

Rethinking Brand Commitment in Internal Branding Models: A Cross-national Validation of a Three-component Model in Germany, China and North America

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There seems to be consensus on the role of brand commitment in internal branding models but overall confusion exists to its affective and cognitive conceptualization. The aim of this research is to add to its clarification over any conceptual confusion. Furthermore, this research attempts to validate whether or not the postulated brand commitment-brand citizenship behavior framework is a universal concept by validating the model among German, Chinese and North American employees of a large automobile manufacturer in Germany.

This research evaluates the dimensionality of brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior and explores cross-country disparity. As the dimensionality of brand commitment and the conceptualization of brand citizenship behavior varies so much as to be unreliable, the author conducted exploratory interviews with senior executives from various organizations listed in the DAX 30 and internal branding consultancies to probe for a holistic IBM model. A semi-structured interview approach was chosen prior to conceptualizing the variance based partial least square and structural equation model (PLS-SEM). The results of the structural relationships are discussed.

Keywords: internal brand management, brand commitment, brand citizenship behavior

INTRODUCTION

The key factors in delivering the brand promise are employees and the strategic importance of the competitive advantage of an organization (Wentzel, Henkel et al., 2010), and the success of organizations depends on their ability to unlock the potential of their employees when collaborating with external and internal stakeholders (Iyer, Davari et al., 2018; Schmidt and Baumgarth, 2018). Staff understanding and commitment are drivers to brand and business performance, and organizations need to fully ensure that employees understand and internalize these values of their brands to the extent that employees are aligned and committed to enacting those (Thomson, de Chernatony et al., 1999; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; Preez and Bendixen, 2015). Engaged, empowered and competent employees delivering the brand promise across all brand touchpoints create a sustainable competitive advantage (Gottschalg and Zollo, 2007; Gautam and Bhandari Ghimire, 2017; Mohajan, 2019) through positive, consistent brand experiences, which are a pivotal source of differentiation and more difficult to imitate than functional characteristics (Mosley 2007). Finding and keeping employees both willing and capable to act on behalf of their organization with authority, integrity and competence constitutes a challenge.

The field of internal brand management understands the role of personnel as the first market of branding initiatives and crucial to the success or failure of an organization. Internal branding attempts to achieve consistency between the external and internal perception of the brand, fosters brand commitment and brand ambassador behavior. It is the “reflection of the values and the realization of the promise of the brand internally and externally (Mahnert and Torres, 2007)”.

Within internal brand management (IBM) research, various models capture different conceptualizations of employee’s brand ambassador behavior as a desirable outcome of internal branding efforts (Wittke-Kothe, 2001; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; King and Grace, 2009; Piehler and Burmann, 2009; Ravens, 2014). While frequently new models and their underlying constructs are introduced into the field of IBM models to explore and explain partial aspects of internal branding (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018; Dechawatanapaisal, 2019), surprisingly, there is little attention to holistic models of IBM capturing antecedents to brand citizenship behavior (BCB). There seems to be consensus on brand commitment (Burmann and König, 2011; Piehler, King et al., 2016) but overall confusion to its affective and cognitive conceptualization (Ravens, 2014; Piehler, King et al., 2016), brand identification (Dechawatanapaisal, 2019) as either part of brand commitment (Zeplin, 2006) or a separate dimension (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Piehler, King et al., 2016) of brand understanding (Xiong, King et al., 2013). The aim of this paper is to clarify any conceptual confusion over brand commitment. Furthermore, this research attempts to validate whether or not the brand commitment-brand citizenship behavior framework is a universal concept by validating the model among German, Chinese, and North American employees of a large automobile manufacturer.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Citizenship Behavior

Coined by Burmann and Zeplin (2004) and leaning on the concept of organizational citizenship behavior, BCB is a central construct that subsumes a number of generic brand or industry-dependent employee behaviors. These behaviors enhance the brand identity and are consistent with the brand promise. The concept of BCB does not distinguish between the different roles staff play within an organization and embodies the conviction that all employees across the entire value chain need to embody the identity of the brand through their behavior. The concept of brand supportive behavior has long been recognized (Wittke-Kothe, 2001; Boyd and Sutherland, 2006; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006; Henkel, Tomczak et al., 2007), but the authors do not define the construct specifically. Meanwhile, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) introduced brand citizenship behavior with subsequent revisions (Maloney, 2007; Burmann, Zeplin et al., 2009; Ravens, 2014) of its multidimensional conceptualization. While different studies agree on the three-dimensional conceptualizations, the exact definition of these dimensions are not agreed upon. Piehler et al. (2016) proposed brand endorsement (i.e. recommendation of the brand to others), brand development (i.e. proactive advancement of the brand) and brand compliance (acceptance of rules and regulations). Ravens (2014) validated the BCB dimensions of helping behavior, brand development, and brand compliance but could not confirm brand endorsement as a dimension of BCB. This study will conceptualize BCB based on Ravens (2014).

***H1:** BCB is a three-dimensional construct of helping behavior, brand acceptance, and brand advancement.*

Brand Commitment

Constitutive to the identification of BCB as a central outcome of internal branding, research indicates brand commitment to be its antecedent (Burmann and Zeplin, 2004; Maloney, 2007). Brand commitment (BC) is inferred directly from relevant organizational commitment (OC) research in organizational behavior and one of the most researched and challenging concepts. Extensive research is devoted to identifying antecedents, modifiers, and consequences of OC insofar that studies have suggested to abandon the term commitment and focus on various concepts instead (Angle and Perry, 1981). High

levels of commitment are associated with the lack of intent to turnover (Bentein, Vandenberg et al., 2005; Vandenberghe and Bentein, 2009), lack of absenteeism (Iverson and Buttigieg, 1999; Cohen and Kirchmeyer, 2005), job satisfaction (Kirkman and Shapiro, 2001; Markovits, 2007; Kumar and Giri, 2009), customer satisfaction (Caruana and Calleya, 1998; Jaramillo, Mulki et al., 2005), and organizational citizenship behavior (Organ and Ryan, 1995; Meyer, Stanley et al., 2002; Riketta and Landerer, 2005). An adaptation in the form of brand commitment found entry into marketing research. Two conceptually different streams of brand commitment exist. The first conceptualization of brand commitment takes an external, consumer-oriented perspective and the second one pursues an internal perspective. Although implied in various studies (King and Grace, 2008) and vague definitions (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky et al., 2009), internal brand commitment received a theoretically sound conceptualization through Burmann and Zeplin (2004). While other conceptualizations of BC received moderate alterations in extended Burmann and Zeplin models, the core definition of BC as the psychological attachment of employees to the brand (Piehler, 2011) remained and continued to receive substantial support in later research (Strödter, 2008; Hartmann, 2010; Esch and Strödter, 2011). While there is consensus on how brand commitment is defined, substantial disagreement over the issues of conceptual taxonomies and brand commitment dimensionality exists. As much as organizational commitment constructs have undergone substantial refinement, ranging from one-dimension to bi-dimension and finally multi-dimension approaches, brand commitment conceptualizations seem to equally evolve and witness a considerable reevaluation.

Meyer and Allen's conceptualization of organizational commitment as a stabilizing force that gives direction to behaviors with three simultaneous mindsets of affective, continuance, and normative commitment is the most dominant operationalization of OC (Westphal and Gmür, 2009) and transfers the economic (Becker, 1960), psychological (Mowday, Porter et al., 1982), and normative schools (Wiener, 1982) into a model. Affective commitment describes an emotional attachment to the organization such that the individual, strongly committed, identifies with, is involved in, and enjoys membership in the organization. Continuance commitment results from the employee's calculation of the costs, economic and social, associated with leaving the organization. Normative commitment concerns employees' feelings of obligation toward the employer. Despite considerable alternations in 1993, 1997, 2002, and 2006, supportive evidence sustains Meyer and Allen's measure of commitment. As for the apprehension by Burmann and Zeplin raised over Meyer and Allen's conceptual focus on remaining organizational members, their concern seems unwarranted; Meyer et al. (2002) see commitment as distinguishable from transaction-based forms of motivation and from target-relevant attitudes.

Various studies building upon Burmann and Zeplin's initial BC conceptualization struggle with the issue of dimensionality (Zeplin, 2006; Giersch, 2008) with Maloney (2007) and König (2010) struggling to verify the two-dimensional structure of Zeplin's O'Reilly and Chatman's OC-based approach. Piehler (2011) changed his brand commitment conceptualization based initially on O'Reilly and Chatman to a Meyer and Allen-based conceptualization (Piehler, King et al., 2016), but as a one-dimensional, affective brand commitment. Piehler et al. note continuance and normative commitment to entail a strong requirement focus and disregard of those two components based on the notion that organizations require more than continued membership. "That is, understanding an employee's intention to stay is important, but the commitment construct in an IBM setting involves defining the factors that contribute to an employee's brand-related behavior. Normative and continuance forms of commitment are unlikely to lead to pro-brand behavior (...) such forms of commitment may be antithetical to BCB," (Piehler et al., 2016:1578). Furthermore, Piehler, King and Grace argue continuance and normative commitment to be external-oriented dimensions of commitment and as such not suited to predict BCB. However, Meyer and Allen point out that organizational commitment is not limited to affective commitment and its depth, and explanatory power is more suitably assessed using all three components. They further postulate that affective, continuance, and normative commitment are not types of commitment but components. Commitment has both affective and cognitive elements. Consequently, a conceptualization of BC as unidimensional construct may not capture the depth of BC. As a consequence of this broadened approach, continuance brand commitment is an essential element of BC capturing cognitive and affective elements

in that it depends on employee's individual feeling of "high sacrifice" and "low alternatives" (Wasti, 2002; Jaros, 2007). This study adopts Meyer and Allen's postulated structure of commitment reflecting three mindsets, a target of commitment being the brand, and affective as much as cognitive elements. Affective brand commitment is defined as the employee's attachment to, identification with, and involvement with the brand. Continuance brand commitment results from an employee's calculation of costs, both economic and social, associated with leaving the brand. Finally, normative commitment concerns an employee's feeling of obligation toward the brand.

H2: Brand commitment is a three-component construct of affective, continuance, and normative brand commitment.

H3: Affective brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB.

H3a: Affective brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB helping behavior

H3b: Affective brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB brand acceptance

H3c: Affective brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB brand advancement

H4: Continuance brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB.

H4a: Continuance brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB helping behavior

H4b: Continuance brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB brand acceptance

H4c: Continuance brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB brand advancement

H5: Normative brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB.

H5a: Normative brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB helping behavior

H5b: Normative brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB brand acceptance

H5c: Normative brand commitment has a significant, positive effect on BCB brand advancement

Method and Data Used

This research evaluates the dimensionality of brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior and explores cross-country disparity. Since there is a lack of studies addressing these research questions, the nature of this research is exploratory. As the dimensionality of brand commitment and the conceptualization of brand citizenship behavior varies so much and could be unreliable, the author conducted exploratory interviews with senior executives from various organizations listed in the DAX 30, as well as three from internal branding consultancies to probe for a holistic IBM model. A semi-structured interview approach was chosen to gain a deeper understanding of internal brand management problems per se and internationally.

Items reflecting antecedents of brand commitment, brand commitment, and brand citizenship behavior were identified. This paper will focus on the latter two. Cross-cultural research exhibits a higher level of complexity (Boyacigiller and Adler, 1991), demanding additional resources and consideration regarding an emic versus etic approach and conceptual equivalence (Berry, 1969; Herche, Swenson et al., 1996). This research employs an etic approach characterized by taking an outside perspective, where behavioral patterns are related to variations in cultural context. It is generally described by extrinsic concepts and categories to draw cross-cultural comparisons (Davidson, Jaccard et al., 1976). Other

concerns arise from construct equivalence, as comparability of constructs across cultures and true score calibration may differ (Riordan and Vandenberg, 1994).

The initial survey from 2009 and 2010 contacted 858 employees of a German automobile manufacturer with 244 questionnaires filled out online (Ravens, 2014:141ff.). A second study is currently in progress and the author expects to add to the longitudinal study by the end of fall 2019. The construct measures apply Likert scales, and all scale items are adopted from existing scales with demonstrated reliability and validity. Brand commitment was measured based on an adapted application of Meyer et al.'s (1993) revised six-item scale of the three-component model. The scales were modified to reflect the internal branding context of the research. Brand citizenship behavior was measured by applying Zeplin's (2006) scale with the exception of brand acceptance, which is measured by applying an adjusted Graham's (1991) scale.

Brand Commitment

Brand commitment is a new concept, which is an attitude-based antecedent of brand citizenship behavior; the scientific community resorts to few theoretical and empirical analyses. At the same time, research draws from extensive organizational commitment analyses, both theoretically and empirically. This research models brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior as a second-order type II model (Jarvis, Mackenzie et al., 2003) with a reflective measurement specification and the direction of causality moving from the construct to the indicators on the first level, and the formative measurement specification with the direction of causality moving from the items to the construct on the second level.

Exploratory factor analysis was used to substantiate the proposed three-component conceptualization of brand commitment with six indicators per component. The extraction method applied is a principal component analysis with a rotation converged in 5 iterations (varimax with Kaiser normalization). An evaluation of the indicator's reliability shows affective brand commitment to be a unidimensional construct after the elimination of one indicator showing a loading below the elimination value of 0.4. The loadings, otherwise, substantiate adequate reliability. All t-values are significant. The average variance extracted, and composite reliability values are above their respective thresholds of 0.5 and 0.7 with an eigenvalue of 2.837 and Stone-Geisser test of 0.508 substantiating the construct's reliability. Continuance and normative brand commitment behavior's construct reliability was equally substantiated by applying the same methodology.

Discriminant validity of all three components is given based on meeting the Fornell and Larcker criterion. Evaluation across the entire sample substantiates brand commitment to be a three-component construct consisting of affective, continuance, and normative brand commitment. Furthermore, the measurement model evaluation of affective, continuance, and normative brand commitment meets the indicator's and construct's evaluation criteria for the German, Chinese, and North American settings after the elimination of one AC item, two CC and NC items. All other indicator and construct evaluation criteria are met and substantiate the universalism of affective, continuance, and normative brand commitment across all subsamples (see Table 1).

Brand Citizenship Behavior

Given the conceptual differences found between Maloney (2007) and Zeplin (2006) and the exploratory nature of the research, both concepts were tested with the intent to verify which of the two three-dimensional conceptualizations of BCB can be substantiated. Similar to brand commitment, there are a limited number of theoretical and empirical analyses of brand citizenship behavior, let alone tested cross-culturally.

Brand citizenship behavior is a type II second-order model. Due to the internal brand management focus of this research, Zeplin's scales are adopted with the exception of three Graham (1991) items for brand acceptance. As with BC, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. The rotation matrix substantiates a three-dimensional structure of BCB across the total sample, but can neither confirm Maloney's nor Zeplin's conceptualization but a mix of both. This survey reconfirmed helping behavior as a separate dimension. The items loading on Zeplin's brand endorsement, which were renamed brand

missionary in Maloney's study, show two items loading on helping behavior and three on brand acceptance. Construct reliability is confirmed for each dimension, with AVE and composite reliability values exceeding their respective mark. In a second step, the construct reliability is confirmed for each subsample, thereby substantiating the reliability of the model.

The brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior measurement models are analyzed further through a series of tests following the procedure of Wold's hierarchical component method examining nomological validity, indicator relevance, and multicollinearity (VIF). Both measurement models met the required evaluation criteria.

Variance-based partial least square and structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was chosen due to its small sample size and due to the nature of BCB and BC being second-order type II models. The results of the structural relationships are shown in Figure 1. PLS-SEM uses two-stage factor approaches to analyze second-order constructs (Ringle, 2004). The results of the structural relationship are shown in Figure 1.

Evaluation of the relationship between brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior across the three groups identifies substantial differences (see Figure 1- lower part). Coefficients of determination, R^2 , vary. Across all evaluations, the German R^2 is lower (0.114) than in the North American (0.388) and Chinese samples (0.466). Affective and normative BC have positive relationships with helping behavior, brand acceptance, and brand advancement, but their relevance differs across regions and the relevance of continuance BC absent in some (refer to Figure 1).

The relationship between affective, continuance, and normative BC displays a pattern across evaluations conducted on the entire sample and on the three separate groups. Affective and normative brand commitment are the central drivers of brand citizenship behavior. Interestingly, results of the BC-BCB behavior constructs among the Chinese and the North American sample deviate from the results obtained across the total sample. Continuance BC shows a positive relationship with all three BCB dimensions among the Chinese group and with brand acceptance among the North American group but none with the German sample. In conclusion, the Chinese sample displays a different pattern from the German and North American samples in that continuance brand commitment and normative brand commitment are the central predictors of BCB. All hypotheses are confirmed.

DISCUSSION

This study extends Burmann and Zeplin's (2004) model, as well as Maloney's (2007), König's (2011) and Piehler's (2011) extension of the internal brand management model. It was tested in Germany, China, and North America.

The findings of this research contribute to an understanding of brand commitment and brand citizenship by adding to the component of affective brand commitment, continuance, and normative brand commitment based on Meyer and Allen's notion that commitment exhibits both affective and cognitive elements. This research provides interesting insights into the interdependencies of the component-dimension relationships. Affective and normative brand commitment share a much stronger relationship with brand citizenship behavior than continuance brand commitment. Continuance brand commitment is, however, an important predictor of brand citizenship behavior in China and, to a lesser degree, in North America. While helping behavior is a dominant component of brand citizenship behavior across all three subsamples, the importance of brand advancement and brand acceptance varies across the groups.

Secondly, the research shows the brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior conceptualization as universal and therefore valid and reliable across Germany, China, and North America. The paper aimed to clarify conceptual confusion and could establish that brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior consist of three distinct components. Furthermore, this research validated Meyer et al.'s understanding of commitment to include continuance and normative commitment. Brand commitment is not limited to affective commitment but a much broader construct than suggested in various studies (Piehler, King et al., 2016).

The scope of this paper is limited to the BC-BCB relationship. A central finding of this study establishes that internal branding strategies need to allow for adaptation to relevant local contexts. While internal branding is a universal concept, the application needs to integrate a local perspective. Future research and a currently ongoing study will analyze the relevance of the various brand commitment instruments to brand commitment. As much as organizations adjust their marketing efforts to local customer requirements, organizations need to develop a better understanding of all the options available to increase employees' brand-aligned behavior.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study shows the following limitations: For one, cross-cultural differences regarding the antecedents of brand commitment are postulated but exceed the scope of this paper. Secondly, the sample size is relatively small and taken from the same company, which may influence the representative nature of the study. Future research will therefore be directed toward validating the same model across a larger sample and from different industries within Germany, China, and North America. The two latter subsamples were relatively small and more international groups should be added to future studies. The first wave of these internal branding studies tends to focus on quantitative cross-sectional analyses. A longitudinal analysis of internal branding would add to the research significantly. Furthermore, the study uses PLS-SEM over covariance-based structural equation modeling due to the small size of the sample. However, PLS has been criticized for being statistically less precise, criticized for overstating a model, and is often referred to as "soft modelling". A larger sample would allow for more conservative quantitative tools such as LISREL.

**TABLE 1
SELECTED RESULTS**

Affective Brand Commitment							
Region	Indicator	Indicator Evaluation Criteria		Construct Evaluation Criteria			
		Loading >0.7 (>0.4)	t-value >1.96 / >1.64	AVE >0.5	Composite Reliability >0.7	Eigen- values >1	Stone-Geisser Q ² >0.1
Germany	BC_AC_1	0.663	12.808	0.505	0.714	2.557	0.525
	BC_AC_3	0.536	5.903				
	BC_AC_4	0.796	15.700				
	BC_AC_5	0.821	43.520				
	BC_AC_6	0.701	10.051				
China	BC_AC_1	0.750	19.515	0.590	0.743	6.277	0.589
	BC_AC_3	0.817	12.979				
	BC_AC_4	0.772	11.999				
	BC_AC_5	0.794	35.526				
	BC_AC_6	0.702	9.067				
North America	BC_AC_1	0.759	18.986	0.551	0.789	3.836	0.589
	BC_AC_3	0.898	11.578				
	BC_AC_4	0.802	11.606				
	BC_AC_5	0.781	30.565				
	BC_AC_6	0.346	8.176				

Continuance Brand Commitment							
Region	Indicator	Indicator Evaluation Criteria		Construct Evaluation Criteria			
		Loading >0.7 (>0.4)	t-value >1.96 / >1.64	AVE >0.5	Composite Reliability >0.7	Eigen-values >1	Stone-Geisser Q ² >0.1
Germany	BC_CC_1	0.785	24.150	0.508	0.798	2.035	0.443
	BC_CC_2	0.802	18.939				
	BC_CC_3	0.756	16.001				
	BC_CC_6	0.447	4.803				
China	BC_CC_1	0.663	7.872	0.508	0.792	4.069	0.513
	BC_CC_2	0.367	2.909				
	BC_CC_3	0.883	50.296				
	BC_CC_6	0.824	21.854				
North America	BC_CC_1	0.477	38.343	0.506	0.797	2.087	0.614
	BC_CC_2	0.858	27.891				
	BC_CC_3	0.644	31.061				
	BC_CC_6	0.804	7.907				
Normative Brand Commitment							
Region	Indicator	Indicator Evaluation Criteria		Construct Evaluation Criteria			
		Loading >0.7 (>0.4)	t-value >1.96 / >1.64	AVE >0.5	Composite Reliability >0.7	Eigen-values >1	Stone-Geisser Q ² >0.1
Germany	BC_NC_1	0.545	6.731	0.607	0.857	2.138	0.612
	BC_NC_3	0.859	40.783				
	BC_NC_4	0.882	54.294				
	BC_NC_5	0.784	22.419				
China	BC_NC_1	0.858	37.527	0.656	0.883	3.166	0.614
	BC_NC_3	0.870	29.910				
	BC_NC_4	0.843	32.767				
	BC_NC_5	0.647	7.823				
North America	BC_NC_1	0.593	7.383	0.554	0.831	2.172	0.513
	BC_NC_3	0.739	2.731				
	BC_NC_4	0.887	51.441				
	BC_NC_5	0.787	20.386				

**TABLE 2
SELECTED RESULTS**

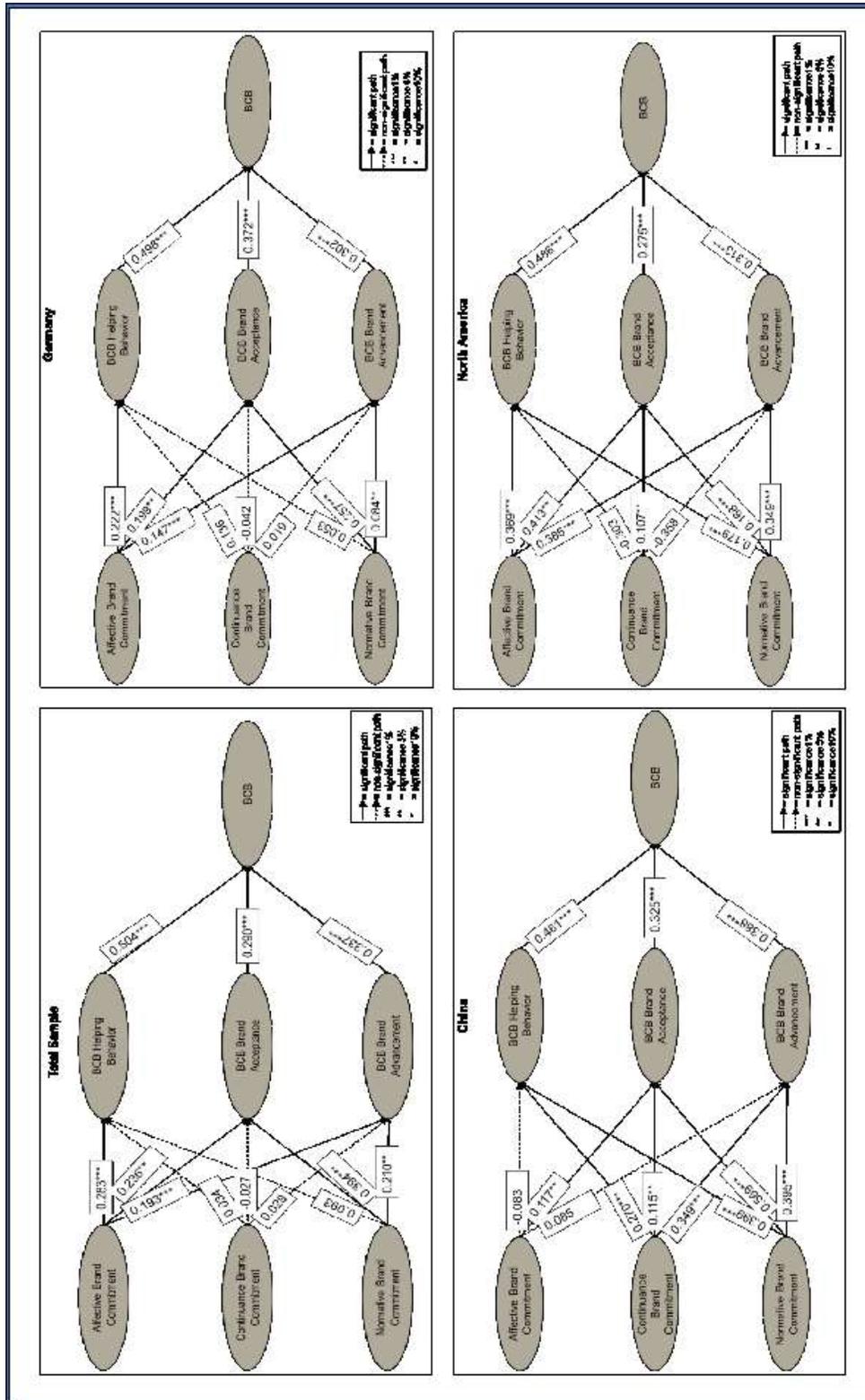
Helping Behavior across the three subsamples							
Region	Indicator	Indicator Evaluation Criteria		Construct Evaluation Criteria			
		Loading >0.7 (>0.4)	t-value >1.96 / >1.64	AVE >0.5	Composite Reliability >0.7	Eigenvalues >1	Stone-Geisser Q ² >0.1
Germany	BCB_BC_1	0.737	14.898	0.601	0.923	4.812	0.585
	BCB_HB_2	0.827	25.508				
	BCB_HB_3	0.873	50.028				
	BCB_HB_4	0.870	48.403				
	BCB_HB_5	0.745	20.245				
	BCB_BM_BE_1	0.762	20.068				
	BCB_BM_BE_2	0.676	11.514				
	BCB_BACC_5	0.685	13.394				
China	BCB_BC_1	0.873	72.659	0.672	0.941	5.404	0.649
	BCB_HB_2	0.893	71.047				
	BCB_HB_3	0.886	39.465				
	BCB_HB_4	0.849	21.534				
	BCB_HB_5	0.730	17.016				
	BCB_BM_BE_1	0.856	29.456				

Helping Behavior across the three subsamples							
Region	Indicator	Indicator Evaluation Criteria		Construct Evaluation Criteria			
		Loading >0.7 (>0.4)	t-value >1.96 / >1.64	AVE >0.5	Composite Reliability >0.7	Eigenvalues >1	Stone-Geisser Q ² >0.1
	BCB_BM_BE_2	0.874	63.229	0.739	0.957	5.916	0.585
	BCB_BACC_5	0.530	7.886				
North America	BCB_BC_1	0.821	14.456				
	BCB_HB_2	0.844	26.945				
	BCB_HB_3	0.914	48.110				
	BCB_HB_4	0.863	44.933				
	BCB_HB_5	0.811	18.711				
	BCB_BM_BE_1	0.842	19.456				
	BCB_BM_BE_2	0.919	12.218				
	BCB_BACC_5	0.860	12.698				

Brand acceptance across the three subsamples							
Region	Indicator	Indicator Evaluation Criteria		Construct Evaluation Criteria			
		Loading >0.7 (>0.4)	t-value >1.96 / >1.64	AVE >0.5	Composite Reliability >0.7	Eigenvalues >1	Stone-Geisser Q ² >0.1
Germany	BCB_BM_BE_3	0.570	7.959	0.569	0.886	4.488	0.417
	BCB_BM_M_1	0.720	13.552				
	BCB_BM_M_2	0.785	22.580				
	BCB_ACC_1	0.849	22.586				
	BCB_ACC_2	0.847	44.221				
	BCB_ACC_3	0.719	19.405				
China	BCB_BM_BE_3	0.661	12.851	0.581	0.891	4.589	0.457
	BCB_BM_M_1	0.662	11.426				
	BCB_BM_M_2	0.768	17.481				
	BCB_ACC_1	0.924	92.642				
	BCB_ACC_2	0.857	48.228				
	BCB_ACC_3	0.655	18.145				
North America	BCB_BM_BE_3	0.444	8.554	0.570	0.884	3.427	0.550
	BCB_BM_M_1	0.821	14.096				
	BCB_BM_M_2	0.868	23.470				
	BCB_ACC_1	0.831	33.455				
	BCB_ACC_2	0.829	42.847				
	BCB_ACC_3	0.645	18.873				

Brand advancement across the three subsamples							
Region	Indicator	Indicator Evaluation Criteria		Construct Evaluation Criteria			
		Loading >0.7 (>0.4)	t-value >1.96 / >1.64	AVE >0.5	Composite Reliability >0.7	Eigen- values >1	Stone-Geisser Q ² >0.1
Germany	BCB_ADV_1	0.732	21.943	0.565	0.885	3.407	0.565
	BCB_ADV_2	0.825	24.990				
	BCB_ADV_3	0.687	9.147				
	BCB_ADV_4	0.848	33.535				
	BCB_ADV_5	0.722	7.996				
	BCB_ACC_4	0.679	17.627				
China	BCB_ADV_1	0.904	68.864	0.675	0.924	4.059	0.675
	BCB_ADV_2	0.926	83.447				
	BCB_ADV_3	0.859	42.212				
	BCB_ADV_4	0.875	48.381				
	BCB_ADV_5	0.727	16.664				
	BCB_ACC_4	0.586	9.401				
North America	BCB_ADV_1	0.879	22.539	0.656	0.912	3.942	0.555
	BCB_ADV_2	0.656	26.441				
	BCB_ADV_3	0.914	9.921				
	BCB_ADV_4	0.791	34.219				
	BCB_ADV_5	0.812	8.075				
	BCB_ACC_4	0.787	17.806				

FIGURE 1
PATH COEFFICIENTS BC – BCB RELATIONSHIP ACROSS TOTAL SAMPLES AND
SUBSAMPLES



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