



The effects of generational work values on employee brand attitude and behavior: A multi-group analysis



Ceridwyn King^{a,*}, Enrique Murillo^b, Hyemi Lee^a

^a School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management, Temple University, 1810 North 13th Street, Speakman Hall, 306 Philadelphia, PA 19122, USA

^b Department of Business Administration, ITAM, Rio Hondo 1, Mexico City 01080, Mexico

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 6 October 2016

Received in revised form 10 July 2017

Accepted 17 July 2017

Keywords:

Work values
Generations
Employee
Brand
Brand citizenship behavior

ABSTRACT

The competitive hospitality industry requires effective external and internal brand management. Since service employees bring the brand to life, insight regarding their motivational drivers is important. Given a multigenerational hospitality workforce, individual motivations will likely differ and therefore inform attitudes and behavior differently. Adopting work values as a motivational lens, and drawing on generational theory, this study surveys 303 hospitality employees to understand how generational collective memories (i.e., formative referents) inform individuals' work values. Further, it examines how generational work values differentially influence employees' perceived brand fit and brand citizenship behavior. The results suggest that an individual's collective memories from their formative years influence their work values, with altruistic, social and intrinsic work values having a positive impact on employee brand attitude and behavior, while extrinsic and leisure work values have no significant impact. Generational differences are evident, but not always in a manner that is consistent with previous literature.

© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Effective brand management is crucial for hospitality brands to deliver their brand identity and differentiate themselves from competitors (O'Neill and Mattila, 2010). Many brand management studies have focused on the brand as it relates to the external customer. However, effective brand management of a hospitality brand requires both an external and internal focus. This is because service employees are a critical component of service brand success (Grace and O'Cass, 2004) as they are central in bringing the brand's identity to life (King et al., 2013). As employees' pro-brand attitude and behavior contribute to consumers' perceptions of the service brand (Miles and Mangold, 2004), insights that advance internal brand management (IBM) efforts are of significant importance.

To date, emphasis in IBM research has been on the impact of organizational actions on employee attitudes and behavior. Limited consideration is given to the role of the individual employee's psyche enabling them to champion the brand (Miles and Mangold, 2004). This paucity has important consequences, as organizational IBM programs alone do not guarantee that employees will internalize the brand and advance it in their thoughts and actions (Xiong

and King, 2015). In this regard, this study seeks to contribute to the emerging dialogue that considers how individual attributes of employees inform their attitudes and behaviors towards the brand.

In consideration of the IBM literature, whereby coveted outcomes require employees to exhibit brand supporting behavior that is considered to be above and beyond normal job requirements (i.e., brand citizenship behavior) (Burmam and Zeplin, 2005), recent studies have considered the importance of employee motivation in driving such outcomes (e.g., Xiong and King, 2015). A key motivational driver that influences an individual's attitude and behavior is what the person values (e.g. Rokeach, 1973), a topic that has been extensively examined in the organizational behavior literature. In particular, work values represent outcomes that people desire and feel they should attain from work (Twenge et al., 2010). These goals can influence an employee's beliefs and attitudes as well as guide their actions (Alsop, 2008; Kupperschmidt, 2000; Parry and Urwin, 2009). From an IBM perspective, such attitudes and behaviors need to align with the brand for delivery of the promised hospitality experience. Therefore an important question is, how do an employee's work values/goals, influence their attitude and behavior towards the brand.

While individuals may share a workplace, or more specifically, occupy the same role within an organization, their work goals may differ, given different life experiences and accumulated knowledge. Consideration of such differences has drawn on generational the-

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: ceridwyn.king@temple.edu (C. King).

ory as a means to understand how life experiences when growing up inform life-long views, values and attitudes (Manheim, 1952) and, therefore, present day decision making. Based on generational cohort segmentation, several studies have documented differences in work place attitudes by generations (e.g., [Gursoy et al., 2008](#)). As the hospitality workforce displays a multigenerational profile ([Maier, 2011](#); [Zopiatis et al., 2012](#)), consideration of potential differences is necessary to inform effective human resource practices. Generational research suggests that employees will not necessarily pursue the same outcomes because they have different work values/goals ([Twenge et al., 2010](#)). This is because, in accordance with expectancy theory, people are motivated to seek outcomes that have value to them ([Vroom 1964](#); [Chiang and Jang, 2008](#)). As “a reward will not increase employee motivation unless it is valued by the employee” ([Cogin, 2012, p. 2269](#)), it becomes essential to understand what different employees value at work and how this, in turn, affects their work related attitudes and behavior. Without insight into what an employee seeks and values, the development of initiatives that propose to align and motivate employee attitudes and behavior is challenged ([Chen and Choi, 2008](#)).

If work values, a key motivational driver of employee behavior, differ across generational cohorts, then another important issue from a hospitality manager’s perspective is whether IBM programs need to be customized for each generation, in order to ensure that all employees internalize the brand and display brand citizenship behaviors. For instance, Marriott’s Moxy brand strongly targets a millennial mind-set, embracing such brand values as fun, irreverent, and cheeky. However, like most hospitality organizations, Moxy does not only have millennial employees, particularly in management positions that are held accountable for brand promise delivery. According to [Xiong and King \(2015\)](#), employees’ perceived congruency between their values and the values of the brand (i.e., perceived brand fit) affects their pro-brand motivation and subsequent performance. Therefore, are different strategies necessary to help Moxy’s older employees internalize the brand’s millennial mind-set values in order to perceive a fit with the brand? According to [Solnet et al. \(2015\)](#), with fewer young people entering the hospitality workforce at the same time older people are working beyond the traditional retirement age, the multigenerational workforce may have implications for the design and management of the hospitality workplace.

Numerous business books and practitioner articles have heralded generational differences in the workplace. However these have been based mostly on anecdotal evidence rather than rigorous research (e.g. [Lancaster and Stillman, 2002](#); [Zemke et al., 2000](#)), and have been overly focused on the characteristics of the millennial generation, otherwise known as Generation Y (e.g. [The Economist, 2013](#)). As a result, general managers and HRM practitioners often base their decisions on claims made by the popular press, whose assumptions and recommendations lack a research foundation ([Cogin, 2012](#); [Lyons and Kuron, 2014](#)). Given the profile of the hospitality workforce, many hospitality owners, managers and HR professionals are searching for new and innovative ways to engage such diversity ([Solnet et al., 2015](#)). As such, there have been several hospitality empirical studies seeking to understand the managerial challenges this demographic composition brings about. For example, some studies challenge the assumption that management and leadership practices that worked for the Baby Boomers and Generation X can be effective in today’s workplace, but acknowledge that they are still the norm in the hospitality industry ([Maier, 2011](#); [Solnet et al., 2015](#)). Support for such conclusions is evident in the work of [Lub et al. \(2012\)](#) and [Solnet et al. \(2012\)](#) who found significantly lower commitment and higher turnover intention among Generation Y hotel employees. Similarly, [Park and Gursoy \(2012\)](#) examined generational effects on hospitality employee engagement also finding differential effects for

Generation Y. In a follow-up study, [Chi et al. \(2013\)](#) found that front line hospitality employees do not perceive a difference between managers belonging to different generations, but other managers do perceive a difference.

At the same time that research finds differences between generations, other results indicate that any “special” treatment of members of a particular generation (e.g. Millennials) carries with it the potential to generate resentment among members of other generations ([Cogin, 2012](#); [The Economist, 2013](#)). Furthermore, the need to cater to different generations in the workplace is challenged by a lack of empirical evidence supporting measureable and enduring differences in workplace attitude and behaviors across generations (e.g. [Deal et al., 2010](#)). Within the generational hospitality literature, the studies conducted have been overwhelmingly descriptive, with observed differences attributed to generational profiles based on sample segmentation by age alone. These studies do not examine the basic tenet of generational theory ([Parry and Urwin, 2011](#)), concerning the influence of experiences during one’s formative years, or when they came of age (i.e. 14–20 years of age), on present day values, attitudes and beliefs ([Mannheim, 1952](#)). [Parry and Urwin, \(2011\)](#) point out that such descriptive studies, while proposing to operationalize Mannheim’s concept of generations, are simply cohort/segmentation studies that merely divide the sample by age or birthdate to examine differences. No consideration is given to the influence of collective memories from respondents’ formative years when explaining such differences, which is the foundation of generational theory. Furthermore, while few studies actually measure a work values construct when examining generational differences regarding work values (e.g. [Chen and Choi, 2008](#); [Gursoy et al., 2013](#)), no previous hospitality studies have used a work values construct as an explanatory variable for work attitudes and behavior.

These inconsistencies in previous empirical studies regarding generational diversity necessitate additional research. While seeking to build on existing hospitality studies that suggest generations have different work attitudes, this study, through the adoption of a multigenerational sample of hospitality employees, draws on theoretically based insight to help hospitality managers and HR practitioners address some of the challenges described. In particular, the influence of collective memories from a cohort’s formative years on present day workplace attitudes and subsequent brand-related behavior is examined. In doing so, the study answers the call from [Parry and Urwin \(2011\)](#) for more theoretically informed generational research that is linked to both attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Accordingly, the three research questions that guide this study are:

RQ1: How do employees’ present day work values inform their attitudes and behavior towards the brand?

RQ2: How are these present day work values influenced by memories from employees’ formative years?

RQ3: Do memories from employees’ formative years differentiate generational cohorts with respect to their influence of work values on employee attitude and behavior towards the brand?

Given the age diversity of the hospitality workforce, an important missing link in the IBM literature is insight about different generations and their relationship to the organization’s brand. In answering these questions, the study aims to contribute to the hospitality human resource and internal brand management literatures. The next section describes the theoretical frameworks drawn upon when conceptualizing this study as well as formally defines the constructs and justifies the hypotheses tested. Section three describes the sample and survey instrument and justifies our choice of statistical methods. Following this, the results of

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/5108273>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/5108273>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)