strong Islamic values in every program offered."

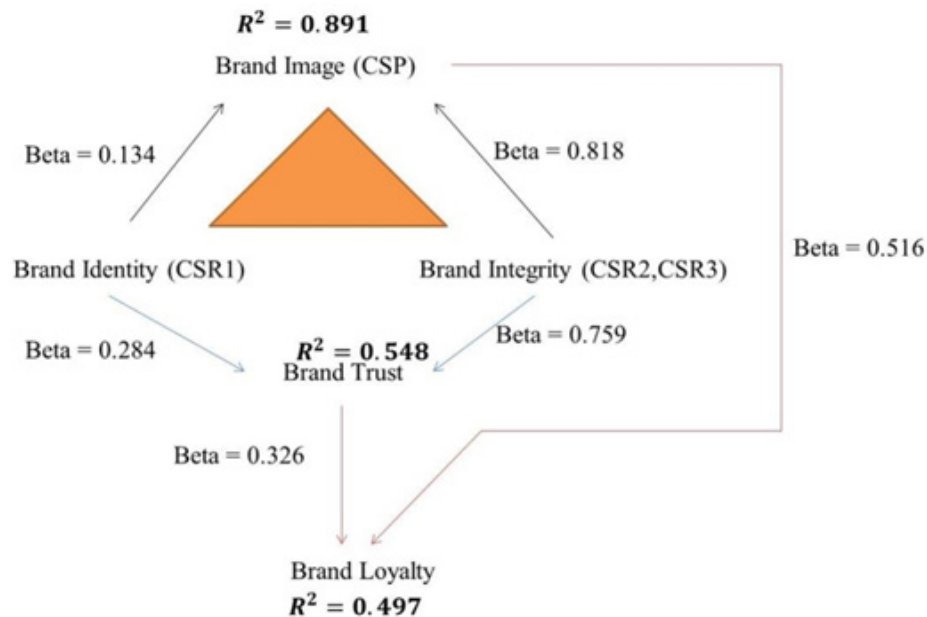


Fig. 2. Brand Structure for the RZI Case

The model contributes also to provide a structural mechanism to implement the abstract concept depicted in the customer-based brand equity model (Keller, 2002), in which brand identity at the salience level and brand integrity at the performance level, leading to brand image and brand trust (i.e. consumer judgment) at the response level.

Case 2: Branded Coffee Chains in Thailand (H1, H2 and H3 are all Supported)

For this case, 400 participants from Bangkok (48.3%) and Chiang Rai (51.8%), were involved in the survey, with 52.5% female customers and 47.5% male customers, in using Amazon Café (32.5%), Starbucks (28.5%), Doi Chang (at 16%), Black Canyon (at 13.5%) and others at 9.5%. Among



them, 53.8% responded that they visit the branded coffee shops occasionally, or when opportunity arises; otherwise, 23% indicated much frequent visit behaviours, or once a day at 5.3%. Others are clustered into 11.3%. When asked for the main purpose of visit, 31% told of finding a sitting area to relax, followed by a desire for coffees and food at 20.5%, in search for friendly service at 11.5%, and for socializing purpose at 10%, and for after-work refreshing purpose at 7.5%. The rest are functional issues such as respondents being attracted due to the on-going promotional campaign, or simply a visit driven by physiological needs, i.e. hungry, collectively, at less than 10%. The survey instrument is designed by adapting the concepts and the empirical works of different authors, with the main ones as Feldwick (1996), Han, Yun, Kim and Kwahk (2000), Kombenjamas and Lertrattananon (2011), Lassar, Mittal and Sharma (1995), and Tuu and Olsen (2010). Reliability coefficients in terms of Cronbach's Alpha are calculated to fall in the range of 0.781 to 0.912.

Specifically, from the Fig. 3 shown below, 83.3% of variance in brand trust, which shows the cognitive nature of customer motive playing the role, can be explained by customers engaging in their brand experiences through marketing-mix services (see inside the thick bracket) and the brand attitude formed (Beta = 0.728, cf. Arnett, 1996; East, Wright, and Vanhuele, 2013), and the affective customer satisfaction, at BETA of 0.250. In turn, both brand trust (Beta = 0.240), and customer satisfaction (Beta = 0.607) can collectively explain customer loyalty's variance at 63.9 per cents. All three Hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 are supported. The exploratory factor analysis highlights the "affective" aspect of customer loyalty, i.e., "The delightful feeling from this coffee shop makes me satisfied every time I recall it," as well as the behavioural nature demonstrated for instance by, "I would love to come back to this coffee shop again," and "I would say positive words about this coffee shop to others." While the affective loyalty stresses on emotion and feeling (Pichard and Robinson, 2012), behavioural loyalty emphasizes on the action of the customers, i.e. to revisit (Kim and Ritchie, 2014).

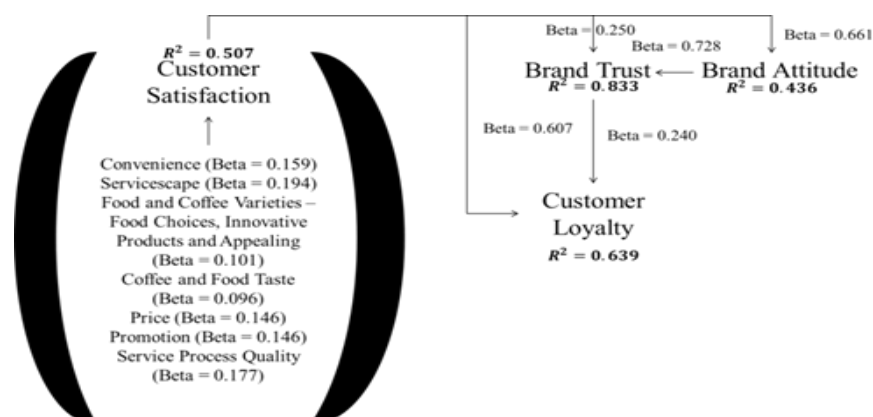


Fig. 3. The Case of Coffee Chains in Thailand



In the aspects of the service marketing-mix variables, the “environment” describes the role of the landscape and servicescape of the coffee shop (see Bitner, 1992). Other variables in the service marketing construct are self-explainable, as shown in Fig. 3. Overall, customer perceptions of the qualities of the service marketing strategies and actions toward the branded coffee chains lead the customers to believe that by choosing certain brands they have behavioural control over their decisions – i.e. that they can receive responsive and expected services, which aligns with the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB, Ajzen, 1991; also refer to Fishbein Model, Fishbein, 1963), and in turn, influences customer attitude towards the brand as well as the confidence and trust customers have over the brand.

Case 3: Patient Perceptions of the Services of Hospitals in Chiangrai (H1 and H3 are Supported)

In this case, H1 and H3 are shown supported, based on the statistical analysis of the data collected from the patients of two private (Overbrook Hospital and Kasemrad Sriburin Hospitals) and two public hospitals (Mae Fah Luang Hospital and Chiang Rai Prachanukhro Hospital) in Chiang Rai. The statistical analysis was based on 447 participants in the survey.

Among the participants, 33.6% are male and 66.4% female. Among them, the majority, 41.4%, are in between 18-30 years old, 21.7% in between 30-40 years old, and 14.1% in between 40-50 years old. Age group under 18 years old is at 10.5%, while the rest, 50 to less than 60 at 4.7%, and 60% or above at 7.6%. In a broader sense, 50% of the participants are less than 30 years old, and the rest are older than 30 years old. Besides, 66.9% of them are single and 33.1% married. While 86.8% of the participants are Thai, 13.2% of them are from Myanmar. In the study of the descriptive mean, empathic caring is the most important factor the patients addressed, at 4.3102 (of Five Likert Scales, from “1” strongly disagree to “5” strongly agree). Nevertheless, the perceived performance of empathic caring is at 3.8407, and thus this depicts the service quality gap.

The model shown in Fig. 4 implies that there is a Gestalt psychology in action, in which hospital patients draw cues from the hospital service environment, shown by both hard and soft service quality in explaining the 76.2% of the variance in the perceived empathic caring. This manifests the dynamic interactions among the various service variables in the perceptual formation of customers. Gestalt psychologists have long questioned how humans are able to solve the adaptive tasks of integrating and making sense of the barrage of what are sensed and perceived, which is also a theme of environmental psychology (see Baker, 1968; Gardner and Stern, 2002). This research also shares the similar discovery of Berry, Davis and Wilmet (2015), which reveals that patients can read the empathic messages of the hospitals and their services from a variety of

tangible and intangible aspects of services, i.e. body language, choice of words, tone of voice, and appearance of staff members. In sum, empathic caring is seen as a key perceptual image of the customers utilizing hospital services, which should be made evidential in also tangible domains of services, such as waiting areas and facilities (Haron, Hamid and Talib, 2012).

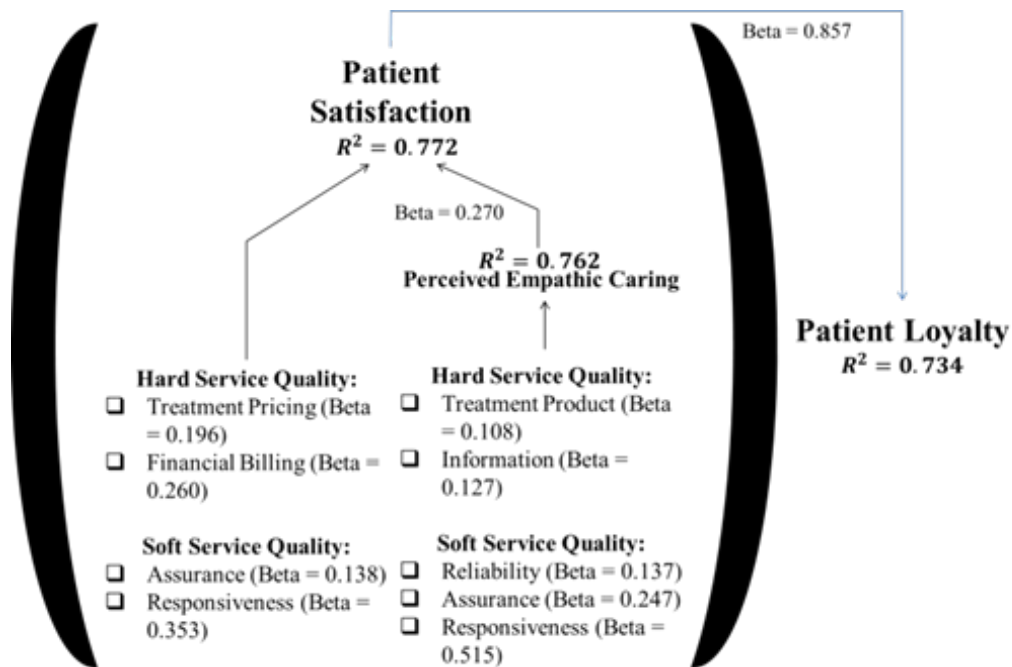


Fig. 4: Service Excellence Model of Hospital Service

In addition, for the 77.2% of the variance in patient satisfaction, hospital patients perceive affordable price and value for the price paid important, including the assured credibility of the staffs, doctors, and drugs used, and a host of other responsiveness qualities i.e. short waiting time, quick responses, prompt services, the easy accessibility to staff attention and the reliability of the billing information. A recent Bangkok Post's (2015) publication reported that medical bills are among the key consideration agenda of the patients. Patient loyalty reflects both the attitude and behaviours of the patients, for instance, in aspects of "Have no doubt to choose this hospital again for future diagnosis," "When suffer illness, this hospital is preferred choice," "Would always recommend this hospital to someone else who seeks advice," "Would say good words about this hospital to others," "Would encourage friends and relatives to use this hospital services," "Would revisit this hospital again," "Would consider this hospital as first choice when traveling to the area," and "Would always have health-check-up at this hospital without considering other alternatives." Patient satisfaction is the single most important factor that can explain the variance in patient loyalty, at 73.4%.

Case 4: Construction Material Trading Case Organization (H1, H2 and H3 are Supported)

In this case, a private largest construction material trading company in Chiang Rai is studied, as a part of an action research effort, which involves cyclical, dynamic and collaborative process that aims to address organizational issues, i.e. performance improvement and employee behaviours (cf. Lewin, 1952). As there are only 71 employees in the company studied, all the employees participated. To complement this low-sample size, in-depth interviews are, first, conducted, in order to identify the most relevant factors that concern the employees at the moment the organization is in the state of reengineering and change management. A close relevancy of the study context can, most expectedly, lead to higher level of R-squared in multivariate regression analysis and maintain homogeneity in the factor analysis, which justifies the use of smaller sample size (cf. Cohen, 1992).

Among the participants, 53.5% are officers, 32.4% in labor workforces, and 14.1% in metal sheet section. Also, 36.6% of them have been serving the company for less than 1 year, 29.6% in between 1 to 3 years, 21.1 between 3 to 6 years, and 12.7% over six years. 60.6% are males and 39.5% females, with age ranging less than 20 years old in 2.8%, 21-25 years old in 18.8%, 26-30 years old in 32.4%, 31-45% in 35.2% and 11.3% more than 45 years old. Survey instrument is developed by adapting the concepts, definitions and empirical works of Buchanan (1974), Klein, Wesson, Hollenbeck and Alge (1999), Kline (1999), Mcknight (1997), Mowday, Porter, Steers and Boulian (1974), Podsakoff, Ahearne and MacKenzie (1997), Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor and Pelletier (2009), Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996), and Wiener (1982). Reliability coefficients, being indicated by Cronbach's Alpha, are determined to be in the ranges of 0.70-0.881.

Shown in Fig. 5 are the in-role and extra-role corporate citizenship behaviours, which are shown explained by how employees feel and perceive pertaining to the different facets of job characteristics, the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment at the individual and team-level, as well as the vision-, strategy- and policy-enabled change management perceptions at the organizational level. These antecedent factors can collectively explain the variance in in-role and extra-role corporate citizenship behaviours (OCBs) at 58.8% and 49.5%, respectively. While the extra-role OCBs present the willingness of the employees to surpass contractual or minimum job or work role requirements (Organ, 1988), the in-role OCBs explain the level of commitment and behaviours of obligations demanded by the norms of reciprocity. Thus, clearly, H1, H2 and H3 are supported.

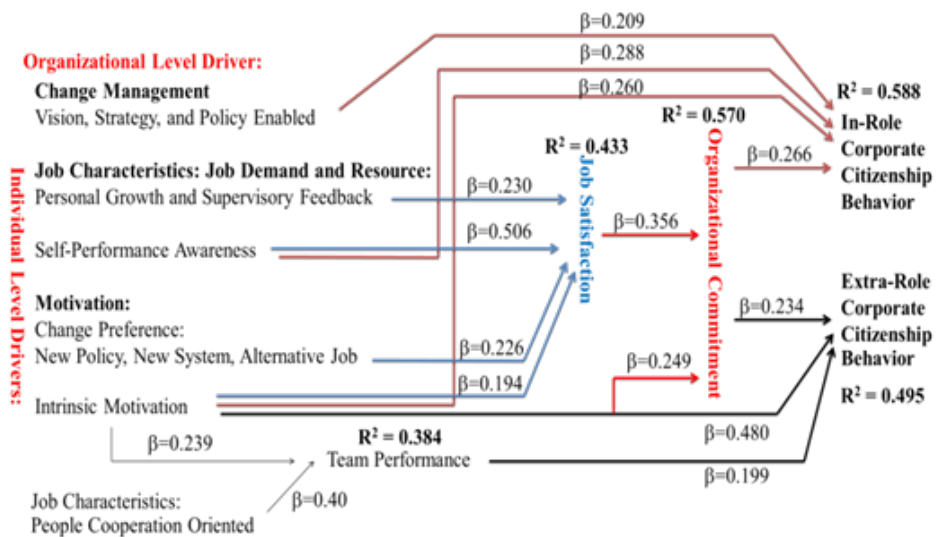


Fig. 5: For a Construction Material Trading Organization Case

Case 5: Construction Industry in Chiang Rai (H1, H2 and H3 are Supported)

In this case, the perceptions of the construction workers of three construction sites in Chiang Rai province were sought. At the time of the surveys, the smallest site had about 20 construction workers, the medium site had 50 workers, and the largest being surveyed at more than 100 construction workers. The three chosen construction sites depict different nature of job demand and resources. The instrument design adapts the conceptual definitions and the empirical evidences of Hackman and Oldham (1975), Locke and Latham (2002), Stajkovic and Luthans (2003), and Williams, Miller, and Steelman (1999).

A total of 150 workers participated, and among them, 78.5% are male and 21.50% are female, and 59.6% are in single marital state, with 37.4% married and 3% divorced. Majority at 94.4% are Thai while workers from Myanmar are 5.6%. Also, 51.9% of them are full-time workers and another 48.1% part-time workers. Most of them live in the distance in between 6 to 10 km, at 35.60%, while the others live slightly further.

Personal resources, which include pride in the job and willingness in doing the job well, as well as participatory nature in the decision making, are neglected factors in the extant literature, and are shown in Fig. 6 as important in driving job satisfaction and employee loyalty to organization. In particular, the construction companies would need to improve the welfare conditions and the standards of resource provision in supporting the employees, and ensure the fairness of regulations and the good working atmospheres at the workplace, including safety precaution measures in the workplaces.

Specifically, as indicated in Fig. 6, employee perceptions over the aspects of job and personal resources, relating to supervisory relationship (Beta = 0.105), collegial relationship (Beta = 0.238), job autonomy (Beta = 0.071), and company provision of attractive policies and ethical protection (Beta = 0.229), pride in the job (Beta = 0.098), and decision making (Beta = 0.176), are significantly important for the construction workers and parts of the reasons in their job satisfaction. The model also highlights areas which the construction sites would need to improve, namely on job demand in that the workload, emotion, mental and physical demands seem not able to match the realities of perceived job resources, indicated by Beta = -0.07. Together, perceptions of job characteristics at the personal resource level, job resource level, and job demand level, can explain the variance in job satisfaction at 90.9%

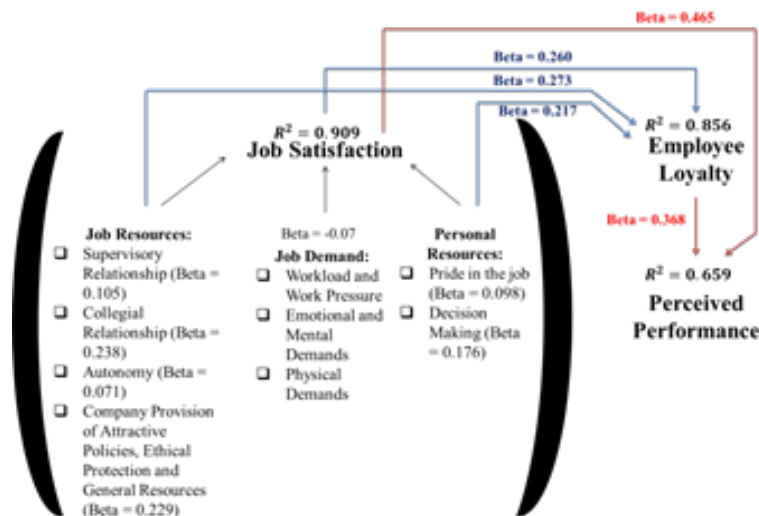


Fig. 6: Case Studying the Construction Industry in Chiang Rai

Judging from the loyalty traces in Fig. 6, it is important the construction companies attempt to foster a good harmonious working relationship, significantly of the workers and their colleagues, from which they can obtain the necessary encouragement in stressful or job-demanding environment and the necessary teamwork and intellectual sources for brainstorming to help them succeed in work and achieve targeted work goals at the construction sites. In addition, the construction companies should attend to improve the level of pride on the job, broaden decision-making space and clarify the role of the company in aspect of resources provision, and are committed to bring job satisfaction to the workers. Judging from the nature of the predictors, namely colleague relationship and job satisfaction in influencing employee loyalty, which is feeling in the former and evaluative in the latter, worker loyalty has a psychological inclination



that contains “feeling” (Boroff and Lewin, 1997), as well as evaluative consequences including attachment (Leck and Saunders, 1992) and commitment to the organization (Sverke and Goslinga, 2003). In other words, to influence job-related performance, for instance, in on-time delivery of construction project, the zero-accidents on the job site and the quality of the construction work in matching the specified standards, the construction companies would need to ensure the creation of a favourable psychological state of feeling and commitment to the employees, represented by their loyalty and job satisfaction.

In sum, H1, H2 and H3 are also supported in the context of construction industry.

Conclusion

The Buddhist Canons provide vast resources of cases and knowledge to help one understanding human behaviours, such as how the human personality is constituted and continually recreated through dynamic processes: the bodily reactions, sensation, perceptual diversities, activities, and consciousnesses. Ultimately, the behavioural study process aims to stop all sorts of conditioned, unwholesome mental and bodily activities. However, the logics presented in the Buddhist Canons, for instance, of the Buddhist Novel Eightfold Path, can be used to help understand how consumers and employees in organizations form views, intentions, and behaviours, to induce performances. Through five empirical cases, based on questionnaire-based survey approach, the model that is represented by three broad-based hypotheses, is supported, which sees the ability of the model to serve as an intellectual platform and theoretical basis to help researchers synthesize and search for appropriate behavioural dynamics structure in the studies. The five empirical cases illustrated are diversified in nature, which span across social enterprising, coffee chain, hospital services, construction material trading, and construction onsite behavioural study. Having rooted in a strong behavioural study basis, it is hoped that the researchers and practitioners can better apply the existing contemporary theories of behaviours, such as the Norm Activation Theory (NAT), Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the U-Theory, for diversities of applications.

Specifically, this research highlights how practical and relevant religious philosophies can be adapted to our daily life, in helping us to understand the nature of realities i.e. how our behaviors and perceptions are influenced by our experiences and the views formed. Being a flexible model, which integrates views, thoughts, behaviors, performances and the things we experience, the model can guide researchers to synthesize and inquire for the relevant themes and their nature of relationships. The model is also a process-based approach to organizational and personal change management, targeting to stimulate for changes in views and understanding of the situations that need changes.



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