Internal Branding
- Understanding Brand Values

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PREFACE
This research was a Bachelor thesis that finalized our three years of study at Linnaeus University in spring 2012. Through the process we have learned how to handle the concepts of marketing, and it has given us experience and was very valuable to us. We hope that the results of this thesis will be useful for others.

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Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of the study was to investigate how employees perceive and understand their company brand values. The aim was to show the importance of internal branding when communicating brand values in an organization to employees.

Design/methodology/approach - The methodology used in this research was a quantitative survey study. Three warehouses were chosen for the study, in Älmhult, Helsingborg and Malmö. The sample was 129 employees and questionnaires were handed out to them. The data from the questionnaires were analyzed in the data program SPSS.

Findings - Result from the study shows that the employees have a good understanding and share a mutual perception about the brand values. Although the employees have good knowledge the study shows that they are not committed on a personal level to the brand values. Since internal branding is about implementing the brand values with the employees the result shows that the internal branding is not as embedded as it should be in the organization.

Research limitations and implications - Due to the timeframe given, the research was a cross-sectional study. A suggestion for future research is to do a longitudinal design in order to see changes over time. A theoretical implication is given to the two concepts of brand citizenship behavior and brand commitment since the results in this research are different from other studies. For the managerial implications, the commitment to the brand should be taken into consideration in the internal branding process.

Originality/value - The value that this study brings is to the internal branding process by showing the lack of brand commitment even though the knowledge about the brand values are high.

Key words - brand value, internal branding, organizational culture, employees
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1. INTRODUCTION

This first chapter is intended to introduce and give background information to the area of research. First, a brief background discussion is provided, followed by the problem discussion that reveals the problem, ending with the research purpose.

1.1 BACKGROUND

In today’s market, the key success factor for businesses is no longer only financial capital but human capital as well. Knowledge about the organization with the employees is seen as a crucial factor for success in business operations (Shiu and Yu, 2010) since it is the employees and their ability to behave out of the brand values that is directly connected to the business performance (Hogg, Carter and Dunne, 1998). While much attention is paid to form and state the brand values, less is paid to how the brand should be managed and delivered in order to keep the value of the brand strong (M’zungu, Merrilees and Miller, 2010). Harris and De Chernatony (2001) argue that employees are becoming central to the process of brand building and that their behavior can either reinforce or undermine a brand’s advertised values. It is therefore crucial to look inside the organization in order to understand how employee’s values and behavior can be aligned with a brand’s desired values.

According to Bergstrom, Blumenthal and Crothers (2002) branding is about adding a higher level of emotional meaning to a product or service and thereby increasing its value to customers and other stakeholders. Forming the brand within the organization begins with communicating the brand effectively to the employees, convincing them of its relevance and value, and successfully linking all parts of the organization to deliver the brand essence. These activities are at the core of internal branding. Successful internal branding helps shape the employee’s awareness, behavior and commitment towards the brand and gives them a better understanding of the brand (Khan, 2009). An example were this is implemented is in one of the world’s most successful airlines, Singapore airlines (Chong, 2007). What distinguishes Singapore airlines from other organizations is their focus on infusing employees with their core values through tailored internal communication channels so that they become walking and living representations of the brand (Chong, 2007).

Internal branding is explained as when an organization aligns internal processes and brand values with organizational culture (Khan, 2009). According to Henri (2006) the culture in the organization consists
of shared values and behavioral norms that show the employees what is important and how things are
done in an organization. Employees are, as mentioned, viewed as playing a crucial role in brand
management since they facilitate the interface between the organization and the market, and this is
why their behavior must represent the organization in accordance with the brand values (Harris and

1.2 Problem Discussion

According to Bergstrom, Blumenthal and Crothers (2002), it is the people, not the advertising, that are
at the core of a brand. Representatives of the organization are always communicating something and it
therefore makes sense to be proactive about the message being sent. It is not only about winning the
hearts of external customers, but also motivating the internal customers, the employees, as well
Blumenthal and Crothers (2002). Whatever job they are doing, they need to know what it is they are
contributing to, and why, because they are a valuable asset for the company (King and Grace, 2008).

What companies have overlooked before is the importance of people contributing to the brand
message, regardless of their level in the hierarchy or job description. It is the employees that answer
the telephone, package the product, decide what parts to use and which go where, and are involved in
distributing it. Internal branding explicitly links the everyday lives of people on the job to the brand’s
long-term, big picture success (Bergstrom, Blumenthal and Crothers, 2002). This is why employees
are critical contributors to a brand and can be seen as brand builders, since their participation is
important for the organization and formation of the brand (De Chernatony, 2001).

Employees need to understand how their competence and interaction with each other can affect the
brand positively. The point is to implement the values into the employees and make them live the
brand. Chong (2007) states that this turns the employees to the most important customer for the
organization, otherwise no one is committed to communicating the values further to the external
stakeholders and customers. It is the employee’s that must understand what the brand means and how
it provides value in order to deliver that value and promise to the customers and transform the
espoused brand messages into brand reality for customers and other stakeholders (Chong, 2007; Khan,
2009; Ballantyne, 2003).

Internal branding is successfully created by starting with the employees totally believing in the brands
higher vision, in other words; the employees needs to live the brand (Khan, 2009). A major cause for
an internal branding program to fail is if organizations never tell the employees how to live the brand, meaning that the employees do not represent the brand in compliance with what the brand says and what the brand promises. The consequence is that they do not communicate the brand to the customers, and thus decrease the satisfaction level (Khan, 2009). What organizations need to find out is how to communicate these internal values to the employees to be able to be unified and consistent in their behavior and delivery of the brand values to the stakeholders, since without employees, internal branding cannot be successful (Khan, 2009; King and Grace 2008).

1.3 Purpose

The purpose is to investigate how employees, with help of internal branding, perceive and understand their company brand values.

1.4 Objective and Outline of Thesis

The objective of this research is to give insight in how successfully internal branding is implemented with employees and through this implementation how they understand and perceive their brand values. In this research it will be shown if the employees understand and have knowledge about their brand values. With the results both managerial and theoretical implication will be made.

This research starts with an overview of existing literature and discussion of the concept of internal branding and the reasons for the research in the area. The research paper will continue with a literature review over the concepts that constitute internal branding. It will later continue with a detailed description of the research design and methodology. The findings of the research will be discussed and the paper concludes with conclusions and implications for further research.

Chapter summary
This first chapter gave a background discussion and introduced internal branding, followed by a problem discussion highlighting the importance of managing internal branding within organizations. The discussions lead to the purpose of the study and next a relevant literature review of the subject will be presented.
2. Literature Review

A literature review regarding internal branding will follow discussing previous research and findings about the subject. The literature review will give theoretical insight in the research area and provide a background for this research.

The concept of internal branding cannot be discussed without an overview of the values of the brand, the role of the employees and the organizational culture. Based on our understandings, brand values is what is being communicated through internal branding and what shapes and guides the employees’ behavior. If this is performed consistently, it will create a strong culture in the organization where the performance of the employees will be consistent and unified.

2.1 Brand values

A brand is the combination of name, term, sign, symbol and design that is intended to identify the goods or services of one or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors. These features are the aspects that build up the value in a brand (Kotler et al. 2009). The concept of brand value implies that what makes a brand a brand and distinguishes it from others, is its personality (Christopher, 1996). For companies to be able to express their brand values in the best possible way there is a need to instill shared understandings of companies brand values in the hearts and minds of the employees (Juntunen et al. 2010). The greater the fit between brand values and the individual, the more likely it is that the attitude and behavior of employees is consistent and aligned with the values to be delivered, also called the brand’s promise (Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2005).

A brand value is of intrinsic meaning to employees since it give them reasons and codes for their actions (Van Rekom, Van Riel and Wieranga, 2006; Henkel et al. 2007). A general assumption is that employees who are more engaged with the brand values are likely to show bigger commitment and be more emotionally connected to the organization (Foster, Punjaisri and Cheng, 2010; Chong, 2007). Helm (2011) confirms this statement and adds that the alignment is connected to a pride of being part of that specific brand. De Chernatony, Cottam and Segal-Horn (2006) found in their research that brand success is dependent on ensuring that employees correctly interprets their brand values and are committed to enacting these values in their interactions with the external environment.
Managers should recognize that their employees may also be consumers of the brand and should therefore, prior to any external communication focus on internal communication of the brand and presentation of values, more specifically internal branding. In a study made by Van Rekom, Van Riel and Wieranga (2002) they found that the most central values, being the ones the employees work with in an everyday basis are also considered as the most valuable ones. The behavior from the management should be aligned with the internal values in the brand because an aligned behavior from the management sends consistent signals in behavior in form of guidelines to the employees. The employees’ in an organization need to behave consistent and to manage this, most organizations have a central theme that is implicit. Without such guidelines employees may be struggling with when, how and to whom to direct their energies (Webster, 1992). The culture and the brand needs to be naturally linked together and connected to each other (Mosley, 2007).

2.2 Internal Branding

Internal branding is when branding becomes more than just the perception of the organization in the external marketplace, as showed by the marketing. Internal branding in its full context is the stakeholders, customers and the wider public’s identification with the feelings, perceptions and actions that are included in the products and services (Gapp and Merrilees, 2009). The objective with internal branding is to ensure that employees transform the espoused brand messages and promises from that products and services into brand reality for customers and other stakeholders (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007). According to Tosti and Stotz in Vallaster and De Chernatony (2006), one of the aims of internal branding is to align individual’s behavior with the brand’s espoused identity so employees are better equipped to fulfill the promises inherent in the brand. Internal branding activities communicate and educate employees about the brand values in order to strengthen their intellectual emotional engagement with the brand (De Chernatony, Cottam and Segal-Horn, 2001). Based on the possible clear understanding of the brand values, employees can behave and act naturally with customers whilst still effectively communicating the brand values (Mosley, 2007).

To support the internal brand building process, Vallaster and De Chernatony (2006) argue that information from external stakeholders should travel up the organization to get a feeling of how the desired brand identity converges with the perceived brand image. This view of information flow is shared by Michailova and Minbaeva (2012) and Papasolomou and Vrontis, (2006), saying that if constructive dialogue is established between the employees and the management, they will be well
equipped to learn together and from each other. Robson and Tourish (2005) agree on the high importance of having good interpersonal relationship in an organization to be successful. Hartnell, Yi Ou and Kinicki (2011) discuss that teamwork between the employees and high participation creates an engagement in the organization, which in its turn creates a sense of responsibility that makes the employees feel important. Moroko and Uncles (2008) state that this is what gives the employees their great influence on the brand. Balmer and Wilson (1998) and Lings (2004) argue that if the employees are satisfied with the job they contribute to a positive reputation and tend to fulfill personal beliefs in their work activities. By having an internal aspect of the brand, it is seen as a guiding light for organizational culture, behavior and strategy according to Urde, Baumgarth and Merrilees (2011).

2.3 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Organizations that have developed successful brands have created a culture in which all areas of the organization are committed to the branding process (Noble, Sinha and Kumar, 2002). An organizational culture consists of the values, beliefs and norms that are shared within the organization (Balmer and Wilson, 1998; Hatch and Schultz, 2003), and that in turn provides the employees with guidelines for how to behave and work within the organization (Urde, Baumgarth and Merrilees, 2011). Chow, Haddad and Wingender (2011) say that the key to give the employees knowledge and talent is through the organizational culture that includes the organization’s missions and goals. The focus of organizational culture is on how the employees interpret and understand their work-related experiences and how these interpretations are related to the actions of the employees (Van Muijen et al. 1999; Ahmed and Rafiq, 2003).

Hartnell, Yi Ou and Kinicki (2011) argues that organizational culture is the key to effectiveness since it unifies the organization and makes the organization work towards the same goal. By being influenced by the organizational culture the employees create meaningfulness to the organizational world (Van Muijen et al. 1999; Ahmed and Rafiq, 2003). Noble, Sinha and Kumar (2002) argue that culture centers on embedded values and beliefs that guide behavior. Therefore, it is assumed that culture guides the behaviors that ultimately influence performance. Managers need to be aware of their organization’s culture and its alignment with the brand’s values (Mahnert and Torres, 2007). If there is inconsistent behavior between these two it can affect stakeholder’s perception of the brand in a negative way (Harris and De Chernatony, 2001), since organizational culture has a great impact on external stakeholders through the employees’ behavior and attitude (Wilson, 2001; Wasmer and
Bruner II, 1991). Organizations dedicated to a brand focus cannot only develop convincing propositions for the marketplace but also bind their organizations more tightly and increase their general effectiveness (Christopher, 1996). This makes organizational culture a tool to secure competitive advantage (King and Grace 2008; Balmer and Wilson, 1998) by building a strong brand whose positioning is hard to threaten or copy for competitors (Burmann, Zeplin and Riley, 2008; Chong, 2007; Hatch and Schultz, 2003).

Organizational culture includes the shared, taken for granted values and includes teamwork and acting out of the organization as a whole. A culture cannot be formed by only one employee but needs to be shared and internalized throughout the organization and among all employees (Hartnell Yi Ou and Kinicki, 2011; Koys, 2001). Organizational culture has an impact on the employee’s motivation and commitment to the organization and their job satisfaction, since they feel integrated in the culture and committed to it. It can also give a structure in the organization without bureaucracy and formal code of conduct and turn it into a natural flow (Chow, Haddad and Wingender 2011; Wasmer and Bruner II, 1991).

2.4 EMPLOYEES

People possess skills, knowledge and experiences about an organization and its products and services. Having these skills, knowledge and experience can enhance productivity because the employees know their organization better and because of this, people are of significant economic value to the company and represent capital that is too valuable to be lost (King and Grace, 2008).

The employees must understand their important role in the organization in order to have motivation for functioning in their work position (Asif and Sargeant, 2000). Internal communication together with an understanding of the brands vision and strategy helps create a unified behavior among employees. Ensuring this unified behavior is a key part of internal branding (M’zungu, Merrilees and Miller, 2010; Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Papasolomou and Vrontis, 2006).

The employees must understand the brand values and accept them in order to deliver what the brand promise, to meet expectations from the external environment (Juntunen et al. 2010; Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009; Wieseke et al. 2009). To ensure the employees behave in such way
the organization needs to engage and motivate the employees. This will gain competitive advantage according to Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, (2009).

2.4.1. Living the brand

Living the brand means that employees shares the same understanding of the brand throughout the whole organization, and interact with the customers in a way that complements and support the values promised to the customers by the brand (Khan, 2009; Kottasz et al. 2008; Juntunen et al. 2010). Henkel et al. (2007) gives in his article IKEAs founder, Ingvar Kamprad, as an example of a role model living up to his company’s brand values of price consciousness and simplicity.

Employees must understand what the brand is about to be motivated to behave aligned with it (Thomson et al. 1999; Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009). When there is an explicit understanding of the brands core values, the employees are more likely to be intellectually and emotionally engaged with the brand (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2011; Wilson, 2001). This will lead to satisfied employees that in its turn lead to satisfied customers (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009; King and Grace, 2008).

In order to manage the perception and knowledge about the brand it is important to put emphasis on internal communication (Henkel et al. 2007), to inform and remind employees about the brand values to make them committed to the brand (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009; Thomson et al. 1999). If employees hold different attitudes towards the brand and its values, the external perception about what the brand stands for will be confused (Gotsi and Wilson, 2001; Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009), since people are heterogeneous and not always acting the same (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007).

Commitment leads to personal identification with the organization and the employees get a feeling of belonging to the organization when there is a shared understanding about the same values in the organization (Thomson et al. 1999; Punjaisri and Wilson, 2011; Snell and White, 2009). Many researchers argue that if the employees are committed to the brand they perform better and they will perceive success and failure of the brand as their own if they identify themselves with the brand and manage to live the brand (e.g. Shiu and Yu, 2010; Wilson, 2001; Gotsi and Wilson, 2001). Identification with the brand often leads to the employees using the term “we” rather than “they” when
talking about the brand they work for, and tend to talk about the brand and their colleagues as if they were family (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2011; Snell and White, 2009).

It is a challenge to make the employees live the brand, due to the fact that people can behave unpredictable and talk spontaneously. Therefore it is important to work with internal communication to reduce that unpredictable behavior is not aligned with the values of the organization (Gotsi and Wilson, 2001).

The employees’ behavior can be divided into two constructions, identified by Burmann and Zeplin (2004):

- **Brand citizenship behavior:**
  The first construction is brand citizenship behavior that is an outcome of the employees living the brand. Burmann and Zeplin (2004) state that the employees should feel obligated to the brand and also feel like they are a part of a whole. Brand citizenship behavior only works when the employees have knowledge about the brand, the organization, and can behave in a brand-related way. The key driver for brand citizenship behavior is brand commitment (Brumann and Zeplin, 2004).

- **Brand commitment:**
  The second construction is brand commitment that explains the psychological process, in living the brand, that lead employees to show brand citizenship behavior and put extra effort into the work to reach the brand goals, according to Burmann and Zeplin (2004). They clarify that they do not mean that the employees should act like robots that repeat the values and say whatever the management want them to say, but to show empathy and care for the customers. The reason the employees behave like this is referred to the social acceptance in the organization as a group. When these two constructions are put together they create a strong brand for an organization through the employee’s behavior (Burmann and Zeplin, 2004).
### 2.4.2 Delivering the Brand Promise

The concept of brand promise is constructed and used to simplify the customer brand perception. Through the brand promise, a promise is proposed to customers making them able to appreciate how the values in the brand can enhance their experience (De Chernatony, 2001).

According to Thomson et al. (1999) when employees live the brand, they are able to deliver the brand promise externally. When employees deliver the brand promise to external stakeholders their attitudes and behaviors must be aligned with the brand (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Punjaisri and Wilson, 2011). Helm (2011) discusses that there are two important aspects that shape the stakeholders perception of the organization based on the employee’s behavior; how they act aligned with the organizations’ values and how they shape the values when delivering the brand to the external stakeholders. Internal branding is about ensuring that the brand promise is transformed by employees into reality, reflecting the espoused brand values that set customers’ expectations (King and Grace, 2008).

A clearly defined brand promise enables the employees to have performance standards that are tied to the brand promise and they can then adjust their productivity accordingly. For employees to be the brand they have to understand the product’s overall brand promise and also, in addition, employees need to understand the role they play in delivering that brand promise (Khan, 2009). This is an underlying factor and a crucial point to have a consistent delivery of the brand values in the brand promise (Khan, 2009, King and Grace, 2008). De Chernatony, Cottam and Segal-Horn (2003) claims that employees who are responsible for fulfilling the brand promise are required to deliver the service in a consistent manner to attain and maintain the desired identity of the brand. Snell and White (2009) agree in this saying that every employee has an individual responsibility for the brand.

When employees have internalized the brand value they will consistently deliver the brand promise to all contact points between the company and the stakeholders. To make the internalization process possible, internal branding is needed because it is through internal branding that the values are communicated to the employees (Vallaster and De Chernatony, 2005). Management has to put an effort in translating the internal values into daily activities, which the employees can then associate to.
In an organization the employees need to enact the key characteristics of a brand and represent them to the stakeholders in order to have a successful brand (Punjaïsri and Wilson, 2007).

As branding is about the organization’s employees interacting with multiple stakeholders, the success largely relies on employees’ attitudes and behaviors in delivering the brand promise to external stakeholders. For organizations to be recognized as high performing, they have to understand and orchestrate their employees. Under this light, internal branding has emerged as a key process to align the behaviors of employees with the brand (Punjaïsri and Wilson, 2007). If managers can understand and orchestra marketing and human resources, it can then be argued that employees will better accept and internalize the brand values and align their attitudes and behavior accordingly (Vallaster and De Chernatony, 2005). This will result in a delivery of the brand promise providing with customer satisfaction, customer preference and loyalty (Gapp and Merrillees, 2006).

2.4.3 The importance of leadership

When forming the organization, leadership is one important aspect (Mosley, 2007; Hulberg, 2003). To make sure the employees know how to live the brand and how to deliver the brand promise there is a need for active leadership, meaning that they translate the brand promise into employee action (Vallaster and De Chernatony, 2006).

Leaders do not only influence the internal brand building process by verbal communication but also through non-verbal, as in their social interactions (Wieseke et al. 2009). Successful leaders are seen as those who consistently and repeatedly communicate messages to employees about brand identity and commitment to living the brand promise. They need to engage the employees to behave consistent with the values of the organization (King and Grace, 2005; Hulberg, 2006).

Webley (1999) argues that the main challenge for leaders in an organization is to ensure that the whole organization follows and understands the values. He continues by saying that there are four key values that should always be considered: justice, mutual respect, stewardship and honesty (Webley, 1999). Asif and Sargeant (2000) state that the more communication between leaders and employees there is, the less risk of misunderstanding will occur. This is highly important since misunderstandings can lead to conflicts and dissatisfaction. Koys (2001) also states the importance of employees helping each other and encouraging each other with support from leaders.
Chapter Summary

This chapter was a literature review that discussed what previous literature states about internal branding and the concepts that surround it; the brand, the organizational culture, and the importance of employees and leaders. Next the conceptual framework and the research discussion is presented.
3. Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, the aim is to clarify how the theoretical concepts presented in the literature review have been conceptualized, and how these relate to each research question. Starting with a discussion of the research problem, the research questions are then presented.

3.1 Research Discussion

Without brand knowledge employees are unable to transform brand values into reality for customers (King and Grace, 2008). Employees may subscribe to a value, but may not know why they should stick to it and may not really know how to live up to it. Such values are difficult to enact in situations that challenge them (Maio et al. 2001). Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) state that people are heterogeneous, meaning that everyone does not behave the same. This can be a problem when employees interact with customers since it is the employees that deliver the brand promise and should deliver a consistent brand identity and corporate image. This is why internal branding is of importance (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Henkel et al. 2007).

Most existing literature on internal branding is focused on brand managements’ and consultants’ perspectives according to Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson (2009). Their study was on the hotel industry and since this industry is affected by high and low seasons of travelling, the results are not applicable on other industries. This creates a gap in the research field (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009), which this study addresses by doing a research in the furniture industry. Henkel et al. (2007) also states in their research the need for more research to be done with the focus on branding with the employees.

Based on the literature review, seven research questions were formulated from the concepts that are discussed in the thesis. These research questions will help show if there is a mutual understanding of the brand values among the employees or if the management needs to improve the dissemination of internal information.
3.2 Research questions

- RQ¹: What is the employees’ knowledge about the brand values?
- RQ²: What is the employees’ behavior in relation to the brand values?
- RQ³: How committed are the employees to the brand values?
- RQ⁴: How positive is the employees’ attachment to the brand?
- RQ⁵: How do the employees communicate the brand values within the company?
- RQ⁶: How unified are the employees when working towards the same organizational goals?
- RQ⁷: How well do the employees feel they can deliver the brand promise?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter the concepts from the literature review have been discussed and research questions were formed based on the discussion.
4. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the methodology for the research is presented and a description of how the research will be investigated is given. In every part a motivation for the chosen methodology is included.

4.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

4.1.1 INDUCTIVE RESEARCH VS. DEDUCTIVE RESEARCH

There are two ways of approaching a research problem. One is an inductive research where the theory is based on the collected data and its correlations, meaning the choice of theory is based on an empirical base, called grounded theory (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The empirical base is the observations that the researcher does before conducting a theory. This research approach is related with qualitative research methods rather than quantitative ones (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Glenn, 2010).

The other research approach that can be used is deductive research. Based on existing knowledge and literature in a certain area, the researcher develops research questions that need empirical investigation. The researcher must be able to translate theoretical concepts to material that can be used in order to form research questions and collect needed data (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra and Birks, 2003).

The research approach used in this study was deductive research since the theory tested was based on existing literature and this information was presented in the paper as a literature review. The choice of research approach is based on the aim of investigating and testing existing theory by collecting data rather than doing own observations and from that basing new theoretical concept.

4.1.2 QUANTITATIVE VS. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

When conducting research there are two different research approaches possible. Qualitative research is used when a smaller amount of data is collected. This is a less formalized strategy used to describe more complicated situations where there is little previous research done. The data collected relies heavier on words than numbers since the aim is to gather as much information as possible about a
single subject (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Qualitative research approaches strive to gain a deeper insight and more complete vision of the problem being studied. It is used to investigate human behavior and the reasons of such behavior (Glenn, 2010). The conclusions are based on own assumptions and judgements and therefore no generalization is made in this method. An inductive approach is commonly used when working with qualitative methods and this is because the area of research is often of a more complicated nature (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Quantitative research is used when a large amount of numeric data is collected, and the results are assumed to be measurable and presentable in form of numbers and statistics. The aim is to make generalizations based on the processed results of the investigation. Quantitative research emphasizes quantification when gathering and analyzing data (Bryman and Bell, 2005) It is used for testing of hypotheses and answer research questions (Glenn, 2010) and is commonly used together with a deductive research approach with focus on the theories being used, with a few variables being studied on a large number of units. (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Glenn, 2010)

In this research a quantitative research approach was used because the focus was to make generalizations about perception and understandings based on the results therefore a large amount of data was needed. Combining deductive research with quantitative research approach was suitable. The quantitative approach gave the researchers’ specific and precise information from the respondents’ answers that gave proper data to work with.

4.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is simply the plan to be followed in order to answer the research aim and objectives (Bryman and Bell, 2005). A complete research design contains a theory that is going to be studied. The simple aim is to have a good enough plan of formulating the study, something that demands theoretical hypotheses. A complete research design will implicate an effective guideline for what data to collect and what strategies of data analysis to use (Yin, 2007). There are three different research designs to follow, exploratory research design, descriptive research design and casual research design.

Exploratory research design is fact-finding research with the aim to provide insight and understanding, that can be used as a measurement when judging other research (Malhotra and Birks, 2003; Yin, 2007; Glenn, 2010). The exploratory research design is normally carried out at the early stages of a major
project to clarify the research problem and research direction and to make hypotheses (Yin, 2007; Lenn, 2010).

Descriptive research design describes what the research is about in a realistic way, giving it a current perspective. (Yin, 2007) The major objective of descriptive research design is to describe something, typically market characteristics or functions (Malhotra and Birks, 2003) This design is about identifying and describing a problem and giving it a solution. This research answers the questions who, what, when, where and how (Yin, 2007), and is useful in measuring opinions. The base is commonly hypotheses or research questions tested with a survey questionnaire (Phophalia, 2010).

Casual design is used to examine whether one variable causes or determines the value of another variable and why they affect each other. It is not simply about looking at if they affect each other but also how and find the underlying causes. This research design is used to explain reasons of something being what it is (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra and Birks, 2003; Glenn, 2010). Marketers often have a specific interest in causality and business research is therefore commonly built on a casual design. Casualty can never be proved or completed with certainty, however causality can be understood and conclusions can be made with reasonable certainty (Glenn, 2010).

The choice of research design in this research is descriptive since the purpose is to investigate the subject in a current situation and since there is previous research in the theoretical area, there is no need to explore the subject further. Also the aim was not to look at if and how variables affect each other and that is why the causal design was not conducted.

When doing descriptive research design, the research can be conducted once during a specific time period or continuously during a long period of time. When performing the research only once, the design is called cross-sectional. When doing the cross-sectional design, many targets groups are researched during one time. But doing the research on only one specific target group is called single cross-sectional design, where data is gathered from one group only with similar characteristics. If the aim is to investigate two different groups within the specific target group and compare them, a multiple cross-sectional design is conducted. Longitudinal design is when the research is performed continuously during a longer period of time. The advantage with this is that changes can be detected and causes and inferences can be predicted (Bryman and Bell, 2005).
By having a descriptive design the choice of doing the single cross-sectional design was made. The reasons for this were because the research investigated one specific target group and was conducted during one specific time period only.

4.3. DATA SOURCES

There are two different data sources that can be used in research. One of them is primary data that is information collected first-hand, gathered from the original source. Since the information is not available to anyone it needs to be asked for. It is positive that the information can be tailor-made specifically for the research questions and not collected for another purpose (Malhotra and Birks, 2003; Phophalia, 2010). The information gathered will also be current and relevant since it is collected for the current purpose by the actual researcher. The biggest advantage with using primary data is that the information collected is specified for the research purpose and collected by the author. The disadvantages with using primary data is that it can be time-consuming to gather new data and it may not always result in answers that are relevant for the purpose (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Secondary data is easier to grasp than primary data since this is data that has been collected earlier by other researchers for other purposes than for the current study. There are two types of secondary data (Brymann and Bell, 2005; Malhotra and Birks, 2003):

- **Internal secondary data**: This is data from within the organization for which the research is being conducted. Some examples are annual reports, strategy documents and internal communication documents, like emails and sales reports (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra and Birks, 2003).

- **External secondary data**: Data generated by sources outside the organization available for everyone both internally and externally. This can be, for example, published material or online databases (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra and Birks, 2003).

The advantages with this type of data are that it is cost-efficient and time-saving to use already gathered data, instead of collecting it again. This means that the energy can instead be put on the analysis of the data (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Secondary data may help to redefine the research problem and build creativity for the project it may also formulate an appropriate research design by
identifying key variables to measure and understand (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The data is often of high quality due to the fact that the research must be reviewed several times before being published and accessed by others (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

There are though disadvantages with secondary data. The data collected might not be of relevance for the researched purpose or might be too old to be relevant. There might not be enough secondary data for the subject of research, which means that the data needed for the research might not be sufficient. Another issue with secondary data is that with information gathered by others, time must be spent on getting familiar with the existing material and the variables tested in that research. Also the quality of the data should never be taken for granted since quality can never be predicted beforehand (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

In this research a combination of primary and secondary data was used. The subject had not been researched in accordance with the same purpose and case company as in this thesis before and this is why the primary data was relevant. Secondary data was used as help when investigating the brand values to get pre knowledge before conducting the questionnaire. The sources used when collecting secondary data was external secondary data, more specific the homepage of the company and the published code of conduct. Since the aim of this paper was to get deeper knowledge about one specific subject, primary data was the better data selection for this purpose since it has an internal perspective. Primary data was chosen also because the data gathered was gathered for the research purpose only. But in order to know what to collect primary data about, secondary data was used as a base for the primary data collection.

4.4 Research Strategy

There are five research strategies in social science that can be used. The choice of strategy depends on what type of research question that is formulated, the degree of control the researcher has over behavioral events and if the focus is on current or historical events. The five research strategies are described in table 4.1. (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Yin, 2007).
The experimental strategy design is a rare method in business research but the primary reason for its use is that it can act as a measurement in judging non-experimental research. They have a function of verifying, falsifying or establishing the validity of hypothesis (Bryman and Bell, 2005). If the experimental research design is used in an experiment context it must be repeatable (Glenn, 2010). When conducting an experimental design two groups are compared with each other, where one group is exposed to an experimental variation and then compared to the control group that is not. Thereafter the differences between the groups are analyzed and the researcher can draw conclusions (Yin, 2007). This strategy design is popularly used in natural science due to the possibility to control operating conditions (Phophalia, 2010).

Survey research strategy is about the sampling of individuals from a population with the aim of making statistical inferences about the population by using the sample. The survey strategy is favourable when the research purpose is to describe the occurrence of an event or if the purpose is to describe the consequences of a certain input (Yin, 2007).
Archival analysis strategy is a form of observational method where the researcher examines the accumulated documents, or archives, of the unit of analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Case study can be used as a research strategy and means that one certain place or object is researched specifically, where developmental factors in relation to the context and relevant theory are stressed (Yin, 2007). The researcher gathers information about the object from present time, past time or environmental forces, which contribute to the behavior of the unit for the study (Phophalia, 2010). It is intensive and systematically structured on looking at an object or place, collecting data, analyzing it, and states the conclusions (Glenn, 2010; Phophalia, 2010). The most basic form of case study is a detailed and deep study of one case and the causes and relations of that specific case. Case studies can be used in both qualitative and quantitative methods and are preferred if the study includes current happenings (Yin, 2007).

History research strategy is the collection and analysis of historical documents. Any written records form the past, of all types, reports, newspapers, diaries etc (Phophalia, 2010). This strategy is preferred if there is no control or possibility to study relevant situations directly. The advantage with history research is that it can handle the past, when there is no individuals left to explain certain events (Yin, 2007). The researcher also needs to depend largely upon secondary data such as library material and historical records (Phophalia, 2010). Historical research strategy is an appropriate method to use when searching for identification of origin date, evidence of localization and recognition of authorship (Glenn, 2010). It can fill up gaps about knowledge in the past and give useful information and knowledge about the future (Phophalia, 2010).

The research strategy for this method was survey since it aims to making inferences about the population. The study does not require any control of what is happening but instead wants to look at why and how events are occurring in one specific context and the happenings in that context. Because of the previous choice of having a descriptive research design, the survey strategy was the most relevant. The research questions were formulated with what and how, and this made survey strategy the best choice for this research and the most relevant for collecting data for the purpose.
4.5 Data Collection Method

When collecting data, there are several methods that can be used. Which data collection is to be used depends on what kind of research it is (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

One way to collect information is through focus groups. Focus groups are when several respondents are interviewed together about a certain subject that is discussed deeper in the group (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The main purpose is to gain insight by creating an environment where respondents feel enough relaxed to reflect their feeling and behavior at their own pace using their own language and logic (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The focus group is often recorded by the interviewer and normally lasts longer than single interviews. The advantage with having focus groups is that it is easier to generate ideas when talking to others, but at the same time the answers might be bias since the respondents might follow others opinions and might not answer according to their own thoughts. The size of the focus group is normally between 5-15 people (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Doing observations is also one way of collecting data. Observations are about observing the behavior of the studied object. The observation can either be a participant or non-participant observation (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The participant observation, also called ethnography, is when the researcher becomes engaged in a social environment and tries to get a picture of how individuals in this context behave by sharing their way of life (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). When conducting a non-participant observation, the researcher uses an observation schedule when observing and recording the behavior. The schedule decides what behavior to look for and how that behavior shall be recorded. The rules that decide the schedule needs to be as specific and concrete as possible in order for the observers to focus on the aspects of behavior that are relevant for the study (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

When the research aim is to gain deeper insight and focus on specific parts of a case study, Blankenship et al. (1949) state that interviews is a good method to use. When doing an interview the aim is to get information from the respondent about how the respondent behaves and what attitudes, norms, beliefs and opinions exist (Bryman and Bell, 2005). This method requires a meeting between the researcher and the respondents in order to get answers to the questions relevant for the study. Here the possibilities are good to get deep and detailed information, but it is costly and has a quite slow
procedure if there are many respondents which can make the method time-consuming. The wording must be clear so that the respondent gets a clear picture of the subject discussed. With unclear questions the answers might be inaccurate (Blankenship et al. 1949). When it comes to the construction of the data form there should be clarity in the design and a logical flow so that it is simple to follow. Research has shown that with a fewer numbers of words the likelihood for understanding becomes higher with the respondent. Before the questions are presented to the respondents they should be presented for the subject to be prepared for what is coming. The questions must be relevant and formed in a way so the researcher can gain the information desired (Blankenship et al. 1949).

When conducting interviews, they can be either semi structured or unstructured. In semi structured interviews the interviewer asks a number of questions from a general interview guide, where there possibility exists to vary the order of the questions that are generally formulated. In a semi structured interview, the interviewer gets the possibility to ask counter-questions to the respondent in certain questions (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Unstructured interviews are a form of direct personal interview where the interviewer only has a list of subjects or questions to be treated, where the respondent is probed to uncover underlying motivations and feelings to the subject (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The way of asking the questions are relatively informal and the formulation and order of the questions can vary (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Surveys are questionnaires where the respondents answer questions with given alternatives. Using surveys is a low cost method where the researcher can reach a wide distribution of the respondents. The negative aspect is that it needs to be short to not bore the respondent and because of this it can be difficult to gain detailed information (Blankenship et al. 1949). Surveys can either be done on every element of the population, called census surveys, or the survey can be conducted on a representative proportion of the population, called sample surveys (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

Sample surveys were the best method to be used in this paper since there was a large amount of data that was to be analyzed. This design gave the researchers only relevant information from the samples. This was important since the researchers knew what information they wanted and did not have time for sorting out larger amount of irrelevant information. Another reason for conducting surveys is that the researchers did not want to disturb the employees too much when working, so surveys were the quickest way to get information from them without interrupting their work. Interviews would have taken too much time from the employees so surveys were the most appropriate in order to gain the
information needed for the thesis. Questionnaires were the fastest and most suitable method for collecting the data that was needed for the thesis and the amount that was required. The large amount of data collected would not have been gathered as quickly and structured if the method would have been interviews.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT
Measuring theoretical indicators cannot be done without an operationalization, which means turning the theory into measurable variables and definitions. By making the concept measurable the research becomes concrete and possible (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

4.6.1 OPERATIONALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT OF VARIABLES
The concepts to be measured in this research were operationalized in table 4.2 and from each concept survey questions were conducted to ensure that the concept was being measured in a proper way. These questions and their relation to the concepts are shown in table 4.3 and 4.4.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Operationalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand value</td>
<td>Are the attributes, characteristics and values that the brand stands for (Punjaisi and Wilson, 2007)</td>
<td>What the brand stands for and what it is connected with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand citizenship behavior</td>
<td>Is about the intention of each employee to voluntarily perform certain behavioral characteristics outside the expectations of their defined role (Burmann and Zeplin, 2004).</td>
<td>To what extent they perform more than expected in the company to strengthen the brand values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand commitment</td>
<td>It is the committed relationship between the employees and the organization (King and Grace, 2008), and how attached the employees are psychologically to the brand. (Burmann, Zeplin and Riley, 2009).</td>
<td>How emotional attached the employees are and how strong the bonds are to the organization. To what extent the employees can identify themselves with the company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand builders</td>
<td>The employees can be seen as the ones who form the brand by communicating the emotional and functional values externally (De Chernatony, 2001).</td>
<td>If employees talk about the brand values outside the company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>Leaders are those who consistently and repeatedly communicate messages to employees about the brand identity and commitment to living the brand promise (Vallaster and De Chernatony, 2006; Wieseke et al., 2009).</td>
<td>The employees that have the most influence when informing about the brand and its values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
<td>The values, beliefs and norms that should be shared in the organization to make it one cohesive whole (De Chernatony, 2001).</td>
<td>If the employees perceive the brand values in the same way and work towards the same goals. If the actions of the employees are unified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Promise</td>
<td>To simplify the brand, a promise is proposed to customers making them able to appreciate how the brand can enhance their experience. (De Chernatony, 2002)</td>
<td>The values the brand promises its customers, what the brand will deliver and how it will create value for the customers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Operationalization of concepts
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Questions measuring the concept</th>
<th>Questions adopted from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BV1</strong>: Can you explain in three words what you think a brand is?</td>
<td>(King and Grace, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand values</td>
<td><strong>BV2</strong>: What does your organizations’ brand stand for?</td>
<td>(King and Grace, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BV3</strong>: To what extent do you feel you have the knowledge/ skills to do your job in a way that</td>
<td>(Thomson et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>supports what the brand stands for?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BV4</strong>: To what extent do you feel that you have enough knowledge about the brand values in</td>
<td>(Thomson et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>order to deliver them correctly to the customers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BCB1</strong>: Do you do more than expected of you when you get the change, if so, what do you do?</td>
<td>(King and Grace, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand citizenship Behavior</td>
<td><strong>BCB2</strong>: Do you get the information from managers about how to act in certain situations?</td>
<td>(King and Grace, 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BCB3</strong>: My colleagues would help me /support me when I need it even if it is not in their area</td>
<td>(Perks, Kahn and Zhang, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of responsibility.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Commitment</td>
<td><strong>BC1</strong>: Would you take it personally if someone made a negative comment about the company?</td>
<td>(Wieseke et al., 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BC2</strong>: Do you identify yourself with the company?</td>
<td>(Punjasiri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BC3</strong>: When was the last time you heard someone within the company talk about the brand values?</td>
<td>(Thomson et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BC4</strong>: To what extent do you feel emotionally attached to the brand?</td>
<td>(Punjasiri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand builders</td>
<td><strong>BB1</strong>: To what extent do you talk positively about the brand outside the company?</td>
<td>(Wieseke et al., 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BB2</strong>: To what extent do you feel that you are proud to tell others that you are part of the</td>
<td>(Punjasiri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>company?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BB3</strong>: When you talk about the brand outside the company, do you usually say “we” rather than</td>
<td>(Punjasiri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“they”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Questions measuring the concept</td>
<td>Questions adopted from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L1: Is there anyone specific besides the managers that inspire the other employees for a shared vision and understanding of the brand values?</td>
<td>(Wieseke et al., 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L2: Is there any specific employee that informs about the importance of the behavior and their actions in relation to brand values?</td>
<td>(Wieseke et al., 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L3: Is there any specific employee that motivates the people in the organization more than other employees to act according to the brand values?</td>
<td>(Wieseke et al., 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
<td>OC1: To what extent do you feel that all employees work towards the same goals?</td>
<td>(Thomson et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OC2: To what extent do you feel that when someone from another department helps you, you want to return that favor?</td>
<td>(Perks, Kahn and Zhang, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OC3: To what extent do you feel that your opinions are valued and appreciated by other employees and the company IKEA?</td>
<td>(Thomson et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OC4: To what extent do you feel that your participation in company activities is valued and appreciated by other employees and the company?</td>
<td>(Thomson et al., 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand promise</td>
<td>BP1: Do you know what your company as a brand promises its customers?</td>
<td>(Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BP2: Do you feel that you can effectively fulfill these promises?</td>
<td>(Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BP3: To what extent do you feel it is important for you as an employee to understand what has been promised to the customer in relation to the service you provide?</td>
<td>(King and Grace, 2008)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6.2 Questionnaire Design

The survey questionnaire was made offline in Swedish, and the researchers approached the respondents and gave them pre-information about the subject before the respondents started with the survey. The questionnaires were handed out in person to the respondents, with the researchers present if difficulties with the survey would come up and needed to be clarified. The sample that was researched did not have possibilities to daily look at their e-mails or mails at work, and their managers and wished for the researchers to be present in the warehouse to hand out the survey questionnaire.

The structure of questions in surveys can be made in different ways, open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. The difference is the way the respondents can answer. In open-ended questions the respondents answer in their own words, while in closed-ended questions there are alternatives to choose from. There can also be partially closed-ended questions where a common way to conduct them is a closed-ended question followed by an open follow-up question (Bryman and Bell, 2005). In this research closed-ended questions were used with alternatives for the respondents to choose from together with a few open-ended questions. The use of closed-ended questions reduces the variability in the results that may be caused by having different interviewers with different interpretations during the research (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The questionnaire consisted of 24 questions and out of these there were six open-ended questions and the rest were closed-ended questions with Likert-scales. The two first opened-ended questions functioned as introduction questions, to get the respondents interest and introduce the subject of the questionnaire. The third one was constructed with the aim to investigate the employee’s behavior and if they did more than expected of them. It also showed how they defined “more than expected”. The fourth opened-ended question was about how often the employees heard about the brand values. In this question the frequencies were categorized into time intervals.

In some questions the respondents got to answer yes or no questions, in a few of them they could answer with own words and in others there was a Likert-scale on which the respondents had to answer to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the questions. Likert-scales are numbered scales, in this case from number one to seven, where number one is totally disagree and number seven means totally agree, as shown in figure 4.1. The numbers in between measures how much/less the respondent agrees or disagrees with the statement (Bryman and Bell, 2005).
When using Likert-scales it is important to have a consistent scoring procedure to be able to measure high or low value aspects. This requires the categories to be assigned in the same way, positively or negatively. A Likert-scale is easy for respondents to understand due to the fact that it is widely used and has a simple construction. The main disadvantage is that it takes longer to complete since the respondents have to consider how to scale their statements (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Likert-scales helped the researchers to analyze the data since it was easy to code the questions and the answers since all respondents had the same scales and alternatives to answer (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

When doing Likert-scales there are considerations to think about, like how many numbers to use on the scale and the physical form of the scale. Too many categories can confuse the respondents, but for the researcher it is good to have many to be able to make the analysis more detailed. The physical form of a Likert-scale can be vertically or horizontally presented. The numbers can be in boxes, discrete lines or on a continuum (Malhotra and Birks, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Totally agree</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Figure: 4.1 Likert-scale

4.6.3 PRETESTING

Pretesting and pilot studies can be made to ensure that the right thing is being measured and also to make sure that the data collection method is understandable. It also helps the researchers to erase bad questions and rewrite confusing ones. If this is not made respondents may misunderstand questions or not understand them at all and refuse to answer. The consequence of this will be useless and incomplete information (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The pilot study gives the researchers useful information about which questions that are useful and relevant (Yin, 2007), and this is a significant part of the research to ensure that the research is accurate (Phosophalia, 2010).

The survey questionnaire was pretested on experts in the area, more specific professors in marketing research and key persons at the case company, totally five persons evaluated the survey in this study and brought their thoughts on improvements that the researchers took into considerations.
**Pilot study**

A pilot study was conducted to gain background knowledge about the case company to get enough knowledge and information to form the questionnaires. It was conducted through an interview with the person responsible for internal communication at company X, where eleven questions was asked. The session was recorded with a speech dictation device and one of the researchers took notes during the interview about what was being discussed. The information was later transcribed. The interview session lasted for 45 minutes and was made as a pre-study in order to gain enough knowledge about the subject to develop the questionnaires for the investigation later on.

**4.7 Sampling**

When doing research, the collection of data is necessary, and since there are relevant and irrelevant objects, a sample must be pointed out. A sample contains a group of respondents and is a part of the population relevant for the study (Phophalia, 2010). Sampling can be done in two ways; the researchers can look at the whole population, called research the census, or by taking a sample of the population, called sampling (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Due to time and money restrictions, sampling is the one that is more generic to use (Bryman and Bell, 2004). When doing sampling, there are different ways to design sample for a study (Phophalia, 2010):

- **Deliberate sampling**: This sampling design involves a purposive selection of units that represents the population (Phophalia, 2010).
- **Random sampling**: By randomly pointing the sample out, all units in the population have equal probability to be part of the sample (Phophalia, 2010).
- **Systematic sampling**: The units in the population are arranged and picked out from that. This can be numerically, geographically or alphabetically arranged (Phophalia, 2010).
- **Cluster sampling**: The population is grouped into subgroups and one or more of the groups are picked as sample (Phophalia, 2010).

**4.7.1. Sampling Frame**

The sampling frame is according to Malhotra and Birks (2003) a representative group of the target population and in this research it is employees at the organization X with 11,500 employees in Sweden that is the population, but due to time and money restrictions it was not possible to research all elements in the population, which means that a sample study was made. The research was only
conducted on groups of the population in Sweden. The population for this research were hard to calculate since not all employees were relevant for this study. The focus was on investigate the frontline employees, and the managers could not give an exact number of how many frontline employees that worked in Sweden. The selection of sample design in this research was based on accessibility, since the researchers had easiest access to three groups of the population, and therefore cluster sampling was convenient. The groups that represent the sample were employees at the warehouses in south of Sweden, more specifically in Älmhult, Malmö and Helsingborg. The reason for choosing three clusters for the research was that only one cluster would not have been enough to get a broad perspective of the subject.

4.7.2 Sample selection and case company

The total amount of respondents possible relevant for the study were 250 employees in warehouses in Älmhult, Malmö and Helsingborg. A dialogue with the person responsible for internal communication, ended up with the decision of conducting the survey with the researchers present at the organization, handing out the questionnaires to the employees in person. The reason for this was that the employees did not have access to their email on a daily basis, which meant that they could not be reached by us in that way. Also the managers at the warehouses did not want to spend time in managing the surveys at al.

The case company for this study has grown from being a small family business in Sweden in the 20th century, to become what it is today; An international company with partners and stores in 41 different countries, and 131 000 employees worldwide. The organization is specialized on furnishing and interior decorating, delivering the full concept of a home to its customers. Their vision to create “a better everyday life for the many people” is well founded in the core of the company, being cost conscious and value driven, meaning that their prices are made so anyone can afford their products. The company themselves state that the co-workers and employees are their most valuable asset, since they are the base for how the organization does things. They mean that as the organization grows, so do the co-workers. The company was listed as number 20 in “The world’s most attractive employers 2011” (Universum, 2011).
4.8 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The analysis and presentation of data can be made in different ways depending on what methodology approach that was used for collecting the data (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The report must present the subject of matter in a logical way and relate to the problem for the research (Phophalia, 2010).

The data in this research needs to be analyzed in a proper way suitable for quantitative data (Bryman and Bell, 2005). The data from the close-ended questions was coded into numbers that was implemented in the technical advice SPSS, which was a tool that helped the researchers with analyzing the data. The questions with Likert-scales were already numbered and needed therefore no further coding. The questions were coded as in table 4.2 and 4.3 above. The data from the open-ended questions was transcribed.

Sometimes some questions are missing answers due to the fact that the respondent has misunderstood or are unwilling to answer the question (Bryman and Bell, 2005). This risk was minimized in this research since the researchers were present and could clarify possible question marks. The significance levels in the data were measured to ensure the result of the research being correct and valid.

4.8.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics is used to summarize and organize data of measurement (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Nolan and Heinzen, 2011). It is used to describe a large amount of data so it becomes easy to view (Nolan and Heinzen, 2011). The data calculated was the gender classification, age of the employees and years of employment. Each variable was coded into numbers. For instance gender was coded female=1, male=0. The descriptive statistics gives a clear picture of the sample and what is being measured.

4.8.2 ONE SAMPLE T-TEST

The t-test specifies how well the findings from the sample can represent the mean of the population. A one-sample t-test uses a distribution of means to calculate the mean of the population from the sample (Nolan and Heinzen, 2011). To be able to calculate this, a test value had to be stated. In the t-test made in this research the test value was four since the investigation was mostly based on answers on seven pointed Likert-scales, which means that four became the neutral number. Standard deviation shows the variation from the test value, which was four in this research. A low standard deviation tells that the
data is close to the test value (Nolan and Heinzen, 2011). By using t-test in this research the means of the concepts was tested to see if they were higher or lower than the test values.

4.9 QUALITY CRITERIA

In order to know if the measurements have good enough quality and trustworthiness, it needs to have validity and reliability (Yin, 2007; Phophalia, 2010). Validity refers to the degree to which a measurement actually measures what it is supposed to measure (Bryman and Bell, 2005). It also reflects the true differences among the objects being measured (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). Reliability is the degree to which a measurement of an object is reliable or stable (Bryman and Bell, 2005), and to what extent the study is repeatable (Malhotra and Birks, 2003).

4.9.1 CONTENT VALIDITY

Content validity, also called face validity, is how well a measurement construct components actually represent that construct and how well they are understood. Content validity can be assessed by pre-testing it on either experts or a small scale of the population (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Malhotra and Birks, 2003).

In this paper content validity was assessed by letting five experts read through the questionnaire and leaving comments about changes or improvements. The five experts were three professors that know about the subject and two key persons that work in the company.

4.9.2 CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

Construct validity is about how well the concepts are operationalized into measurable variables and how accurately the variables represent the concepts (Bryman and Bell, 2005; Yin, 2007). The critical part is how well the operationalization is conducted. What the researchers can ask themselves to ensure construct validity is why the theoretical questions works on the underlying theory (Malhotra and Birks, 2003). This is connected to the reliability of the research, and this is also what makes the research strong. Construct validity can be assessed by using multiple sources of evidence, called triangulation, letting experts look at it or saving all original transcripts, establishing a chain of evidence (Bryman and Bell, 2005).
Construct validity can be measured through a correlation analysis which has the purpose of providing information about whether the relationship between two or more variables is significant (Phophalia, 2010; Malhotra and Birks, 2003). The significance level tells if the coefficient is applicable on the population and not only on the sample in the research. There is a bigger likelihood that the correlation coefficient is significant if the sample size is big (Bryman and Bell, 2005).

In this paper the construct validity was assessed by sending the operationalization to key persons in the theoretical area and letting them read it and come with propositions about improvements. Every concept also had more than one question measuring it, making sure that the concept was tested with more than one measure. Construct validity was also assessed by a Pearson's correlation test, that show the relationship between the variables.

4.9.3 Reliability

Reliability is the consistency of a measure of a concept, the degree to which a measurement of an object is reliable or stable. Reliability is assessed by repeating the study at a later point in time, making the study repeatable (Bryman and Bell, 2005). Using multiple case studies, interviews or focus groups is also an option of reaching reliability (Yin, 2007). Another option to make the study reliable is by using case study protocols that is a detailed explanation of the steps in the data collection and analysis procedure. To establish and continuously updating a case study database is also an alternative of reaching reliability with a research. (Bryman and Bell, 2005) High reliability minimizes the risk of skew and misleading results and a well-established operationalization helps study become reliable. There should be a possibility to study all details of the methodology and operationalization to be able conduct the study (Yin, 2007).

In order to show the reliability Cronbach’s alpha (α) were calculated. This value should be above 0.6 to be acceptable. The closer it is to 1,0 the more excellent it is. If the value is below 0.6 the result is questionable and should be considered with carefullness (Hair et al. 2003). If some other researcher wishes to repeat our research they are able to do it by following the information in our methodology chapter. This research assessed reliability by having the detailed methodology chapter, which was like a protocol. Calculating Cronbach’s alpha did not give accurate picture of the measurement instrument since this research contains of a mix of open-ended and close-ended survey questions.
4.9.4 **Triangulation**

When gathering information there are principles to be followed to ensure that the research is valid and reliable, such as triangulation, which means to use multiple sources for collecting the data. Using multiple sources contributes to a broader spectrum and creates a consensus of the research where the different sources strengthen each other. There are four approaches to triangulation (Yin, 2007).

- Data triangulation, where the data comes from multiple sources of origin (Yin, 2007).
- Researcher triangulation, where different researchers approach is evaluated and analyzed as different data sources (Yin, 2007).
- Theoretical triangulation, where different perspectives on the same data is being considered, for instance, surveys or interviews can show different respondents opinions (Yin, 2007).
- Methodology triangulation, where different research methods are used (Yin, 2007).

In this research theoretical triangulation is used, since different perspectives of the same data was given from the information the surveys brought. The three researchers made the analysis together to give their different perspectives on the data and in that way create a discussion for a deeper analysis.

Another principle when sampling data is to strengthen the reliability with a chain of evidence. This is based on vision alike legal investigations and consists of letting an observer, or reader, follow the research from the beginning to the end and be able to do this with a logical approach. The observer should also be able to track the different steps back to the research question and understand all scenarios and steps that were taken (Yin, 2007). Since this research was a bachelor thesis the observers were the tutor, the examiner, and also the opponents, all in the same research area.
Chapter Summary

In this chapter the methodology has been presented and for each part choices appropriate for this research were made, as can be seen in figure 4.2. The approach of this research was deductive and quantitative. It consists of descriptive research where both primary and secondary data was used. The strategy appropriate was survey. The data collection method was survey questionnaire with a sample of the population. The quality criterion was discussed and will be further discussed in the following chapters. Next the data will be presented and analyzed.

![Figure 4.2 Summary of Research methodology](image)
5. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter the empirical data is presented. As mentioned, the data was collected from survey questionnaires. The data will be presented with descriptive statistics and a correlation analysis shows the significance of the concepts. The research questions will be answered and analyzed separately.

5.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The quantitative data was collected at three of the warehouses where the possible sample was 250 employees and 129 of them answered the survey, which gave a response rate of 51.6%. The employees asked were the ones facing customers in their work positions. As shown in figure 5.2 the sample consisted of 74 females (57.3 %) and 54 (41.9 %) males, one respondent did not answer the gender question. The average amount of years as employee was 7 years, but there was a big variation in this question. The most frequent age of the respondents was 28 years old, this was only 6.2 % though, which meant that the age varied, this is shown in figure 5.1. The answers that were received from Likert-scales had the value from one to seven, where number one meant totally disagree and number seven meant totally agree.

The means were calculated for the survey questions with Likert-scales and the mean for most of them were all close to six, apart from two question; Question BC1 (Brand Commitment), Would you take it personally if someone made a negative comment about the company? got a lower value than the rest.
with 3.70. BP3 (Brand Promise), *To what extent do you feel it is important for you as an employee to understand what has been promised to the customer in relation to the service you provide?* got a higher value than the others with 6.51. The mean for all questions with Likert-scale can be seen in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 The mean value of the survey questions with Likert-Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BV3 (Brand values)</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>1.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BV4 (Brand values)</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>0.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP2 (Brand Promise)</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>0.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP3 (Brand Promise)</td>
<td>6.51</td>
<td>0.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCB3 (Brand citizenship behavior)</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>1.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC1 (Brand commitment)</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>1.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC2 (Brand commitment)</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>1.565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC4 (Brand commitment)</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>1.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB1 (Brand Builders)</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>0.972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB2 (Brand Builders)</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>1.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC1 (Organizational Culture)</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>1.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC3a (Organizational Culture)</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>0.829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC3b (Organizational Culture)</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>1.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC4a (Organizational Culture)</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>1.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OC4b (Organizational Culture)</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>1.212</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 **Reliability and Validity**

Reliability for the concepts was assessed by looking at the answers of the questions for each concept and if they varied a lot or if the answers were close to each other. The standard deviation shows how much the data varies from the test value and if the answers are scattered. The standard deviation for each concept is close to one, which means that the data for each concept is coherent.

The Brand value concept had answers that were close to each other, which shows that the respondents answered in an equal way and had a mutual understanding about what the questions meant. In the concept Brand Citizenship Behavior the answers are all lending towards positive, which means that
the respondents have answered equal to each other and this indicates that they have a mutual understanding of the questions.

When looking at Brand Commitment the survey had one question that was non-numeric and two with Likert-scales. All of the questions regarding this concept got answers that were towards the negative side, except for one which had a mean of 5.11 that was still close to neutral. This means that they understood the meaning of the questions and the answers of the question support each other.

The two survey questions with Likert-scale in Brand builders that were about the general positive attachment to the brand had similar results, which means the respondents understood the meaning of the questions. The answers of the questions about the concept Leaders were all positive which means that the majority of the respondent answered in a similar way and had a mutual understanding. In the questions about organizational culture the answers were all between four and six, which indicates that the answers are close to each other and not very scattered. This shows a mutual understanding about the questions. The concept Brand promise got answers that were all between five to seven, which means that the respondent have answered the questions in an equal way and perceived the question as intended.

Cronbach’s alpha on each concept is shown in table 5.2. Every question had at least one item that was not numeric which made it slightly more difficult to calculate the alpha since it is normally only calculated for numeric items. The non-numeric items were coded by the researchers so that alpha could be calculated for the concepts but this is something that affected the result of the alpha. The non-numeric items could not be removed since it would leave every concept with only two measures and three measures is the minimum items in a scale to measure a concept (Hair et al. 2003). Since the questions were both numeric and non-numeric, the alpha does not show the accurate reliability of the questions since the alpha could not be calculated in a correct way.

Even though the alpha is low, the answers of the questionnaire were answered in consistency with each other and show that the respondents did understand the questions.
Table 5.2 Cronbach’s alpha (α)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Brand Vaule</th>
<th>Brand Citizenship Behavior</th>
<th>Brand Commitment</th>
<th>Brand Builders</th>
<th>Leaders</th>
<th>Organizational Culture</th>
<th>Brand Promise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>0.783</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.463</td>
<td>0.579</td>
<td>0.765</td>
<td>0.284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 CORRELATION

The Pearson Correlation test in table 5.3 tells if the variables measure the same concept or not. If the coefficient is lower than 0.9 it means that the variables do not measure the same concept and that they do not correlate too highly with each other. In the table it can be seen that all variables are under 0.9 which means that they do not measure the same concept. And by looking at the p-value, which is <0.05 it is shown that the correlations are significant in all of the variables.

Table 5.3 Correlation analysis

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**
5.4 Analysis of Research Questions

Each concept was connected to a research question and mean was calculated for the ones with Likert-scales. This was done to be able to answer the research questions. The standard deviations show how much the answers vary from mean. The test value used when doing the t-test was as mentioned four because on the one to seven scale four is average. A t-test shows if the variation between the means depends on coincidences in the sample or if it has significance. If the test is significant it means it is accurate enough to draw conclusions on the whole population and that the variation is not only due to coincidences in the sample. The value is significance if p-value < 0.05. The test is made with the concepts that have more than one question with Likert-scales.

RQ1: What is the employees’ knowledge about the brand values?

By combining the numeric survey questions for brand value a mean was calculated for the whole concept of brand value. The mean was high, 5.95 on a seven-point scale and the standard deviation 0.86342 which indicates that the respondents answered in a coherent way. Since the mean is higher than neutral and is close to seven it means that the employees consider themselves as having good knowledge about what brand values are and which brand values the organization stands for.

RQ2: What is the employee’s behavior in relation to the brand values?

In survey question BCB1 (Brand citizenship behavior) that was about if the employees do more than what is expected of them, the answer yes got a percentage of 93.5%. In BCB2, if they get information from managers about how to act, 72.2% of the respondents answered yes. The mean value of BCB3, if the colleagues will support and help even outside of their area of responsibility, was 5.82 with a standard deviation of 1.027. By having the majority of the respondents answering yes on the first two questions about brand behavior, and having a mean higher than four on the last survey question, shows that the employees do know how they should behave in a way that supports the brand and what it stands for, since there is a positive result on all three questions. This result can be related to the concept of brand value which also got a high mean and showed that the employees had knowledge about the brand values which a requisite for behaving in a brand supporting way.
RQ³: How committed are the employees to the brand values?

In the case of how committed the employees feel to what the brand stands for, the mean was 4.56. Even though the mean is higher than neutral, it is only slightly higher, which means the positive result is not strong enough to consider the employees strongly committed to what the brand stands for. This can also be supported by looking at the survey question BC1 (Brand Commitment), if they would take it personally if someone made a negative comment about the organization, and survey question BC2, to what extent they identify themselves with the organization. The mean for BC1 was below the test value of four, and the mean for BC2 was 4.82, which was very close to the neutral. By also looking at the question BC3 that was about when they last heard about the brand values, the result in figure 5.3 show that the most frequent answer was on an everyday basis. Even though the majority of the employees heard about the values on an everyday basis, it does not seem to affect their commitment to what the brand stands for, with the mean of 4.56 and standard deviation of 1.227700.

![Image of pie chart showing brand commitment](image-url)

Figure 5.3 Brand Commitment
RQ₄: How positive is the employees’ attachment to the brand?

When looking at the result of the survey questions regarding the employee’s positive attachment to the brand, the mean was 5.8 and a standard deviation of 0.95466. With a mean higher than four and very close to seven it means that the employees are attached to the brand in a positive way since all three questions got a high mean value. This can be seen by looking at the question BB3 (Brand builders), if the employees usually say we rather than they when talking about the organization, where yes got 87.5% of the answers.

RQ₅: How do the employees communicate the brand values within the company?

When looking at the survey questions regarding specific individuals informing about the brand values, the most frequent answer among the employees in all three questions was yes. In the question about if anyone specific inspire the employees besides the managers 80.2% said yes. When asking if there are specific employees that inform about the importance of the behavior in relation to the brand values 57.5% said yes. The question regarding if there are specific employees that motivate the people in the organization more than others, 76.6% said yes. This means that the employees agree that there are specific individuals informing about brand values besides the managers.

RQ₆: How unified are the employees when working towards the same organizational goals?

Regarding the organizational culture and if the employees feel that they all work towards the same goal, the mean was 5.32. With the mean being higher than four the research question got a positive answer, but since the mean is still close to neutral they generally do not seem to feel that they work towards the same goal. This points to the organizational culture not being fully embedded in the organization. The standard deviation was 0.80970.

RQ₇: How well do the employees feel they can deliver the brand promise?
When it comes to the concept brand promise and if the employees know what to deliver the customers in relation to the brand promise, the mean was 6.09, which is a high number on the seven point scale and a standard deviation of 0.67255. With a strong positive mean being higher than neutral, the employees have knowledge about what to deliver to the customers in relation to the brand value. There was 70.5% that answered that they knew what the brand promise was. The table 5.4 below shows the mean values of the concepts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Value</td>
<td>25.646</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>0.86342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Commitment</td>
<td>5.010</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>1.2770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Builders</td>
<td>21.489</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.95466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Culture</td>
<td>18.574</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>0.80970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Promise</td>
<td>34.838</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>0.67255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the outcome of the data from the surveys, where the research questions were presented and answered. The reliability of the study was tested and the validity shows significance of the variables and makes sure that they do not measure the same concept. In the next chapter the conclusions are presented.
6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This final chapter is a conclusion of the results discussed together with theoretical framework. The outcome of the investigation that answers to the purpose is presented followed by a discussion of implications and suggestions for further research.

6.1 DISCUSSION

The aim of this thesis was to investigate how employees, with help of internal branding, perceive and understand their company brand values. This research shows that employees have a good perception and understanding of the organizational brand values, which makes the employees engaged to the brand, according to Foster, Punjaisri and Cheng (2010). Engagement can be created by teamwork and high participation according to Hartnell, Yi Ou and Kinicki (2011), and this is related to this research where the employees felt positively about helping each other even outside of their area of responsibility.

The employees’ knowledge about the brand values are good and the employees state that they know what to deliver in relation to the brand promise. As Mosley (2007) states, a clear understanding of the brand values will lead to a natural brand supporting behavior among the employees when facing customers, and his argument was supported and shown in this research.

The employee’s behavior in relation to the brand values shows that they know how to act aligned with the brand but according to Burmann and Zeplin (2004) brand citizenship behavior is an outcome of living the brand. As the employees in this research are not emotionally involved to the brand the requisites for brand citizenship behavior are not fulfilled since living the brand means employees sharing the same values as the brand. This means that the results in this research go against Burmann and Zeplin’s (2004) findings in their research.

Since the employees do not share the same values as the brand, the employee’s commitment to the brand values are low. They do not feel personally committed to the brand and this means their identification with the organization is weak. Personal identification is an important part of being committed to a brand according to Thomson et al. (1999), Punjaisri and Wilson (2011) and Snell and
White (2009). Many researchers argue that if the employees are committed to the brand they will perceive success and failure of the brand as their own, if they identify themselves with the brand and manage to live the brand (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009; Thomson et al. 1999; King and Grace, 2008). The argument that the researcher’s bring is supported in this research since the lack of commitment to the brand among the employees did not take a negative comment about the organization personally.

The employees are positively attached to the brand and they can be seen as brand builders, because their participation is important for the formation of the brand as De Chernatony (2001) states. This research also shows that the employees are proud of being a part of the brand and representing it even though they do not share the brand values on a personal level.

The employees manage to communicate the brand values within the company by having leaders and co-workers besides the managers that inspire and motivate others. There are also specific individuals within the organization that informs about the brand values, since the most frequent answer about how often they talk about the brand values in the company was every day. Vallaster and De Chernatony (2005) argues that there are others than the managers that should contribute to important information. Having leaders strengthens the possibility to deliver the brand promise (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007), since these are the ones who consistently communicate messages to the employees about the brand values (King and Grace, 2005). As Asif and Sargeant (2000) argues bad communication can lead to misunderstandings and dissatisfaction among the employees. The employees in this research feel that they do deliver the brand promise, which strengthen important function of leaders in an organization.

The employees are not completely unified when working towards the same goals in the organization, which means that the organizational culture cannot be seen as strong. By integrating the employees in the culture the codes of conduct comes naturally instead of being formal bureaucracy (Chow, Haddad and Wingender, 2011). The data from the survey was scattered, and this indicates the codes of conduct are not obvious to the employees and have a need of being more expressed than they are today. This means that they strive for different goals in their work positions, which according to Harris and De Chernatony (2001) has a negative impact on the brand in the long run. Hartnell, Yi Ou and Kinicki (2011) argue that organizational culture makes the organization unified and work towards the same goal. This relationship is proven in this research since the results of organizational culture was not proven very strong and the employees felt that they generally did not work towards the same goal.
If the employees should manage to deliver the brand promise they must have an understanding of the brand values and live the brand according to Thomson et al. (1999). Even though the employees have good knowledge about brand values, the brand promise cannot be delivered completely because the employees do not manage to live the brand.

As Khan (2009) states employees need to live the brand and totally believing in the brand for internal branding to be successful. Since the employees do not manage to live the brand and do not share the brands values internal branding is not fully implemented. Organizational culture is also an important part of internal branding according to Urde, Baumgarth and Merrilees (2011), and this is something that weakens the internal branding in the case company based on our findings.

6.2 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The relationship between brand citizenship behavior and brand commitment that Burmann, Zeplin and Riley (2008) proved was not supported in this research. The two concepts were not as strongly connected to each other in this research, and this means that brand commitment has several underlying factors that affects, and internal branding is more complex than just communicating the brand values to the employees.

6.3 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The focus of this research was to prove the importance of internal branding. The results show that even though the employees have good knowledge about the brand values, internal branding is still necessary to make the employees committed to the brand. Internal branding is not finalized when the values are communicated and understood among the employees, it needs to be more implemented among the employees in their ever-day lives.

The fact that the employees are attached to the brand does not mean that they automatically are committed to it. Even though employees know how to behave in order to deliver the brand promise it does not mean that they are committed to the brand and share the brand values on a personal level. This is something managers could take into considerations when informing about the brand values and the importance of acting out of them.
6.4 LIMITATIONS

The research was a cross-sectional study due to the time frames given. The study was concentrated in the south of Sweden because there was not enough time to investigate all warehouses in Sweden.

The respondents answered the questionnaire during their lunch breaks, and were not informed by their managers that the research was to be made, even though the managers knew about it. This could have affected the results of the questionnaire study with the respondents being stressed and not putting effort into the survey.

Due to the fact that the survey questionnaire consisted of questions that were numeric and non-numeric, it was not possible to calculate the Cronbach’s alpha. By removing the non-numeric questions it would leave concepts with only two measurements and since the minimum is three (Hair et al. 2003) this could not be done either. Since the reliability of the questionnaire could not be assessed by the Cronbach’s alpha, it was instead assessed by looking at the answers and the dispersion of them to see if they are answered in consistency with each other.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As mentioned, the existing literature on internal branding is mostly written from management and consultant perspective (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky and Wilson, 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson, 2011) meaning that there is a need for more academic research about internal branding, since the focus is often on management rather than on the employees.

The study was concentrated to one organization in the furniture industry in Sweden. More research is needed in other industries and also in other countries since parts of the study includes organizational culture and that can differ in other parts of the world.

A recommendation is to do a longitudinal study in order to see changes and improvements over time, since this research only did a cross-sectional study at one point in time. Since the relationship between brand citizenship behavior and brand commitment were not proven strong, studies are needed to investigate how that relationship can be strengthened, and what it takes to make the employees committed to the brand.
Suggestions for further research would be a comparative study to test the relationship between the different concepts and how they affect each other. For instance the link between brand citizenship behavior and brand commitment, since Burmann, Zeplin and Riley’s (2008) research and this research does not prove the same results in the relationship between the two concepts. There is more research needed in why employees are positively attached to what the brand stands for but not personal committed.
REFERENCE LIST


Universum (2011) The Worlds most Attractive Employees 2011
http://www.universumglobal.com/IDEAL-Employer-Rankings/Global-Top-50 [2012-03-31]


APPENDIX 1

ENKÄTUNDERSÖKNING

Hur uppfattar du Företaget X?

Vi är tre studenter från Marknadsföringsprogrammet på Linneuniversitetet som skriver en kandidatuppsats om intern varumärkning. Undersöckningen handlar om hur medarbetare på företaget X upplever företaget de jobbar för. Vi ber därför er att ta er tid att svara på vår enkät som tar ca 5 minuter. Dina svar kommer att behandlas helt anonymt.

Tack på förhand för ditt deltagande!

Man____ Kvinna____ Ålder________

Hur länge har du jobbat på företaget X? ________________

1. Kan du beskriva med tre ord vad du anser att ett varumärke är?

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

2. Vad står företaget X varumärke för tycker du?

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

3. I vilken utsträckning känner du att du har kunskaper om företaget X värderingar för att sköta ditt jobb på ett sätt som förstärker dem?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inte alls</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>Helt och hållet</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

61
4. I vilken utsträckning anser du att du har tillräckligt med kunskap om vad företaget X står för, för att kunna visa det till kunder?

| Inte alls | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Helt och hållet |

5. Vet du vad företaget X som varumärke lovar sina kunder (genom sina värderingar)?

   Ja  [ ]  Nej  [ ]

6. Känner du att du kan uppfylla de löftena till kunderna?

| Inte alls | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Helt och hållet |

7. I vilken utsträckning känner du att det är viktigt att du som anställd förstår vad som är lovat till kunden?

| Inte alls | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Helt och hållet |

8. Gör du mer än vad som förväntas av dig i din arbetsroll när du får chansen?

I sådana fall, vad gör du?

_____________________________________________________________________

9. Får du information av din chef om hur du ska bete dig vid möte med kunderna?

   Ja  [ ]  Nej  [ ]

62
10. I vilken utsträckning känner du att dina arbetskamrater hjälper dig när du behöver det även om det ligger utanför deras ansvarsområde?

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<th>6</th>
<th>Helt och hållet</th>
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</thead>
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11. I vilken utsträckning tar du det personligt om någon talar negativt om företaget X?

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<tr>
<th>Inte alls</th>
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<th>Helt och hållet</th>
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</table>

12. I vilken utsträckning identifierar du dig själv med företaget X?

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<th>Inte alls</th>
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<th>Helt och hållet</th>
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</table>

13. När var senaste gången du hörde någon inom organisationen prata om företaget X värderingar?

_____________________________________________________________________

14. I vilken utsträckning känner du dig känslomässigt engagerad i varumärket företaget X?

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<th>Inte alls</th>
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15. I vilken utsträckning pratar du positivt om företaget X utanför företaget/ jobbet?

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<th>Inte alls</th>
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<th>Helt och hållet</th>
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</table>

16. I vilken utsträckning är du stolt över att berätta för andra att du är en del av företaget X?

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<th>Inte alls</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>Helt och hållet</th>
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</table>
17. När du talar om företaget X utanför företaget, säger du vanligtvis "vi" istället för "dem"?

Ja  [ ]  Nej  [ ]

18. Finns det några specifika individer utöver chefer som inspirerar andra anställda till en att bättre förstå företaget X värderingar?

Ja  [ ]  Nej  [ ]

19. Finns det några specifika anställda som informerar om vikten av att bete sig utifrån företaget X värderingar?

Ja  [ ]  Nej  [ ]

20. Finns det några specifika anställda som motiverar personer i organisationen mer än andra anställda?

Ja  [ ]  Nej  [ ]

21. I vilken utsträckning känner du att alla anställda inom företaget X arbetar mot samma mål?

Inte alls  [1]  2  3  4  5  6  Helt och hållet  [7]

22. Känner du att du vill återgälda tjänsten när någon från andra avdelningar hjälper dig?

Ja  [ ]  Nej  [ ]

23. I vilken utsträckning känner du att dina åsikter är värdesatta och uppskattade av:
2. I vilken utsträckning känner du att ditt deltagande i företagsaktiviteter är värdesatta och uppskattade av:

1) andra medarbetare?

| Inte alls | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Helt och hållet | 7 |

2) av företaget X?

| Inte alls | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Helt och hållet | 7 |

TACK FÖR DITT DELTAGANDE

Emelie, Anna & Azra
APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE

How do you perceive Company X?

We are three students from the Marketing program at Linneaus University in Växjö. We are now writing on our bachelor thesis about internal branding. The research has the aim to investigate how employees at Company X perceive the company they work for. We will be very grateful if you could take the time of approximately 5 minutes and answer our questionnaire. Your answers will be treated totally anonymously.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

Man____ Woman____ Age_____

For how long have you been working at Company X? ________________

1. Can you explain in three words what you think a brand is?

________________________________________________________________________

2. What do you think the brand Company X stands for?

________________________________________________________________________

3. To what extent do you feel you have the knowledge to do your job in a way that supports the brand values?

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<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
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4. To what extent do you feel that you have enough knowledge about the brand values in order to deliver them correctly to the customers?

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5. Do you know what Company X, as a brand, promises its customers (through their brand values)?

Ja [ ] Nej [ ]

6. Do you feel that you can fulfill these promises to the customers?

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7. To what extent do you feel it is important for you as an employee to understand what has been promised to the customer in relation to the service you provide?

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8. Do you do more than expected of you when you get the chance, if so, what do you do?
9. Do you get knowledge/information from managers about how to act in meeting with customers?

Ja [ ] Nej [ ]

10. To what extent do you feel your colleagues would help you when you need it, even if it is not their responsibility area?

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<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
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<th>Totally agree</th>
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</table>

11. To what extent do you take it personal if someone commented negatively about Company X?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
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<th>7</th>
<th>Totally agree</th>
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</table>

12. To what extent do you identify yourself with Company X?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<th>Totally agree</th>
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</table>

13. When was the last time you heard someone within the organization talk about the brand values of Company X?
14. To what extent do you feel emotionally attached to the brand Company X?

<table>
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<th>Totally disagree</th>
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<th>7</th>
<th>Totally agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

15. To what extent do you talk positively about the brand outside the company?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Totally agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

16. To what extent do you feel that you are proud to tell others that you are part of Company X?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Totally agree</th>
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</table>

17. When you talk about Company X outside the company, do you usually say “we” rather than “they”?

Ja ☐ Nej ☐

18. Is there anyone specific, besides the managers, that inspire you as employee to a better understanding of the brand values?

Ja ☐ Nej ☐
19. Is there any specific employee that informs about the importance of the behavior in accordance with the brand values of Company X?

Ja ☐ Nej ☐

20. Is there any specific employee that motivates the employees in the organization, more than other employees, to act in accordance with the brand values of Company X?

Ja ☐ Nej ☐

21. To what extent do you feel that all the employed within Company X works towards the same goal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Totally agree</th>
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</table>

22. Do you feel that when someone from another department helps you, that you want to return that favor?

Ja ☐ Nej ☐

23. To what extent do you feel that your opinions and thoughts are valued and appreciated by:
1) other employees/coworkers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
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<th>7</th>
<th>Totally agree</th>
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2) Company X?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
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<th>Totally agree</th>
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</table>
24. To what extent do you feel that your participation in company activities is valued and appreciated by:

1) other employees/coworkers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Totally disagree</th>
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2) Company X?

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Emelie, Anna & Azra
Linnaeus University – a firm focus on quality and competence

On 1 January 2010 Växjö University and the University of Kalmar merged to form Linnaeus University. This new university is the product of a will to improve the quality, enhance the appeal and boost the development potential of teaching and research, at the same time as it plays a prominent role in working closely together with local society. Linnaeus University offers an attractive knowledge environment characterised by high quality and a competitive portfolio of skills.

Linnaeus University is a modern, international university with the emphasis on the desire for knowledge, creative thinking and practical innovations. For us, the focus is on proximity to our students, but also on the world around us and the future ahead.