

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The definition, theoretical modelling and empirical research of front-line service employee corporate identity within a UK national grocery retailer

determining the FLE corporate brand identification construct

Keith Glanfield

2013

Aston University

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THE DEFINITION, THEORETICAL MODELLING AND EMPIRICAL
RESEARCH OF FRONT-LINE SERVICE EMPLOYEE
CORPORATE IDENTITY WITHIN A UK NATIONAL GROCERY
RETAILER : DETERMINING THE FLE CORPORATE BRAND
IDENTIFICATION CONSTRUCT.

Keith Glanfield

Doctor of Philosophy

ASTON UNIVERSITY

December 2012

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THE DEFINITION, THEORETICAL MODELLING AND EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF
FRONT-LINE SERVICE EMPLOYEE CORPORATE IDENTITY WITHIN A UK
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ABSTRACT

Over the past forty years the corporate identity literature has developed to a point of maturity where it currently contains many definitions and models of the corporate identity construct at the organisational level. The literature has evolved by developing models of corporate identity or in considering corporate identity in relation to new and developing themes, e.g. corporate social responsibility. It has evolved into a multi-disciplinary domain recently incorporating constructs from other literature to further its development.

However, the literature has a number of limitations. It remains that an overarching and universally accepted definition of corporate identity is elusive, potentially leaving the construct with a lack of clear definition. Only a few corporate identity definitions and models, at the corporate level, have been empirically tested. The corporate identity construct is overwhelmingly defined and theoretically constructed at the corporate level, leaving the literature without a detailed understanding of its influence at an individual stakeholder level.

Front-line service employees (FLEs), form a component in a number of corporate identity models developed at the organisational level. FLEs deliver the services of an organisation to its customers, as well as represent the organisation by communicating and transporting its core defining characteristics to customers through continual customer contact and interaction. This person-to-person contact between an FLE and the customer is termed a service encounter, where service encounters influence a customer's perception of both the service delivered and the associated level of service quality. Therefore this study for the first time defines, theoretically models and empirically tests corporate identity at the individual FLE level, termed FLE corporate identity.

The study uses the services marketing literature to characterise an FLE's operating environment, arriving at five potential dimensions to the FLE corporate identity

construct. These are scrutinised against existing corporate identity definitions and models to arrive at a definition for the construct. In reviewing the corporate identity, services marketing, branding and organisational psychology literature, a theoretical model is developed for FLE corporate identity, which is empirically and quantitatively tested, with FLEs in seven stores of a major national retailer. Following rigorous construct reliability and validity testing, the 601 usable responses are used to estimate a confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation model for the study. The results for the individual hypotheses and the structural model are very encouraging, as they fit the data well and support a definition of FLE corporate identity.

This study makes contributions to the branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature, but its principal contribution is to extend the corporate identity literature into a new area of discourse and research, that of FLE corporate identity.

KEYWORDS

Corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate associations, service employees, FLE corporate identity

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First I want to thank my supervision team, Professor John Saunders, Professor Heiner Evanschitzky, and Dr John Rudd.

If it were not for Professor Saunders I would not have started the PhD journey and after over 20 years in the marketing profession embarked upon a career in academia. John I cannot thank you enough your on-going coaching, mentoring and wise words since my MBA ten years ago.

To Professor Heiner, thank you for the insight, measured advice and above all enthusiasm and commitment to keeping me on track in the most tricky time of the PhD journey. It has been a real privilege to work with a true professional.

To Dr John Rudd, especially, your insightful leadership throughout these past three years and supporting my transition into academia from industry has shown me the art of the possible. It is true to say that your continual support has significantly contributed to my achievements of the past three years, and to this PhD in particular.

A special note of thanks goes to Professor Mike Jones, the CEO of the Foundation for Management Education (FME), without whom I would not have been able to enter the academic profession. The career direction I'd sought for some time was fulfilled through the award of an FME Fellowship.

My personal thanks also goes to all my friends and colleagues in the Marketing Group at Aston Business School for their continued friendship and support.

Above all I cannot thank enough my partner Sue, without whom completing this PhD would not have been possible. The sacrifices you've made and the support you've given during this process were endless and show you really are a very, very special person. To my parents, all my love and gratitude, this PhD is for you and Sue and for the times at New Warren.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Outline of the research

This chapter presents an introduction to this thesis and is divided into five broad sections. First an overview of the research context of corporate identity is briefly introduced (1.2), followed by the purpose of the study and its research questions (1.3). The objectives, scope and contribution of the research study are then introduced (1.4), followed by the research design (1.5) and an overview of the dissertation structure (1.6).

1.2 The research context - corporate identity

1.2.1 The evolution of the corporate identity construct

Over the past forty years the corporate identity construct has attracted interest from both practitioners and academics alike (Balmer and Grayser, 2006), with a particular interest shown in the early years of the new millennium due to changes in technology, market dynamics and consumer values and behaviour (Melewar, 2003). The influence of the corporate identity construct is widespread, effecting both the internal and external environments of the firm (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). The substantial reach of the corporate identity construct is evidenced by the breadth and depth of its dimensions that span both the internal influence and the external environment impact of corporate strategy, corporate structure, behaviour, corporate culture, corporate design, corporate communications and industry identity (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003).

Melewar and Jenkins (2002) and Melewar (2003) present one of a number of theoretical models that have significantly contributed to the development of the corporate identity literature, with their theory developed over time through the iterative development of theoretical models (Cornelissen et al, 2012). Such models span decades of theoretical development (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Abratt, 1989; Stuart 1988; Alessandri, 2001; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt, 2003; Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006) and cluster into a number of perspectives concerning the construct (Balmer, 1995).

In its broadest sense the role and purpose of corporate identity within strategic management for a firm is to reveal its philosophy and strategy (Leutheser and Kohli, 1997). Corporate identity is a strategic manifestation of an organisation's corporate level vision and mission that is underpinned by the strategies that the corporation employs (Melewar and Woolridge, 2001).

Corporate identity is also considered as a means of presenting the organisation to its stakeholders via corporate personality and corporate image. It is claimed that the internal characteristics of a firm have the potential to form corporate personality (van Reil and Balmer, 1997), where corporate identity is the corporate personality under cultivation (Olins, 1995). From this perspective corporate identity reflects who or what the organisation is, where it is going, how it carries out its business and what it stands for (Otubanjo and Melwar, 2007). As an expression of corporate personality, corporate identity is rooted in what drives and influences an organisation's corporate image, thus presenting the organisation to all its audiences (Ollins, 1995, Cornelissen and Harris, 2001).

Another perspective of the corporate identity construct concerns corporate identity as a representation of the organisation that is communicated through its corporate visual

identity. The corporate visual identity of the organisation, in the form of its branding, logo and strap line (Bartholme and Melewar, 2009, 2011), is not only a dimension of corporate identity but in its own right is considered to be an expression of corporate identity (Melewar and Saunders, 1998a, 1999; Melewar, Saunders and Balmer, 2001). As a set of visual cues, the corporate visual identity is used to represent and symbolise the firm (Abratt, 1989), delivering a consistent and targeted representation of the firm with an emphasis on corporate logos and symbols (Gioia et al 2000).

Finally, and importantly, corporate identity is also considered a multidisciplinary construct. In the literature, individual corporate identity perspectives are not considered by some researchers as independent and mutually exclusive, but interrelated facets of a multi-disciplinary corporate identity construct (Bick et al, 2003; Melewar and Jenkins; 2002, Melewar, 2003). In recognition of its multi-disciplinary nature (Balmer, 1998; Bick et al, 2003; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), corporate identity discourse has recently widened to encompass both social and organisational identity, which was previously the provenance of literature on organisational behaviour and psychology (He and Balmer 2007; Balmer 2008).

1.2.2 Limitations of the corporate identity construct

The richness of the breadth and depth of the corporate identity construct, and the extensive development of the literature, offers many insights into the potential of organisations to develop (Otubanjo and Melewar, 2007). However, the existent corporate identity literature has three main limitations. First, an overarching and universally accepted definition of corporate identity is elusive (Wilkinson and Balmer, 1996; Melewar and Jenkins 2002; Balmer, 2012), leaving the construct with a lack of clear definition (Balmer and Grayser, 2002). Secondly, within the literature the corporate identity construct is overwhelmingly defined and theoretically constructed at the corporate level (Cornelissen and Harris, 2001; Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten,

2006; Cornelissen 2012), leaving the literature without a detailed understanding of its influence at an individual stakeholder level (Melewar et al, 2012). Finally, only a few corporate identity models have been empirically tested (Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006 Suvatjis; de Chernatony, 2005).

1.2.3 The significant benefits of corporate identity for private sector organisations

Three very notable empirically tested corporate identity studies make a significant contribution to the literature in qualitatively testing corporate identity models with practising managers: Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson (2005); Melewar and, Karaosmanoglu (2006); and Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005). Taken together, but importantly focussing on the research of Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson (2005), the multiple benefits to a firm of a strong corporate identity are substantial. These include motivating, recruiting and retaining high quality employees, achieving competitive advantage by influencing consumer perceptions of the company, cultivating good relationships with suppliers and other interdependent businesses, and attracting investment to the firm. Some of these benefits are encapsulated potentially in one of only a very few empirically researched definitions of corporate identity. Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006, p.864) state corporate identity is "*the presentation of an organisation to every stakeholder. It is what makes an organisation unique and it incorporates the organisation's communication, design, culture, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy. It is thus intrinsically related to both the corporate personality and image*". This important contribution to the literature is further supported by the theoretical foundations developed by Melewar and Jenkins (2002) and Melewar (2003) prior to empirical research, in the form of the taxonomy of corporate identity.

1.2.4 The importance of corporate identity stakeholder groups

The benefits of corporate identity not only serve the firm but also extend to the firm's stakeholders. An organisation's corporate identity makes investors aware of an organisation's strategic capabilities in attracting investment (Lippincott and Margulies, 1988; Milgrom and Roberts, 1986). Customers benefit from the security afforded from a strong corporate brand (Balmer, 1995; Markwick and Fill, 1997) and employees are motivated as well through their understanding of the purpose and direction of the organisation, resulting in a greater sense of support for it (Downey, 1987).

In particular within the corporate identity literature employees stand out as a stakeholder group in their role of boundary spanning the organisation and connecting it with its customers (Kennedy, 1977; Stuart, 1998). In doing so, a firm's employees present, in their behaviour, the organisation to customers and external stakeholders (Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006) and through this interaction gain feedback on the performance of the organisation that is then fed back to the organisation's management (Dowling, 1986; Stuart, 1999). However, such relationships between employees and the organisation, and employees and customers, are again substantially limited due to their theoretical development of corporate identity being limited to the organisational level.

There is, however, a growing recognition of the urgency to empirically research the influence of corporate identity at the individual stakeholder level and in particular with an organisation's employees (Melewar et al, 2012; Ollins, 2006).

1.2.5 The significant role of front-line employees

The services marketing literature establishes that front-line service employees deliver the services of an organisation to its customers (Bettencourt and Brown, 2003; Bettencourt, Brown and MacKenzie, 2005) and represent the organisation by communicating and transporting its core defining characteristics to customers through

continual customer contact and interaction (Hartline, Maxham and McKee, 2000). This person-to-person contact between an FLE and the customer is termed a service encounter (Bitner, 1990, Bitner et al, 1994). Service encounters influence a customer's perception of both the service delivered (Johnston, 1995; Lytle et al, 1998) and its associated level of service quality (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Winsted, 2000). The behaviours exhibited by FLEs during service encounters, service quality implementation behaviours, influence customers' perceived service quality (Farrell, Souchon and Durden, 2001), along with customer perceived value and customer satisfaction (Brady and Cronin, 2001).

The importance of FLEs and service encounters to the firm is emphasised not only by FLEs deriving the needs of customers during service encounters, termed customer needs knowledge (Homburg, Wieseke & Bornemann, 2009) but also that FLEs during service encounters influence the profitability of a service firm (Heskett et al, 1994). By receiving support from the organisation, FLEs increase their satisfaction and loyalty (Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991) so that they deliver an appropriate level of service quality to the customer (Heskett, 1994). This in turn generates growth and profitability for the firm from increased customer loyalty and satisfaction (Schlesinger and Zornitsky, 1991; Rucci, Kirn and Quinn, 1998). The service encounter is central to the role of an FLE, as both the FLE and customer co-create the experience of the encounter, influencing service quality and the customer's subsequent satisfaction and loyalty (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). In addition, service encounters serve to reinforce the psychological relationship an FLE develops with the organisation (Homburg, Wieseke & Bornemann, 2009) and provides opportunities for FLEs to support and promote the brand of the organisation (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009).

Therefore, in summary, an FLE's role is central to an organisation in delivering customer satisfaction and loyalty, and in doing so influences the profitability of a service firm.

However, to date, in the corporate identity literature, the corporate identity construct has not been applied at this FLE operating level. The corporate identity construct is not defined, theoretically modelled, nor empirically tested at the FLE level. The potential important influence of corporate identity phenomena upon FLEs, within their operating environment, is also not considered in the services marketing literature.

1.3 The purpose of the study and its research questions

The purpose of this research study is threefold and seeks to:

- RP1 Define corporate identity at an FLE level, termed FLE corporate identity.
- RP2 Theoretically model the FLE corporate identity construct.
- RP3 Operationalize the FLE corporate identity construct by testing the developed theoretical model through empirical research with FLEs.

Given the specific nature of an FLE's environment, viewed in the context of service encounters, it is necessary to review and apply a number of previous studies in the academic literature in order to define and theoretically model FLE corporate identity. In addition to considering the implications of the existent corporate identity and services marketing literature in the development of the FLE corporate brand identity construct, the branding and organisational psychology literature also require review.

1.3.1 Services marketing literature implications for FLE corporate identity

As discussed above, it is endemic within the services marketing literature that FLEs are considered to be a distinct group of employees within an organisation and that they carry out a very specific role within an organisation (Bettencourt and Brown, 2003; Bettencourt, Brown and MacKenzie, 2005). This is evidenced by FLEs' participation in service encounters with customers (Bitner, 1990, Bitner et al, 1994), in developing knowledge of customer needs (Homburg, Wieseke & Bornemann, 2009), in influencing customer perceived value and customer satisfaction (Brady and Cronin, 2001), and in influencing a service firms profitability (Heskett, 1994).

However, the potential for FLEs to be considered as a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group is not yet considered in the services marketing literature nor are the implications of this group membership upon certain FLE behaviours.

1.3.2 Branding literature implications for FLE corporate identity

The branding literature considers that FLEs live the brand as groups of brand evangelists, brand champions or brand ambassadors (Schultz, 2003). Each term may represent a slightly different interpretation of living the brand, however at the core of each is that FLEs transform the vision for the brand into a reality (Berry, 2000). The literature stipulates that FLEs transform the vision for the brand into a reality by exhibiting employee brand building behaviour, where FLEs represent the corporate brand to the customer (Miles and Mangold, 2004). Mohart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p.123) define employee brand building behaviour as an "*employee's contribution (both on and off the job) to an organisation's customer orientated branding efforts*".

FLEs are considered members of a brand community that is made up of a number of stakeholder groups and through which a continuous social process co-creates brand value by stakeholder interaction and stakeholder-based negotiation (Brodie et al,

2009). Such negotiation is based upon a firm working with its internal and external stakeholders and responding to their input. This process of negotiation and dialogue leads to the development of brand meaning and value over time (Gregory, 2007). The corporate brand is dynamically constructed through this social interaction and its value is located in the minds of its stakeholders including employees and customers (Ballantyne and Aitkin, 2007). Brand community members indirectly or directly share consumption and enhance their mutual experiences of the brand; and employees, customers and other stakeholders are, therefore, involved in the development of the brand (Ind and Bjerke, 2007).

Therefore the literature on branding establishes FLEs as members of a brand community centred around an organisation's brand, and potential members of a corporate identity stakeholder group. However it has yet to be established if FLEs are likely to be psychologically influenced by seeing themselves as members of a brand community, a form of social identity (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), and if this form of social identity influences FLEs brand building behaviour. This thesis proposes that this phenomena is manifested in the FLE corporate brand identification construct, the central construct of this studies theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

1.3.3 Corporate identity literature implications for FLE corporate identity

The literature on corporate identity recognises that members of corporate identity stakeholder groups hold sets of mental associations about a company that are termed corporate associations (Brown and Dacin, 1997). Corporate associations concern the types of beliefs, moods, emotions and evaluations about an organisation that are held by individuals and that are mentally associated with the organisation (Dacin and Brown, 2002). According to Brown and Dacin (1997, p.69), corporate associations are *"all the information about a company that a person holds"*. Corporate associations

apply not just to customers but all stakeholders of an organisation, including managers, employees, shareholders, financial analysts, competitors and government entities (Spears, Brown and Dacin, 2006).

Corporate associations are founded upon the associated network memory model (Scholder Ellen, Webb and Mohr, 2006) where mental associations are held individually in a set of memory nodes and links that combine and are retrieved to represent an individual's knowledge of a particular domain (Anderson, 1983; Wyer and Srull, 1989), in this case an organisation or company. Held in the same way to the associated network memory model for brand knowledge, that comprises an individuals' set of brand associations (Keller, 1993; Hoeffler and Keller 2003), corporate associations also vary in strength. Those that are more central, enduring and distinctive are likely to be stronger than those that are less so (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006). Corporate associations influence corporate performance outcomes including multiple stakeholder corporate and product brand evaluations (Gurhan-Canli and Batra, 2004; Mohr and Webb, 2005).

Corporate associations in the corporate identity literature are considered to be held by employees of an organisation in two forms; organisational associations and construed associations (Brown et al, 2006). Organisational associations concern associations about the organisation held by organisational members (Brown et al, 2006). Construed associations concern associations that organisational members believe others outside the organisation hold about the organisation (Brown, et al, 2006).

In the corporate identity literature neither of these sets of corporate associations are applied and empirically researched in the context of an FLE's operating environment, nor to determine if FLEs , through service encounters, construe associations from customers and if in their operating environment FLEs develop organisational

associations. Specifically, the influence of both FLE-construed associations and organisational associations upon an FLE's social identity, concerning their membership of a corporate brand community, is not theoretically discussed nor empirically researched in the corporate identity literature.

1.3.4 The implications of organisational psychology literature for FLE corporate identity

As part of the social interaction during a service encounter between an FLE and a customer FLEs are likely to transmit psychological signals to customers concerning attitudes and behaviours that are specific to the organisation in which they belong (Van Knippenberg, 2000). Such signals are related to the strength of an individual's identification with an organisation based upon their perception of its core characteristics (Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003).

The organisational psychology literature proposes a psychological linkage between an individual and an organisation (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Van Dick et al, 2004). This research concludes that the extent to which individuals experience a psychological linkage with an organisation is likely to drive a number of outcomes related to an individual's job (Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). In terms of FLEs these outcomes include job motivation, in and extra role performance, job satisfaction, absenteeism and turnover (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Riketta, 2005; Podsakoff et al, 2000). Such an organisational identification is broadly defined as the *"extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of the organisation and where identification with an organisation partly answers the question of who am I?"* (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.33).

Although currently the organisational psychology literature examines the influence of organisational identification upon certain FLE behaviours, as stated above, it does not examine the potential psychological influence of an FLE's membership of a brand

community upon their organisational identification or other related psychological phenomena such as organisational commitment.

1.3.5 Research questions

The corporate identity, services marketing, branding and organisational psychology literature, when considered in the context of an FLE's operating environment of service encounters with customers, raises the following sets of research questions for the proposed study:

- RQ1 What dimensions comprise the FLE corporate identity construct?
- RQ2 Are FLEs a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group and do FLEs consider themselves members of a corporate brand community?
- RQ3 Are FLEs psychologically influenced by their membership of a corporate brand community?
- RQ4 Do FLEs construe associations as a result of service encounters with customers and do FLEs hold organisational associations? To what extent do both FLE construed associations and organisational associations influence the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community.
- RQ5 To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community influence their brand building behaviour?
- RQ6 To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community influence the degree to which FLEs are psychologically bound to the organisation and its objectives.

The psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community, referred to in RQ3 to RQ6 above, is the phenomena manifested in the FLE corporate brand identification construct proposed in this study. FLE corporate brand identification is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

1.4 The research study

1.4.1 Research objectives

This study concerns the definition, theoretical modelling and empirical research of the FLE corporate identity construct. The research objectives of this study concern eliciting theoretical and empirical evidence regarding the FLE corporate identity construct. Based upon the potential implications of the corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisation psychology literature upon the FLE corporate identity construct, there are specifically six research objectives that state the theoretical contribution of the study:

- RO1 To extend the corporate identity literature by empirically testing the dimensions of the FLE corporate identity construct, in the form of a theoretical model, by researching and testing the hypothesised relationships between its specific dimensions.

- RO2 To extend the corporate identity, branding and organisational psychology literature by developing a valid and reliable measure of the psychological strength of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, where the corporate brand community represents the corporate identity stakeholder group for FLEs.

- RO3 To extend the branding, services marketing and corporate identity literature in developing a valid and reliable set of scales to measure FLEs construing customers' corporate associations during service encounters. Determining the influence of FLE construed associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.
- RO4 To extend the branding and corporate identity literature by developing a valid and reliable set of scales in order to measure FLE organisational associations in an FLE operating environment. Determining the influence of FLE organisational associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.
- RO5 To extend the services marketing and branding literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established services marketing and branding construct of FLE extra-role brand building behaviour.
- RO6 To extend the organisational psychology literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established organisational psychology constructs of organisational identification and organisational commitment.

An FLEs social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, referred to in RO2 to RO6 above, is the phenomena manifested in the FLE corporate brand identification construct proposed in this study. FLE corporate brand identification is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

1.4.2 The scope of the study

The scope of the proposed study to define, theoretically model and empirically research FLE corporate identity, is contained within the limits of an FLE's operating environment when applying the applicable corporate identity, services marketing, branding and organisational psychology literature to FLE service encounters with customers. As fundamentally FLE corporate identity is not comprehensively addressed in the corporate identity literature, the scope of the research study concentrates upon the fundamental development of the FLE corporate identity construct.

As the FLE corporate identity construct is not currently defined, theoretically modelled or empirically researched it is for this reason that the construct's influence upon customer satisfaction and customer loyalty is not addressed in the study. It is also for this reason that the service-profit-chain implications of FLE corporate identity are not modelled or empirically tested.

The corporate identity literature determines many dimensions of the corporate identity construct when considered at an organisational level. It is not possible within this study to test the influence upon FLEs of all the dimensions of the corporate identity construct, given the vastness of the potential number of independent variables involved.

However, a number of corporate identity phenomena are selected based upon the definition of FLE corporate identity developed in part A of the study's literature review contained in chapter two of this thesis.

It is also not possible to model and test all the likely FLE behavioural and organisational psychology implications of the FLE corporate identity construct. FLE behaviour, whether this be in-role or extra-role behaviours, contain many different dimensions, as do in-role and extra-role brand building behaviours. It is not possible in this study to consider them all. However, the dimensions selected for inclusion in this

study are selected based upon the definition of FLE corporate identity as developed in part A of the literature review contained in chapter two of this thesis.

Finally, the potential psychological consequences of FLE corporate identity upon FLEs are also numerous and likely span the full spectrum of the organisational psychology literature. Given the recent introduction of social identity and organisational identification into the corporate identity literature, the psychological consequences for FLEs of FLE corporate identity are limited to the social psychology domain of organisational psychology, that concerns the psychological consequences of group and organisational membership.

1.4.3 Summary of the research study and its contribution

The proposed study is therefore summarised in table 1.1 below, which details the purpose of the research, the research questions it addresses and in turn the proposed objectives of the research study.

The theoretical contribution of the study to its relevant literature is contained in the form of the study's research objectives contained in the table below.

1.5 Research design

No one research method can be cited as ideal for all data gathering exercises as, all research problems require their own special emphases and approaches, because every marketing research problem is unique in some way (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). Given the purpose of this study is to define, theoretically model and empirically research FLE corporate identity exploratory and descriptive research methods are deployed. Exploratory research is deployed to gain background information into the

Table 1.1 Summary of the proposed research study

Research purpose	
<p>RP1 Define corporate identity at an FLE level, termed FLE corporate identity.</p> <p>RP2 Theoretically model the FLE corporate identity construct.</p> <p>RP3 Operationalize the FLE corporate identity construct by testing the developed theoretical model through empirical research with FLEs.</p>	
Research question sets	Research objectives
<p>RQ1 What dimensions comprise the FLE corporate identity construct?</p>	<p>RO1 To extend the corporate identity literature by empirically testing the dimensions of the FLE corporate identity construct, in the form of a theoretical model, by researching and testing the hypothesised relationships between its specific dimensions.</p>
<p>RQ2 Are FLEs a distinct corporate identity Stakeholder group? Do FLEs consider themselves members of a corporate brand community?</p> <p>RQ3 Are FLEs psychologically influenced by their membership of a corporate brand community?</p>	<p>RO2 To extend the corporate identity, branding and services marketing literature by developing a valid and reliable measure of the psychological strength of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, the corporate brand community representing the corporate identity stakeholder group for FLEs.</p>
<p>RQ4 Do FLEs construe associations as a result of service encounters with customers and to what do FLEs hold organisational associations? To what extent do both FLE construed associations and organisational associations influence the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community?</p>	<p>RO3 To extend the branding, services marketing and corporate identity literature in developing a valid and reliable set of scales to measure FLEs construing customers corporate associations during service encounters. Determining the influence of FLEs' construed associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.</p> <p>RO4 To extend the branding and corporate identity literature by developing a valid and reliable set of scales in order to measure FLE organisational associations in an FLE operating environment. Determining the influence of FLE organisational associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.</p>
<p>RQ5 To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs' membership of a corporate brand community influence their brand building behaviour?</p>	<p>RO5 To extend the services marketing, branding organisational psychology and corporate identity literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity, relating to their membership of corporate brand community, upon the established services marketing and branding constructs of FLE extra-role brand building behaviours.</p>
<p>RQ6 To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community influence the degree to which FLEs are psychologically bound to the organisation and its objectives?</p>	<p>RO6 To extend the services marketing, branding, organisational psychology and corporate identity literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established organisational psychology constructs of organisational identification and organisational commitment.</p>

nature of a research problem, define and clarify terms, develop hypotheses, and establish research priorities, where review of the existent literature is considered an appropriate form of exploratory research (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010; Stuart, 1998, 1999; Alessandri, 2001; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). Whilst based upon an initial proposition or set of hypotheses, descriptive research seeks to identify the frequency of a particular occurrence, or the relationship between two variables, in the main conducted in the form of longitudinal or cross-sectional quantitative research studies (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010).

Therefore, in line with the traditional methodology adopted in the corporate identity literature to developing corporate identity models, the proposed study takes a deductive approach to developing a definition and model of FLE corporate identity (Stuart, 1998, 1999; Alessandri, 2001; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005).

Corporate identity models are developed from existent literature, including existent definitions and models, to arrive at adapted or new models of the construct (Melewar, 2002, 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). In such studies, this exploratory element of the research design is empirically tested by testing the models and the potential relationships between the models constructs via data collection, analysis and interpretation (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005 ; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), thus forming a descriptive element to the research design.

Therefore the research methods, and their objectives, developed for the study are summarised in table 1.2 below and comprise three stages.

Table 1.2 Summary of research methods

Stage	Research method	Source / Sample size	Objectives	Analysis
1	a) Definition development	Services marketing and corporate identity literature.	1) Understand research area, 2) Derive dimensions of FLE corporate identity from the literature 3) Construct definition	1) Scrutinise the proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity, derived from the services marketing literature, against existing corporate identity definitions and models.
	b) Theoretical model development	Corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature.	1) Construct theoretical model 2) Develop individual constructs, including new constructs 3) Develop relationships between constructs	1) Review of the corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature to model FLE corporate identity and to adapt existing scales to measure new constructs.
2	a) Pre-testing of scales developed and questionnaire: <i>Protocols</i>	15 (Front-line service employees)	1) Issues of clarity, engagement, question flow and question length	1) Manual notation
	b) Pretesting of scales developed and questionnaire: <i>Pretest</i>	232 (Front-line service employees)	1) Identification of any wording and scale issues	1) Reliability and validity assessment of the constructs under investigation, including CFA.
3	a) Quantitative data collection	601 (Front-line service employees)	1) Examination of newly adapted scales 2) Examination of stated hypotheses	1) Structural equation modelling

A broader and more in depth discussion of the methodological choices made within this thesis are available in chapter four of this dissertation. This includes presentation of the research constraints that accompanied research access granted by a major national retailer to seven of its stores. The terms of research access precluded qualitative research and a longitudinal study, due to timing and host organisation operational constraints when collecting data from the seven retail stores.

However, in summary, stage 1a consists of characterising an FLE's operating environment by reviewing the existent services marketing literature with the purpose of proposing a series of potential dimensions of a definition for FLE corporate identity.

The five proposed dimensions are scrutinised against existing corporate identity

definitions and models to determine an initial definition of FLE corporate identity. Stage 1b, in reviewing the existent corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature, develops a series of constructs that comprise FLE corporate identity, identifying and hypothesising relationships between the constructs to form a theoretical model of FLE corporate identity. A series of new constructs are proposed, along with their associated measurement scales, in adapting existing established constructs from their respective literature to an FLE corporate identity context. Stage 2a, in the form of a draft questionnaire containing the newly adapted measurement scales, is administered to a small group of 15 FLEs in order to receive direct and instant qualitative feedback on areas such as questionnaire design, clarity and language utilised. Stage 2b, having modified the questionnaire as a result of the feedback received in stage 2a, is administered to a large group of FLEs, 232 in all, in order to assess the reliability and validity of the study's constructs and their associated measurement scales. Finally, in stage 3, structural equation modelling is applied to analyse the data collected from 601 FLEs, in seven retail stores. This allows a statistical examination of the constructs deployed in the study, a thorough investigation of the hypothesised relationships between constructs, and an examination of the goodness-of-fit between the proposed structural model and the data collected. The subsequent analysis of the study's research findings allows for the modification of the initial definition of FLE corporate identity to arrive at a modified definition for the construct.

In summary, the three stages highlighted above focus on three main issues: a) the definition of FLE corporate identity and the construction of a theoretical model for the construct; b) the development and testing of newly adapted measurement scales previously not researched; c) the empirical testing of the FLE corporate identity theoretical model and the hypothesised relationships between its constructs.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured into eight chapters, including this introductory chapter.

1.6.1 Chapter two - Literature Review

In chapter two, the literature review is comprised of two parts. Part A reviews the existent corporate identity, branding, services marketing and corporate psychology literature to define FLE corporate identity. After firstly discussing and characterising corporate identity at a corporate level, and identifying the need to develop the construct at an FLE level, Part A moves on to characterise an FLE's operating environment. The literature in services marketing, branding, organisational psychology and corporate identity, in relation to FLE service encounters with customers, are used to characterise an FLE's operating environment and as a result five potential dimensions are developed for the FLE corporate identity construct. Next the potential five dimensions of FLE corporate identity are scrutinised for support against a set of existing corporate identity definitions and subsequently a set of existing corporate identity theoretical models. Finally, the five proposed dimensions of the construct, along with the conclusions reached for each, are deployed to construct a definition of FLE corporate identity.

Part B reviews the existent corporate identity, branding, services marketing and corporate psychology literature that relate to the three elements of the FLE corporate identity definition developed in Part A, Part B of the literature review develops a set of constructs that comprise FLE corporate identity. These include a new construct of FLE corporate brand identification and two new construct groupings of FLE construed corporate brand equity and FLE organisational associations. FLE corporate brand identification is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

1.6.2 Chapter three - Theoretical Model Development

Chapter three of this dissertation further applies the corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature to develop a theoretical model of the FLE corporate identity construct. The literature is applied to develop a series of hypothesised relationships between the constructs that are proposed to comprise FLE corporate identity in Part B of literature review. A series of ten hypotheses are presented, resulting in a theoretical model that is to be tested through empirical field based research. The FLE corporate brand identification construct is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this dissertation.

1.6.3 Chapter four - Research Methodology

Chapter four presents and justifies a research methodology for the research study. First, the research objectives of the study are presented, relating to the empirical testing of the FLE corporate identity theoretical model, followed by the presentation of the scientific realism philosophical research position to be taken in the proposed study. Next, the study's research design is addressed, and the deployment of combined exploratory and descriptive research methods for the study is justified, along with the deployment of a quantitative research method, and with the benefits, implications and process involved in deploying structural equation modelling. Measurement development and the operationalization of the proposed study are addressed, along with measure reliability and validity. Finally, the validity of structural models is presented and discussed, along with the implications for the study of common method bias, non-response bias and intra-construct correlation.

1.6.5 Chapter five - Data analysis

Chapter five presents the results of the research study described in chapter four. Prior to estimating the study's measurement model, confirmatory factor analyses are

estimated for all constructs within the four main construct groupings. Within these groupings each construct is assessed for scale reliability and construct reliability, with poor performing measurement items extracted in order for each construct's scale to meet the requirements of each. Next each construct's measures are purified to increase Confirmatory Factor Analysis overall goodness-of-fit by disregarding items with excessive standardised residuals and theta-delta modification indices. Finally, discriminant validity is assessed to arrive at a set of constructs and their associated measurement items, which comprise the final measurement model.

Next, the study's quantitative data is successfully tested for having no common method bias, no non-response bias and very low intra-construct correlation. This is followed by the successful estimation of the study's main measurement model, the results of which meet the thresholds set for the structural equation modelling fit indices.

Finally, the study's structural model and its results are reported, including excellent goodness-of-fit indices, which successfully test eight out of nine hypotheses and structural model paths to $p \leq .05$.

1.6.6 Chapter six - Discussion

Chapter six discusses three aspects of the study's research findings. First, the new measurement scales deployed in the research study are discussed, followed by a discussion concerning the study's hypotheses that could not be tested in the study's structural equation model due to insufficient discriminant validity. Each of the eight hypotheses estimated in the study's structural model are then individually addressed, and it is discussed how the findings of each relate to the existent literature.

1.6.7 Chapter seven - Research Implications

Chapter seven presents the theoretical and managerial implications of the research study. First, the chapter presents the research study's implications for and contribution

to four sets of literature: the corporate identity literature, the branding and services management literature, and the organisational psychology literature. Second, the managerial implications for practicing corporate brand marketers are discussed.

1.6.8 Chapter eight - Conclusions

The final chapter concludes the research study by establishing if the study addresses its research questions and if the research study meets the purpose set for it in chapter one. The limitations of the research study are presented, followed by suggestions for future research, and finally the research study is summarised.

CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter two presents the literature review, which is comprised of two parts. Part A (2.2) reviews the existent corporate identity, branding, services marketing and corporate psychology literature to define FLE corporate identity. Part B (2.3) develops a set of constructs taken from the literature that comprise FLE corporate identity. The central construct of FLE corporate identity is the FLE corporate brand identification construct, as depicted in the studies theoretical model presented in table 3.4 of this thesis. A summary of this chapter, along with a set of conclusions, are included in section 2.4. The FLE corporate identity construct is subsequently theoretically modelled in chapter three .

Part A of the literature review concerns developing the dimensions and definition of FLE corporate identity. After firstly discussing and characterising corporate identity at a corporate level, and identifying the need for the development of the construct at an FLE level, Part A moves on to characterise the operating environment of an FLE. The literature in services marketing, branding, organisational psychology and corporate identity, in relation to FLE service encounters with customers, is used to characterise an FLE's operating environment. As a result, five potential dimensions for the FLE corporate identity construct are developed. Next the potential five dimensions of FLE corporate identity are scrutinised for support against a set of existing corporate identity definitions and, subsequently, a set of existing corporate identity theoretical models. Finally the five proposed dimensions of the construct, along with the conclusions reached for each, are deployed to construct a definition of FLE corporate identity.

Part B of the literature review develops a set of constructs for FLE corporate identity that relate to the three elements of the FLE corporate identity definition developed in Part A. This set of new and existing constructs are theoretically modelled in chapter three, to comprise a theoretical model of FLE corporate identity supported with a series of developed hypotheses. The central construct of the FLE corporate identity theoretical model is FLE corporate brand identification, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

Finally, the literature review chapter is summarised and concluded in stating the developed definition of FLE corporate identity, its component constructs and the research gap that is addressed by the proposed study.

2.2 Literature Review part A: The definition of corporate identity at FLE level

Developed definitions and theoretical models for corporate identity are principally developed at the organisational level (Cornelissen and Harris, 2001; Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten 2006). The purpose of this section of the literature review is to develop the dimensions and a definition of corporate identity at the FLE operating level. This is termed FLE corporate identity.

The analysis comprises five steps. The first scopes the corporate identity construct at the organisation level and proposes the development of the construct at the FLE level (2.2.1). Second, by characterising an FLE's operating environment the important contribution FLEs make to the firm is established. In turn five potential dimensions of FLE corporate identity are proposed (2.2.2). Third, the five proposed FLE corporate identity dimensions are scrutinised for support against a set of corporate identity definitions at the organisation level (2.2.3). Fourth, the five proposed FLE corporate identity dimensions are scrutinised for support against ten corporate identity models,

that model corporate identity at the organisation level (2.2.4). Fifth, the five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity, along with the conclusions determined for each, are used to configure a definition of FLE corporate identity (2.2.5). Finally part A of the literature review is summarised and concluded (2.2.6).

2.2.1 The scope of the corporate identity construct (Step1)

2.2.1.1 Corporate identity at the organisational level

The corporate identity construct over the past forty years has attracted interest from both practitioners and academics alike (Balmer and Grayser, 2006), with a particular interest shown in the early years of the new millenium due to changes in technology, market dynamics and consumer values and behaviour (Melewar, 2003). It remains that an overarching and universally accepted definition of corporate identity has been elusive over a number of decades (Wilkinson and Balmer 1996; Melewar and Jenkins 2002), leaving the construct with a lack of clear definition (Balmer and Grayser 2002) but recognising that a set of multiple stakeholders fall within its scope (Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005). However, overwhelmingly the corporate identity construct is defined at the corporate level within the literature (Cornelissen and Harris, 2001; Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006). Many theoretical models have been developed for the construct (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Abratt, 1989; Stuart 1998; Alessandri, 2001; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt, 2003; Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006), with only very few subject to empirical testing (Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Melewar and, Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Suvatjjs and de Chernatony, 2005).

It is recognised that corporate identity is an effective theory to use in the strategic management of the firm, which makes a contribution to the competitive advantage a firm (Gray and Smeltzer, 1985). In addition corporate identity is not only associated with business strategy but also the philosophy of the organisation, corporate culture,

behaviour and corporate design that are not only unique to each organisation but also interdependent (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005). In recognition of its multi-disciplinary nature (Balmer 1998; Bick et al 2003; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Cornelissen et al, 2012) corporate identity discourse has recently widened to encompass social and organisation identity, previously the provenance of the organisational behaviour and psychology literature (He and Balmer, 2007; Cornelissen, Haslam and Balmer, 2007; Balmer, 2008).

2.2.1.2 Revealing an organisation's strategy and philosophy

In its broadest sense the role and purpose of corporate identity is as a tool within strategic management for a firm to reveal its philosophy and strategy (Leutheser and Kohli, 1997), to the extent that corporate identity is a strategic manifestation of an organisation's corporate level vision and mission that is underpinned by the strategies that the corporation employs (Melewar and Woolridge, 2001). Termed the strategic perspective (Balmer, 1995), its intent is to communicate the strategy of a firm through a visual means. However, in a deeper and more pragmatic sense, corporate identity is also cited as a means of making the firm distinguishable from others (Abratt 1989; Gregory and Weichmann, 1999; van Riel and Balmer, 1997). Here the difference between one firm and another is founded in a set of interdependent characteristics that give it specificity, stability and coherence (Moingeon and Ramantsantsoa, 1997).

2.2.1.3 Presentation of the organisation to all its stakeholders

Such internal characteristics, it is claimed, have the potential to form corporate personality (van Riel and Balmer, 1997) where the corporate identity is the corporate personality under cultivation (Olins, 1995). From this perspective corporate identity reflects who or what the organisation is, where it is going, how it carries out its business and what it stands for (Otubanjo and Melewar, 2007). As an expression of corporate personality corporate identity is routed in what drives and influences an

organisation's corporate image, thus presenting the organisation to all its audiences (Olins 1995, Cornelissen and Harris, 2001). Corporate identity therefore requires presentation be made to all its stakeholders irrespective of the perspective that is addressed by its definition. Corporate identity requires presentation no matter whether corporate identity sits within the strategic perspective of the construct (Leutheser and Kohli, 1997; Markwick and Fill, 1997), is routed in the characteristics of the firm that make it different from others through its corporate personality (Olins, 1995) or whether, importantly, it is a set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known, and through which it allows people to describe, remember and relate to it (Melewar, 2003).

2.2.1.4 A representation of the organisation through its corporate visual identity

The visual identity of an organisation, in the form of its branding, logo and strap line (Bartholme and Melewar, 2009), is not only a component part of other definition forms but in its own right is considered to be an expression of corporate identity. As a set of visual cues it is used to represent and symbolise the firm (Abratt, 1989), delivering a consistent and targeted representation of the firm with an emphasis on corporate logos and symbols (Gioia et al, 2000).

2.2.1.5 Corporate identity - A multi-disciplinary construct

During the evolution and development of the corporate identity construct in the literature a number of perspectives have independently developed including, as presented above, the strategic, corporate image and personality and visual identity perspectives. In certain aspects of the literature, such perspectives are not considered to be independent and mutually exclusive but interrelated facets of a multi-disciplinary corporate identity construct (Bick et al, 2003; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003) which combines many of the above themes to define corporate identity (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Corporate identity discourse has recently widened to encompass both social and organisation identity, previously the provenance of the

organisational behaviour and psychology literature (He and Balmer, 2007; Cornelissen et al, 2007; Balmer, 2008). FLE corporate identity is therefore to be developed and considered as a multi-disciplinary corporate identity construct, not a construct that is specifically limited to and routed in one particular corporate identity perspective or theme.

2.2.1.6 The benefits of corporate identity for organisations

As the majority of corporate identity models are yet to be empirically tested, it leaves the benefits of a having a strong corporate identity to be judged, in the main, by theory alone. However there are three very notable exceptions that make a significant contribution to the literature in empirically testing corporate identity models with practising managers by deploying qualitative research (Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Melewar and, Karaosmanoglu, 2006; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). Taken together, but importantly focussing on Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson (2005), the multiple benefits to a firm of a strong corporate identity are compelling. These include motivating, recruiting and retaining high quality employees, achieving competitive advantage by influencing consumer perceptions of the company, cultivating good relationships with suppliers and other interdependent businesses and attracting investment to the firm. Such benefits are encapsulated in one of only a few empirically researched definitions of corporate identity (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006, p.864) that states corporate identity *is "the presentation of an organisation to every stakeholder. It is what makes an organisation unique and it incorporates the organisation's communication, design, culture, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy. It is thus intrinsically related to both the corporate personality and image"*. This important contribution to the literature is further supported by the strength of theoretical foundations developed by the author prior to empirical research (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar 2003).

2.2.1.7 Corporate identity at the stakeholder level

Theoretically the corporate identity of an organisation has a strong influence upon and spans a number of different stakeholder groups. Investors are made aware of an organisation's strategic capabilities attracting investment (Lippincott and Margulies, 1988; Milgrom and Roberts, 1986); customers benefit from the security afforded from a strong corporate brand (Balmer, 1995; Markwick and Fill, 1997); and employees are motivated through their understanding of the purpose and direction of the organisation resulting in a greater sense of support for it (Downey, 1987). However such relationships, yet again, are theorised at the corporate level as part of composite models. The potentially important influence of corporate identity at an individual stakeholder level, especially with an organisation's employees, is yet to be defined, theoretically modelled and empirically researched. This is recognised by Melewar et al (2012), in recognising the potential significant contribution of and urgency for empirical research concerning the influence of corporate identity at the individual stakeholder level, especially with employees.

Therefore as stated in section 1.3 the purpose of this research study is to:

- A) Define corporate identity at an FLE level, termed FLE corporate identity.
- B) Theoretically model the FLE corporate identity construct.
- C) Operationalize the FLE corporate identity construct by testing the developed theoretical model through empirical research with FLEs.

2.2.2 The characteristics of an FLE's operating environment and the five dimensions of FLE corporate identity (step 2).

Step 2 of the definition development process characterises an FLE's operating environment and proposes five dimensions of FLE corporate identity. It does this by reviewing the services marketing, branding, organisational psychology and corporate identity literature relating to an FLE's central role of delivering a service to an

organisation's customers during service encounters. This element of the literature review establishes the significant contribution FLEs make to an organisation and as such the importance of developing an understanding of how the corporate identity construct might be applied at an FLE level.

2.2.2.1 FLEs are a specific internal grouping

FLEs are responsible for the direct and day-to-day delivery of services to customers (Bettencourt and Brown, 2003; Bettencourt, Brown and MacKenzie, 2005) and represent the organisation by communicating and transporting its core defining characteristics to customers through continual customer contact and interaction (Hartline, Maxham and McKee, 2000). This person-to-person contact between an FLE and the customer is termed a service encounter (Bitner, 1990; Bitner et al, 1994). Service encounters influence a customer's perception of both the service delivered (Johnston, 1995; Lytle et al 1998) and its associated level of service quality (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Winsted 2000). The behaviours exhibited by FLEs during service encounters, service quality implementation behaviours, influence customer-perceived service quality (Farrell, Souchon and Durden, 2001) along with customer-perceived value and customer satisfaction (Brady and Cronin, 2001).

Within a retail context, which is the focus of this study, FLEs tend to adopt one of three different service encounter models (Di Mascio, 2010). First, giving customers what they ask for, efficiently and courteously; and secondly, accomplishing their immediate objectives, i.e. meeting sales quotas, with the third option forming a mutually beneficial relationship with customers through problem solving. Irrespective, in a retail setting, the performance of FLEs during service encounters influences customer evaluation of the retailer, that in turn influences store performance in the form of average customer transaction value and sales growth (Maxham, Netemeyer and Lichtenstein, 2008).

More broadly, Heskett et al (1994) propose a causal chain of events that places FLEs in a position to directly influence the profitability of a firm, termed the service-profit chain (SPC). In receiving support from the organisation, FLEs increase their satisfaction and loyalty (Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991) so they deliver an appropriate level of service quality to the customer. This in turn generates growth and profitability from increased customer loyalty and satisfaction (Schlesinger and Zornitsky, 1991; Rucci, Kirn and Quinn, 1998). The service encounter is central, as both the FLE and customer co-create the experience of the encounter influencing service quality and the customer's subsequent satisfaction and loyalty (Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

It is therefore likely that an FLE's role in an organisation is specific as it is centred around service encounters with customers and it influences the profitability of a service firms. Given the importance and specific nature of an FLE's role in an organisation it is therefore proposed that FLEs comprise a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.

2.2.2.2 FLEs are influenced by factors internal to the firm

As set out above, the SPC serves to highlight the importance of firms managing their internal environment to support FLEs, in that there is a chain of cause and effect running from employee behaviour to customer behaviour that effects profits (Rucci, Kirn, and Quinn, 1998). Another services marketing construct, internal marketing, proposes that a number of internal factors are needed to satisfy the needs of employees before the firm can satisfy the needs of its customers (Berry et al, 1976). Increasing FLE job satisfaction improves the service quality received by the customer and by internally managing the fulfilment of the needs of FLEs, customer satisfaction is ensured (Gronroos, 1990). FLEs are a central party in a chain of delivering a service to a customer, in a sequence where an internal supplier delivers a service to an internal customer, who in turn delivers a service to the next internal customer in the chain, finally arriving at the stage where the FLE, through a service encounter, finally delivers

the service to the external customer (Gounaris, 2008). The intended result is that the service provided by FLEs, as a result of the internal services provided to them, is delivered to the customer to a standard of quality that leaves the customer satisfied (Lings, 2004). FLEs therefore require support from the organisation in the form of training, management empowerment and support, internal mass communication, appropriate HR management systems and IT support (Gounaris, 2008). Such internal support influences FLEs to become well attuned to the mission goals and strategies and systems of the organisation, along with developing a strong sense of affective organisational commitment (Mukherjee and Malhotra, 2003). As a result FLEs are more likely to accept an organisation's goals and objectives, and in doing so influence the service quality they deliver (Mukherjee and Malhotra, 2003).

When modelled at the corporate level, corporate identity regards FLEs as spanning the boundary of the firm and positioned in between the firm and its customer and external stakeholders (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Stuart, 1998). FLEs are also an internal audience of an organisation's corporate identity (Alessandri, 2001; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt, 2003; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). It is therefore likely that in addition to the internal support FLEs receive from the internal elements within the SPC and internal marketing constructs, as presented above, the corporate identity of an organisation is also an internal source of FLE influence.

2.2.2.3 FLEs construe the needs of customers and during service encounters

Service encounters are a form of social interaction (Brodie et al, 2009). If the process of interaction is to be successful the identification of the other party's preferences and attitudes, for example between the FLE and the customer, is at the route of its success (Funder, 2003). An accurate identification of all the preferences of all parties is at the core of the concept of marketing (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990) that requires implementation in the interaction between individual FLEs and individual customers

(Liao and Chuang, 2004). In turn, through the interaction between an FLE and a customer, in accordance with the length of the relationship, FLEs develop knowledge of individual customer needs. Termed customer need knowledge, it is “*the extent to which an FLE can correctly identify a customer's given hierarchy of needs; where customer need knowledge is the consistency between a customer's ranking of his or her shopping related needs and the ranking an employee assumes for this customer*” (Homburg, Wieseke & Bornemann, 2009, p.65). Therefore FLEs are not only influenced by phenomena internal to the firm but are also influenced by the service encounter itself, in the form of identifying a customer's hierarchy of needs from their interaction with other customers during service encounters.

Corporate identity, when modelled at the corporate level, considers FLEs to be spanning the boundary of the firm and placed in between the firm and its customer and external stakeholders (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Stuart, 1998). FLEs are placed as an audience of feedback on the organisation's corporate identity from customers and other stakeholders (Stuart, 1999; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). The corporate identity literature stipulates that both employees and customers of an organisation are audiences of an organisation's corporate identity (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003). It is therefore likely that during service encounters FLEs not only develop knowledge of a customer's needs but also construe customers' attitudes towards the organisation's corporate identity.

2.2.2.4 FLEs develop a psychological identification with the organisation

As part of the social interaction during a service encounter between an FLE and a customer, FLEs are likely to transmit psychological signals to customers concerning attitudes and behaviours that are specific to the organisation in which they belong (Van Knippenberg, 2000). Such signals are related to the strength of an individual's identification with an organisation based upon their perception of its core

characteristics (Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail, 1994; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). Their identification is based upon the foundation that group membership of the organisation contributes to an individual's definition of their self. Individuals define themselves both in terms of their own individual unique attributes and the collective attributes of the organisation to which they belong (Haslam, 2004). As a result FLEs potentially adopt the behaviours, attitudes and orientations that are specific to the organisation and become pro-typical of the organisation through their strength of identification (Van Knippenberg and Hogg, 2003).

Despite the differing corporate identity themes and schools proposed in the corporate identity literature, the literature theoretically proposes that an organisation's corporate identity reveals an organisation's strategy and philosophy (Leuthesser and Kohli, 1997; Melewar and Woolridge, 2001), presents the organisation to all of its stakeholders (Olins, 1995; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006) and is a representation of the organisation through its corporate visual identity (van Riel, 1997; Gregory and Weichmann, 1999). In doing so the corporate identity conveys meaning about the organisation and what it stands for to all its stakeholders (Melewar, 2003) and it is therefore likely that an organisation's corporate identity influences the psychological relationship between an FLE and their organisation.

2.2.2.5 FLEs exhibit behaviours during service encounters

During service encounters FLEs exhibit forms of behaviour, termed service behaviours, with the services marketing literature making a distinction between two forms of FLE service behaviours, in-role and extra role behaviours. In-role behaviours concern those specified in job descriptions (Brown and Peterson, 1993; MacKenzie, Podsakoff and Ahearne, 1998). Extra role behaviours are discretionary to the FLE falling outside of the job description (Williams and Anderson, 1991; Ackfeldt and Coote, 2005). However, in addition, it is recognised that the actions of FLEs, as customer contact personnel,

determine the image of a service firm in the minds of customers during their interaction in service encounters and FLEs build the brand of the organisation through their behaviour (Ind, 2003; Miles and Mangold, 2004; Miles and Mangold, 2007). In an FLE context, Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p.123) precisely define employee brand building behaviours as an *“employee’s contribution (both on and off the job) to an organisation’s customer-orientated branding efforts”*. They make a distinction between in-role brand building behaviour and extra-role brand building behaviour. In-role brand building behaviour is defined as *“FLEs meeting the standards prescribed by their organisational roles as brand representatives”* (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009, p.123); whilst extra-role brand building behaviour is defined as *“employee actions that go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand and are discretionary”* (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009, p.123).

The corporate visual identity of an organisation, in the form of its branding, logo and strap line (Bartholme and Melewar, 2009) is in its own right considered to be an expression of corporate identity (Gregory and Weichmann, 1999; Melewar and Saunders, 1998, 1999). In the form of a set of visual cues the corporate visual identity is used to represent and symbolise the company (Abratt, 1989), delivering a consistent and targeted representation of the firm with an emphasis on corporate logos and symbols (Gioia et al, 2000). It is therefore likely that an organisation’s corporate identity influences FLEs brand building behaviour.

2.2.2.6 Summary

Step two of defining FLE corporate identity characterised an FLE’s operating environment using the services marketing, branding, corporate identity and organisational psychology literature that is associated with an FLE’s core function of delivering an organisation’s services to customers through service encounters. The

review of the literature identified five characteristics of the operating environment of FLEs:

- A) FLEs are a specific internal grouping as they deliver an organisation's service to its customers during service encounters, influencing an organisation's profitability.
- B) FLEs are influenced by factors internal to the firm.
- C) FLEs construe the needs of customers during service encounters.
- D) FLEs develop a psychological identification with the organisation.
- E) FLEs exhibit behaviours during service encounters including brand building behaviours.

When the five characteristics of an FLE operating environment are considered in the context of corporate identity at an organisation level, five potential dimensions of FLE corporate identity are identified:

- F) FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.
- G) An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs.
- H) FLEs construe customer attitudes towards the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.
- I) An organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.
- J) An FLE's brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisations corporate identity.

The five characteristics of an FLE's operating environment and the derived five potential dimensions of FLE corporate identity are summarised in table 2.1.

Step 3 tests the five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity for support against a set of existing corporate identity definitions.

2.2.3 Support of the five FLE corporate identity dimensions from existing definitions of corporate identity at the organisational level (Step3).

A number of previous studies analyse an array of definitions within the corporate identity literature either to arrive at a classification for the concept (Balmer, 1995; van Riel and Balmer 1997; Cornelissen and Harris, 2001) or to develop corporate identity models (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003; Alessandri, 2001; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt, 2003). The intention of step three in the process of defining FLE corporate identity is to present an array of definitions used in previous studies (Stuart 1999, Melewar 2003) and identified from the authors' research of the corporate identity literature, applying them to establish their degree of support for the five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity. These definitions are presented chronologically in table 2.2. The results of the analysis are presented in table 2.3 and summarised in table 2.4.

2.2.3.1 FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group (definition support).

The definitions in table 2.2 give evidence that an organisation has a number of corporate identity stakeholder groups (Markwick and Fills, 1997; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006) all of which, to a greater or lesser degree, hold perceptions about the organisation that result from the way in which an organisation presents itself (Olins, 1995). The behaviour of organisational members is central to the presentation of the organisation and the development of the organisation's corporate identity in expressing its distinctiveness and sameness over time (van Riel, 1997). Members of

the organisation present the organisation by deploying the organisation's strategy by in operationalizing the organisation's mission and vision (Melewar and Woolridge, 2001), revealing the organisation's philosophy and strategy through their behaviour (Leuthesser and Kohl, 1997) and in delivering consistent and targeted representations of the firm (Gioia et al, 2000). Therefore as presented above, members of an organisation, its employees, are considered to be an important dimension of corporate identity when defined at the organisational level. Employees' behaviour, when interacting with other stakeholders, is considered to be an essential element of presenting and representing the organisation's corporate identity. The definitions consider employees of an organisation to be a stakeholder group. The definitions do not precisely refer to FLEs, but do infer to their grouping by inferring employees interact with other stakeholder groups, one of which is customers of the organisation. Thus, the conclusion that FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group is supported by the definitions.

It is therefore likely that the set of definitions which define corporate identity at the organisation level support the FLE corporate identity dimension that FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group. Therefore when FLEs are referred to in the remainder of this section, it is automatically implied they are a sub-group of employees.

2.2.3.2 An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs (definition support).

The definitions in table 2.2 give evidence that an organisation's corporate identity exercises internal influence within the firm. Specifically, FLEs are an audience of a number of corporate identity phenomena including an organisation's strategy, structure, culture, corporate communication, behaviour forms and corporate design (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). In particular the corporate visual identity of the

Table 2.1 Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity

	FLEs as a group	Internal influencers of FLEs	External influencers of FLEs	FLEs relationship with the organisation	FLE behaviours
Characteristics of FLE operating environment	FLEs are a specific internal grouping as they deliver an organisation's services to its customers, which contributes to generating an organisation's profit	FLEs are influenced by factors internal to the firm	FLEs construe the needs customers during service encounters.	FLEs develop a psychological identification with the organisation	FLEs exhibit behaviours during service encounters, including brand building behaviours
Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity	FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs' brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.

Table 2.2 Corporate Identity definitions

Reference	Corporate identity definition
Albert and Whetten 1985	What the organisation is
Abratt 1989	A set of visual cues - physical and behavioural - that makes a firm recognisable and distinguishes it from others. These cues are used to represent or symbolise the company.
Olins 1995	The explicit management of all the ways in which the organisation presents itself through experiences and perceptions of all its audiences. The tangible manifestation of a corporate personality. The personality under cultivation.
Leutheser and Kohli 1997	The ways an organisation reveals its philosophy and strategy through communication, behaviour and symbolism
Markwick and Fill 1997	The organisation's presentation of itself to its various stakeholders and the means by which it distinguishes itself from all other organisations
Moingeon and Ramanantsoa 1997	A set of interdependent characteristics of the organisation that give it specificity, stability and coherence
van Riel 1997	The self-presentation of an organisation, rooted in the behaviour of individual organisational members, expressing the organisation's "sameness over time" or continuity, "distinctiveness" and centrality.
Balmer and Soenen 1999	Mind, soul and voice of the organisation. The mind results from conscious decisions, the soul from subjective factors (sub-cultures, corporate values and the voice represents all of the ways the firm communicates.
Gregory and Weichmann 1999	The planned visual elements that distinguish one firm from all others.

Table 2.2 Corporate Identity definitions (continued)

Reference	Corporate identity definition
Gioia et al 2000	The organisation's presentation of itself to its various stakeholders and the means by which it distinguishes itself from all other organisations
Cornelissen and Harris 2001	Corporate identity is an expression of corporate personality.
Melewar and Wooldridge 2001	A strategic manifestation of corporate level vision and mission, underpinned by the strategies that a corporation employs in its operations or production.
Melewar 2003; Melewar et al, 2011	The set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known, and through which it allows people to describe, remember and relate to it.
He and Balmer 2005	What an organisation is
Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006	The presentation of an organisation to every stakeholder. It is what makes an organisation unique and it incorporates the organisation's communication, design, culture, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy. It is thus intrinsically related to both the corporate personality and image.

organisation presents it to FLEs as one of a number of stakeholder groups (Markwick and Fill, 1997) in the form of a set of visual cues that represent and symbolise the company (Abratt, 1989). FLEs are an audience for consistent and targeted representations from the firm via corporate symbols and logos (Gioia et al, 2000). No matter whether the intention is to communicate the organisation's philosophy and strategy (Leutheser and Kohli, 1997), the corporate level mission, vision (Melewar and Woolridge, 2001) or what distinguishes the organisation from others (Gregory and Weichmann, 1999), FLEs are exposed to a set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known. This exposure allows FLEs to describe, remember and relate to the organisation (Melewar, 2003; Melewar et al, 2011).

It is therefore likely that, similar to the internal influence of FLEs by internal service-profit-chain and internal marketing constructs, the set of definitions that define corporate identity at the organisation level supports the FLE corporate identity dimension that FLEs are internally influenced by an organisation's corporate identity

2.2.3.3 FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters (definition support)

An organisation's customers are also considered as an audience of an organisation's corporate identity as a result of their experiences and perceptions of the organisation (Olins, 1995). Customers therefore receive consistent and targeted representations of the firm, with an emphasis on corporate symbols and logos (Gioia et al, 2000). These visual cues represent the uniqueness of the organisation (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), distinguish the organisation from others (Abratt, 1989; Markwick and Fill, 1997; van Riel, 1997) and communicate a set of meanings by which an organisation allows itself to be known (Melewar, 2003, Melewar et al, 2011). As a result customers remember, describe and relate to the organisation (Melewar, 2003, Melewar et al, 2011). Through their experiences with the organisation customers present it to other corporate identity audiences through interaction (Olins, 1995), of which FLEs are an audience, just as FLEs, through their behaviour as organisational

members, express the organisation's distinctiveness (van Riel, 1997) to different stakeholder groups (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006) including customers.

Therefore the definitions suggest that FLEs, as employees and members of an organisation, interact with customers who are an audience of the organisation's corporate identity and an individual stakeholder group. Customers during this interaction also describe the organisation and how they relate to it, providing FLEs with the opportunity to understand the organisation's corporate identity from the customer's perspective. It is therefore likely that the set of definitions that define corporate identity at the organisation level supports the FLE corporate identity dimension that FLEs are in a position to construe customer attitudes towards the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.

2.2.3.4 FLEs develop a psychological identification with the organisation that is influenced by the organisation's corporate identity (definition support)

FLEs, as members of an organisation, develop a set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known, through which FLEs not only remember and describe the organisation, but also relate to it (Melewar 2003, Melewar et al, 2011). This suggests a psychological relationship is developed between the FLE and the organisation, whereby FLEs make conscious decisions about the organisation that influence the way they represent it (Balmer and Soenen, 1998). This mind, soul and voice of the organisation is a function of corporate identity, defining and representing what the organisation is (Albert and Whetten, 1985; He and Balmer, 2005). FLEs as an audience of an organisation's corporate identity are likely to develop an understanding of the organisation by receiving physical and behavioural visual cues about the organisation (Abratt, 1989), the characteristics that give the organisation specificity, stability and coherence (Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997), the organisation's philosophy and strategy (Leutheser and Kohl, 1997) and the corporate level mission and vision in the context of their operational role (Melewar and Wooldridge, 2001). In

stating that the self presentation of the organisation is rooted in the behaviour of its members (Leutheser and Kohl, 1997; van Riel, 1997; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006) draws a connection between this behaviour and the meaning that is drawn from the organisation and the how organisational member relate to it (Melewar 2003; Melewar et al, 2011), which is informed by the cues and environmental stimuli outlined above.

It is therefore likely that the set of definitions which define corporate identity at the organisation level supports the FLE corporate identity dimension that FLEs develop a psychological identification with the organisation that is influenced by the organisation's corporate identity.

2.2.3.5 FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity (definition support).

The definitions in table 2.3 show that an organisation's corporate identity influences FLE behaviour in their day-to-day delivery of an organisation's service to its customers

Corporate identity distinguishes the organisation from others (Abratt 1989; Markwick and Fill, 1997; van Riel, 1997). It is therefore likely that FLEs understand what distinguishes the organisation from others and importantly how this is to be presented to the customer. FLEs as an audience of the firm's strategy and philosophy (Leutheser and Kohli, 1997), are likely to use corporate identity as a guide as to how they operationally implement the firms' strategy (Melewar and Woolridge, 2001). The meaning that is derived from these, and other stimuli, allows FLEs to describe, remember and relate to the organisation (Melewar, 2003, Melewar et al, 2011). The corporate identity thus influences the behaviour of FLEs as they describe and represent it to other stakeholders, including customers.

As part of the consistent and targeted representation of the firm through corporate symbols and logos (Gioia et al, 2000) it is also likely that FLEs understand what is

Table 2.3 Support for the five FLE corporate identity dimensions from existing definitions of corporate identity

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity		FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs' brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Albert and Whetten 1985	What the organisation is	-	Informs FLEs of what the organisation is	-	An understanding of what the organisation is.	-
Abratt 1989	A set of visual cues - physical and behavioural - that makes a firm recognisable and distinguishes it from others. These cues are used to represent or symbolise the company.	Behavioural cues that distinguish the organisation from others, implies it is those who work for the organisation who represent it	Exposure to a set of visual cues in the internal environment and the behaviour of others that will licit what distinguishes the organisation from others.	The cues received from customers during service encounters in terms of what t makes the firm distinguishable from others.	FLEs determine what makes the firm recognisable and distinguishable	FLEs are an audience of these cues. FLEs communicate cues through their behaviour.
Olins 1995	The explicit management of all the ways in which the organisation presents itself through experiences and perceptions of all its audiences. The tangible manifestation of a corporate personality. The personality under cultivation.	Employees are considered as one of a number of corporate identity audiences	The perception of the presentation of the organisation as an internal audience and through their experience of working within the organisation developing an understanding of the corporate personality.	The experience of FLEs and customers when they interact as audiences of an organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	FLEs hold perceptions of the organisation's presentation of itself and develop an understanding of the corporate personality.	FLEs present the organisation embodying the corporate personality.

Table 2.3 continued

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity		FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers' attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs' brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Leutheser and Kohli 1997	The ways an organisation reveals its philosophy and strategy through communication, behaviour and symbolism	Implied as FLEs reveal the organisation to customers through their behaviour.	Receiving communication on and exposure to symbolic references and interaction with others to derive the organisation's philosophy and strategy	Customers develop an understanding of the organisation's philosophy and strategy.	FLEs develop an understanding of the organisation's philosophy and strategy	FLEs are an audience. They revealing the organisation's philosophy and strategy through their behaviour
Markwick and Fill 1997	The organisation's presentation of itself to its various stakeholders and the means by which it distinguishes itself from all other organisations.	Employees are a stakeholder group	FLEs receive the presentation of the organisation and as an audience gain an understanding of what distinguishes it from other organisations.	Customers as a stakeholders group understand what distinguishes the organisation from other organisations.	FLEs develop an understanding of what distinguishes the organisation from others.	FLEs are an audience. The presentation of the organisation by FLE' FLEs demonstrating what distinguishes it from others.
Moingeon and Ramanantsoa 1997	A set of interdependent characteristics of the organisation that give it specificity, stability and coherence	-	Exposure to the operations of the organisation that illicit the characteristics of the organisation	-	An understanding of the characteristics that give it specificity, stability and coherence	FLEs are an audience.

Table 2.3 continued

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity		FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers' attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
van Riel 1997	The self-presentation of an organisation, rooted in the behaviour of individual organisational members, expressing the organisation's "sameness over time" or continuity, "distinctiveness" and centrality.	Organisation members are central to the development of its corporate identity in expressing its sameness over time, distinctiveness etc	The behaviour of other organisational members and their associated presentation of the organisation	Customers are an audience of the behaviour of organisational members that implies interaction.	FLEs present the organisation through their understanding and expression of its distinctiveness and sameness over time	FLEs present the organisation through their behaviour
Balmer and Soenen 1998	Mind, soul and voice of the organisation. The mind results from conscious decisions, the soul from subjective factors (sub-cultures, corporate values) and the voice represents all of the ways the firm communicates.	Implies there is a sub-culture that is the voice of the organisation i.e. FLEs	Exposure to decisions made by the organisation, sub cultures and values along with FLEs being an audience of the voice of the organisation.	-	Implies that there is a relationship between the mind, soul and voice of the organisation and those who work within the firm.	-
Gregory and Weichmann 1999	The planned visual elements that distinguish one firm from all others.	-	Internal exposure to the visual elements of the organisation.	Customers are an audience of this activity and are able to distinguish the organisation from others	-	FLEs are an audience and represent the visual elements.

Table 2.3 continued

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity		FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Gioia et al 2000	The consistent and targeted representations of the firm with an emphasis on corporate symbols and logos	FLEs represent the organisation and are therefore an audience	Exposure to symbols and logos of the organisation, receiving consistent and targeted messages about the firm.	Customers are an audience of corporate symbols and logos.	FLEs' representation of the firm requires an understanding of the emphasis	FLEs are an audience. FLEs represent the firm's logos and symbols.
Cornelissen and Harris 2001	Corporate identity is an expression of corporate personality	-	Exposure to the firm's environment to inform FLEs of the characteristics of the organisation's personality.	-	FLEs understanding of corporate personality	-
Melewar and Wooldridge 2001	A strategic manifestation of corporate level vision and mission, underpinned by the strategies that a corporation employs in its operations or production.	FLEs are the operations function of a service organisation. A	FLEs exposure to the vision and mission of the organisation as applied in the strategy deployed for the FLEs functional area.	-	FLEs develop an understanding of the organisation's mission and vision and strategies.	FLEs are an audience and likely guided by the organisation's vision and mission and functional strategy on how the organisation should be represented.

Table 2.3 continued

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity		FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Melewar 2003; Melewar et al, 2011	The set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known, and through which it allows people to describe, remember and relate to it.	FLEs represent the organisation to customers with the purpose of describing the service organisation so that customers remember and relate to it.	An audience of the company, taking the set of meanings as a basis on which to describe, remember and relate to the organisation.	FLEs interact with customers during service encounters describing the service organisation so that customers remember and relate to it. In turn customers react to this description and feedback to FLEs	The definition proposes people relate with the organisation and therefore have a relationship with the organisation. This relationship is founded by the set meanings an organisation allows itself to be known	FLEs describe and represent the organisation based upon the FLE's relationship with the organisation informed by the meanings by which it wishes to be known by
He and Balmer 2005	What an organisation is	-	Operating within the organisation informs FLEs of what the organisation is	-	FLEs develop an understanding of what the organisation is.	-
Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006	The presentation of an organisation to every stakeholder. It is what makes an organisation unique and it incorporates the organisation's communication, design, culture, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy. It is thus intrinsically related to both the corporate personality and image.	FLEs, are a stakeholder group as they present the organisation's uniqueness within the service encounter communicating the organisation's personality and image to customers.	Customers' feedback of service encounter in relation to their expectation set by what makes the organisation unique, its image and corporate personality.	FLEs and customers interact representing one form of behaviour that presents the organisation to its stakeholder groups	FLEs as an audience of the organisation's communication, design, culture, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy. Develop an understanding of both the corporate personality and image.	FLEs present the organisation's uniqueness through their behaviour communicating the organisation's personality and image.

signified by the visual identity of the organisation, and in turn incorporate such an understanding into how they behave in presenting the organisation to external stakeholders (Olins, 1995). In doing so FLEs are supporting the planned visual elements of the organisation (Gregory and Weichmann, 1999).

It is therefore likely that the set of definitions which define corporate identity at the organisation level supports the FLE corporate identity dimension that FLEs' brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.

2.2.3.6 Summary of step 3 - Support of the five FLE corporate identity dimensions from existing definitions of corporate identity at the organisational level

Step three of the process of defining FLE corporate identity finds that the proposed five dimensions of FLE corporate identity are supported when scrutinised against a set of existing corporate identity definitions. The full results of the analysis are presented in table 2.3 and summarised in table 2.4.

The results presented in tables 2.3 and 2.4 find broad support for the five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity. It is therefore essential that the five proposed dimensions be further scrutinised, in more detail against the existing corporate identity literature. In the next step, step 4, the proposed five dimensions of FLE corporate identity are scrutinised against the content of ten existing corporate identity models that model corporate identity at the corporate level.

2.2.4 Support of the five FLE corporate identity dimensions from existing models of corporate identity at the organisational level (step 4)

Step 4 of defining FLE corporate identity is to scrutinise the proposed five dimensions of FLE corporate identity for support against ten existing corporate identity models. The content of each model, along with its supporting literature, are reviewed to determine

support for each of the proposed five dimensions of FLE corporate identity. Each model is presented, along with its associated results, in Appendices 2a to 2k. The results of the analysis are summarised in table 2.5.

Broadly, corporate identity scholars have taken discourse over recent years into very specific areas of corporate identity research, including raising issues of how corporate identity aligns and interacts with other forms of identity present in other academic disciplines (Cornelissen, Christensen and Kinuthia, 2012; Balmer, 2012), applying corporate identity to new and emerging issues of corporate social responsibility (Vallaster, Lindgreen and Maon, 2012), studying the applicability of the concept in distinct sectors, i.e. higher education (Lindgreen, Maon, and Wilcock, 2012) or, importantly, incrementally developing specific components of corporate identity models (Melewar and Bartolme, 2011). This dissertation, in responding to the need to develop the corporate identity construct at the individual stakeholder level, therefore uses the most cited corporate identity models in the corporate identity literature as presented in Appendix 2a to 2k.

2.2.4.1 FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group (model support) corporate identity stakeholder groups

In reviewing the selected corporate identity models, two specific stakeholder groupings are present, an internal stakeholder grouping and external stakeholder grouping.

Dowling (1986) distinguishes a stakeholder group that is external to the organisation and the target of an organisation's corporate identity effort. Abratt (1989) identifies an internal stakeholder grouping as part of the taxonomy of an organisation's totality of stakeholder groups. Alessandri (2001) makes a clear distinction between a group of stakeholders within the firm, who are an element of the organisation's corporate identity, and a grouping outside the firm, labelled the public, who are exposed to and perceive the corporate identity of the firm. Bick et al (2003), in the construction of their model, present an external stakeholder audience for the organisation's corporate

identity and depict internal stakeholder groups as a set of interactive internal departments. The employees within these departments represent a projected corporate identity.

Indeed, Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) stipulate a very clear distinction between external stakeholders and internal stakeholders. External stakeholders favourably judge the corporate appeal of the organisation based upon its corporate identity, while internal stakeholders have the responsibility of managing and delivering the corporate appeal. Finally, in their model Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p101) also present two corporate broad identity stakeholder groupings, those inside the organisation and the organisation's external stakeholders. They propose that members of the organisation hold a set of mental associations concerning "*who we are as an organisation?*" and "*what does the organisation believe others think of the organisation?*", where as external stakeholders hold a set of mental associations concerning "*what stakeholders think of the organisation?*".

It is therefore likely that corporate identity stakeholder groups cluster into two broad internal and external groupings.

FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group

From the very early development of corporate identity models, an organisation's employees are represented in the majority of models. Kennedy (1977) identifies company personnel as a specific group who hold a perception of the company, as does Dowling (1986), who depicts employees as holding an image of the company. Stuart (1998) distinguishes employees in their own right as holding a view of the organisation's corporate identity. In a further development of the model a year later (Stuart, 1999), employees are considered as a component of corporate identity placed alongside and separated from managers. Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt (2003) make a clear distinction between managers and employees, identifying both as two very

Table 2.4 Support for the five FLE corporate identity dimensions from existing definitions of corporate identity

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity	FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers' attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Definition support	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported
Albert and Whetten 1985	-	√	-	√	-
Abratt 1989	√	√	√	√	√
Olins 1995	√	√	√	√	√
Leutheser and Kohli 1997	√	√	√	√	√
Markwick and Fill 1997	√	√	√	√	√
Moingeon and Ramanantsoa 1997	-	√	-	√	-
van Riel 1997	√	√	-	√	√
Balmer and Soenen 1998	√	√		√	

Table 2.4 continued

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity	FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers' attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Gregory and Weichmann 1999	-	√	-	-	-
Gioia et al 2000	√	√	-	√	√
Cornelissen and Harris 2001	-	√	-	√	-
Melewar and Wooldridge 2001	. √	√	-	. √	√
Melewar 2003; Melewar et al, 2011	. √	. √ .	. √	. √	. √
He and Balmer 2005	-	√	-	√	-
Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006	√	√	√	√	√

distinct stakeholder groups within internal department structures. This trend continues where Melewar (2003), within the taxonomy of corporate identity, distinguishes between management and employee behaviour. Importantly, a further distinction is made by Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) when empirically testing the Melewar (2003) corporate identity taxonomy with practitioners. The study establishes that employee behaviour in interacting with customers is considered by practitioners to be an important factor in representing and communicating an organisation's corporate identity (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). This indicates that not all employees interact directly with customers, only a specific group. Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) further support this in their empirical study, finding that a distinct group of more junior employees regularly interact with customers, who discuss the prevailing internal environment of their organisation with customers and transmit messages about the organisation to bring about a favourable judgement of the corporate appeal from customers.

It is therefore likely that the review of the models of corporate identity at the organisational level indicate FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.

2.2.4.2 An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs (model support) **Internal and external corporate identity environments**

The review of the corporate identity models indicated two corporate identity operating environments, one within the firm and the other external to the firm.

A theme that permeates both Melewar (2003) and Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) is the external and internal nature of individual elements of their corporate identity taxonomy, including corporate communication and corporate design. Certain models, as follow, are definite in highlighting a division between the internal and external corporate identity environments, indicating as part of the model a noticeable boundary between the firm and its external environment. Specifically, Stuart (1999) encloses corporate personality, corporate strategy and corporate identity within an organisational

culture boundary. Alessandri (2001) clearly denotes the firm and how it presents itself as separate from how the firm is perceived by its public in the external environment whilst Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt (2003) and Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) clearly encircle the internal elements of corporate identity within a boundary indicating a reciprocal relationship between the internal and external environments.

It is therefore likely that the review of the models of corporate identity at the organisational level indicate an internal and external corporate identity environment.

The Internal influence of corporate identity upon FLEs

Melewar (2003) argues that employee behaviour is influenced by elements of corporate communication, along with corporate design, corporate structure and corporate culture dimensions of corporate identity (including corporate philosophy, principles, mission and values). In receiving messages from differing forms of corporate communication and exposure to corporate symbols, FLEs form either an image of the firm or a perception of the firm's corporate identity that they in turn represent and present through personal communication with customers and other external stakeholders (Kennedy, 1977; Abratt, 1989). Alessandri (2001) and Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt (2003) depict this process of interaction between an organisation's corporate identity and its internal environment. The important empirical work of Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) models corporate identity from a practitioner perspective, evidencing the relationship between an organisation's mission, vision and values, and employee behaviour, where employee behaviour communicates an organisation's corporate identity.

The internal influence of corporate visual identity

Melewar (2003) states that the corporate structure, and in particular its sub-dimension of corporate brand structure, is a key component of corporate identity and that corporate brand structures are the mix of corporate, divisional and product names used in an organisation's set of brands. Founded upon the author's prior research with

Saunders (see section 2.3.1.3), Melewar (2003. p.201), indicates that an organisation's corporate visual identity, "*comprises the organisation's name, slogan, logo type and/or symbol, typography and colour*", which projects the organisation's "*quality, prestige and style to stakeholders*". In the Stuart's (1998) corporate identity model an employee's view of corporate identity is directly related to the organisation's corporate symbols. Alessandri (2001) combines corporate service behaviour and the visual presentation of the organisation (logo, tagline, color palette and architecture) into a single corporate identity that is projected to external stakeholders. Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005), on the other hand, also establish a direct relationship between an organisation's corporate visual identity and company staff who represent it to an organisation's customers.

It is therefore likely, that an organisation's corporate visual identity is an important internal corporate identity influence upon FLEs.

The organisational associations of FLEs

In their model of corporate identity, Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p.100), propose that members of an organisation hold a variety of associations with respect to an organisation, which answers the *question "who are we as an organisation?"*

These associations, termed organisational associations, conveyed through an organisation's corporate identity, serve as the reality of the organisation for the individual member of the organisation holding them. A number of central and enduring associations, once internalised, "*form a basis for self referential meaning, constituting an organisationally relevant but individually held, identity for the organisation member*" (Brown et al, 2006,p103)

It is therefore likely that the internal influence of an organisation's corporate identity upon FLEs is termed organisational associations.

Summary

It is therefore likely, for the purposes of defining FLE corporate identity, that the review of the models of corporate identity at the organisational level supports the FLE corporate identity dimension that an organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs. It is also likely that corporate identity stakeholder groups cluster into two broad internal and external groupings, that FLEs are particularly influenced by the organisation's corporate visual identity and the internal influence of an organisation's corporate identity on FLEs is termed FLE organisational associations.

2.2.4.3 FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity (model support)

FLEs' boundaries span the internal and external corporate identity environments by interacting with an organisation's customers

Kennedy (1977) places employees directly in between the company, and groups external to the organisation. Kennedy (1977) models employees and external groups interacting reciprocally, with employees feeding back to the organisation external group reactions to company policy. Dowling (1986) similarly places employees directly in between external groups and elements of an organisation's internal corporate identity, i.e. company policy and organisational culture. Again, employees interact with external groups receiving feedback that in turn influences employee feedback on formal company policy. Stuart (1998) places employees between the corporate identity of the firm and the organisation's public, bridging the external and internal environments of the firm. Employees are again receiving external feedback and consequently providing feedback internally. Importantly, the work of Melewar (2003) by separating out employee behaviour from that of managers, and the organisation as a whole, argues the importance of a specific group of employees representing the corporate identity to customers (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006). This is further supported by the work

of Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005), which also proposes a specific group of employees, FLEs, regularly interacts with customers.

It is therefore likely that FLEs boundary span the internal and external corporate identity environments by interacting with an organisation's customers.

Customers are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group

Abratt (1989) is very detailed in specifying external stakeholder groups, or as they are termed the organisation's public, including customers, government, bankers, influential groups, general public, the media and trade in that grouping. Melewar (2003) cites customers as a stakeholder group given they are an audience of controlled corporate communications, the corporate visual identity and the organisation's differentiation and positioning strategy. Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) are very clear that the principal focus of corporate identity is the customer of the organisation. The internal efforts of the organisation are focused on generating favourable corporate appeal through the creativity, communication and human elements of corporate identity. Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) when testing their corporate identity model with practitioners identify both investors and customers as external stakeholder groups. Customers, individually and collectively, are cited by practitioners as the most important external stakeholder in the market place.

It can therefore be said that customers are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.

The external influence of an organisation's corporate identity upon customers

From the review of corporate identity models, customers as a stakeholder group, within the larger grouping termed external stakeholders, are exposed to a number of phenomenon related to an organisation's corporate identity.

Customers regularly receive marketing communications (Markwick and Fill, 1997; Stuart, 1998, 1999), an element of corporate communications (Melewar, 2003), that

comprises not only product and service information but also more broader corporate messages through corporate advertising concerning the organisation and its corporate visual identity (Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). Stuart (1998, 1999), Alessandri (2001), Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) highlight the external importance of an organisation's corporate visual identity as part of the corporate design and corporate branding structure dimensions of an organisation's corporate identity (Melewar, 2003). And as previously stated customers are also influenced by their interaction with a firm's employees and other stakeholder groupings (Dowling, 1986).

As a result of exposure to these dimensions of an organisation's corporate identity, customers, and other external stakeholders, develop a set of mental associations that enable them to answer the question *"what do stakeholders actually think of the organisation?"* (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006, p102), that is in the main referred to as corporate image (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Abratt, 1989; Markwick and Fill, 1997; Stuart, 1999; Alessandri, 2001; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt, 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Definitions of corporate image are numerous, wide in scope and can be overlapping. For the purposes of the review of corporate identity models the definition adopted by Melewar (2003) is adopted, as it forms one of the foundations of the Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) research study. The definition of corporate image (Melewar, 2003, p.209) is *"the totality of stakeholders' perceptions of the way an organisation presents itself, either deliberately or accidentally. It is the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge and impressions that each stakeholder has about an organisation"*.

It is therefore likely that an organisation's corporate identity externally influences customers, especially the organisation's corporate visual identity.

FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity

Therefore, when entering a service encounter with an FLE, a customer carries with them an image of the organisation. As part of the service encounter this image, and the associations a customer attaches to it, are used to inform the feedback customers give to FLEs. The Kennedy (1977) model illustrates this feedback in a direct relationship between customer and FLE, where the customer's feedback informs an FLE's own image of the firm. This is mirrored by Dowling (1986), and in both instances customer feedback is used to provide feedback between FLEs and the firm. Stuart (1998, 1999) also diagrammatically represents this relationship. Per Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006) such feedback may not always be verbal. Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) and Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) further suggest this reciprocity in the qualitative testing of their corporate identity models with practitioners.

Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p.100) in their model of corporate identity, propose that members of an organisation hold a variety of associations with respect to what others outside the organisation think about the organisation, which answers the question *"what does the organisation believe others think about the organisation?"*

These associations, termed construed associations, are developed through interactions with different corporate identity stakeholder groups and again are internalised by the individual organisational member holding them *to "form a basis for self referential meaning, constituting an organisationally relevant but individually held, identity for the organisation member."* (Brown et al, 2006,p.103).

It is therefore likely that FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity, termed construed associations.

Summary

In summary, it is therefore likely that the review of the models of corporate identity at the organisational level support the FLE corporate identity dimension that FLEs

construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters. It is also likely that an organisation's customers are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group, they are in particular influenced by the organisation's corporate visual identity, and that FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters, is termed construed associations.

2.2.4.4 Organisations' corporate identity influence FLEs' psychological identification with the organisation (model support)

FLEs develop a psychological identification with the organisation

Kennedy (1977) indicates that company personnel hold perceptions of a firm and act as intermediaries between the organisation and its external stakeholders, which indicates a reciprocal relationship between company personnel and the organisation. Dowling (1986) re-states this reciprocal relationship in the form of employees holding an image of the company, acting as intermediaries between the company and its external stakeholder groups image of the company. Stuart (1998, 1999) argues employees hold a view of the organisation's corporate identity and image of the organisation, directly referencing a relationship between the employees and the organisation. Again employees are an intermediary boundary spanning the organisation and its publics. Melwar (2003, p.209), within the taxonomy of corporate identity considers the holding of a corporate image to be *"the totality of stakeholders' perceptions of the way an organisation presents itself, either deliberately or accidentally. It is the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge and impressions that each stakeholder has about an organisation"*. Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p.100) in their model of corporate identity, propose that stakeholders hold a variety of perceptions with respect to an organisation, which is termed corporate associations.

Corporate associations are the set of mental associations about a company held by individuals (Brown and Dacin, 1997) and concern the types of beliefs, moods, emotions and evaluations about an organisation that are held by individuals and that are mentally associated with the organisation (Dacin and Brown, 2002). According to Brown and Dacin (1997, p.69), corporate associations are defined as *“all the information about a company that a person holds”*. Corporate associations apply not just to all stakeholders of an organisation including managers, employees, shareholders, financial analysts, competitors and government entities (Spears, Brown and Dacin, 2006).

Corporate associations conveyed through an organisation’s corporate identity, serve as the reality of the organisation for the individual member of the organisation holding them. A number of central and enduring associations, once internalised, *“form a basis for self referential meaning, constituting an organisationally relevant but individually held, identity for the organisation member”* (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006, p.103).

It is therefore likely that FLEs hold corporate associations that inform the development of an FLE’s psychological relationship with the organisation.

The organisation’s corporate visual identity

As concluded in section 2.2.4.2, FLEs are internally influenced by a number of corporate identity dimensions, which vary model by model but when consolidated reflect the dimensions of Melewar’s (2003) corporate identity taxonomy. However, the influence of an organisation’s corporate visual identity (Melewar, 2003), as applied in an organisation’s corporate branding structure (Melewar, 2003), is considered to be an important dimension of corporate identity that internally influences FLEs (Stuart, 1998; Stuart, 1999; Alessandri, 2001; Melewar, 2003; Melewar and Karaosanoglu, 2006; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005).

In Stuart's (1998) corporate identity model an employee's view of an organisation's corporate identity is directly related to the organisation's corporate symbols. The same is portrayed in Stuart's (1999) later corporate identity model. Alessandri (2001) combines corporate service behaviour and the visual presentation of the organisation (logo, tagline, colour palette and architecture) into a single corporate identity that is projected to external stakeholders. Melewar (2003) states the organisation's corporate visual identity encapsulates the organisation's values, underpins the organisation's communication efforts and projects the quality, style and prestige of an organisation's to stakeholders. Considering the organisation's corporate visual identity as very important in guiding employees as to what is expected of them, influencing their role in controlled and non-controlled corporate communications (Melewar and Karaosanoglu, 2006). Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) also establish a direct relationship between an organisation's corporate visual identity and company staff, who represent it to an organisation's customers. Through its corporate visual identity system, the organisation transmits messages to employees that influence their attitude, values, ethics and actions in transmitting messages about corporate identity to the outside world. It is therefore likely that the organisation's corporate visual identity significantly influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.

Summary

In summary it is therefore likely that the review of the models of corporate identity, at the organisational level, supports the FLE corporate identity dimension that an organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation. It is also likely that the corporate visual identity of an organisation significantly influences an FLE's psychological identification with it.

2.2.4.5 FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity (model support)

FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by the organisation's corporate visual identity

Melewar's (2003) corporate identity taxonomy considers employee behaviour, a component of the behaviour dimension, to be an important dimension of the corporate identity construct. Indeed in the empirical research of Melewar and Karaosanoglu (2006), it is shown that employee behaviour, as part of controlled and uncontrolled corporate communications is influenced by the organisation's corporate visual identity. The influence of corporate visual identity upon FLEs, as indicated by the set of reviewed corporate identity models, is presented in the above two sections and need not be re-stated. However a number of models clearly indicate that FLEs represent the corporate visual identity, among other phenomena, when presenting the organisation to external stakeholders and customers. In particular Stuart (1998,1999) and Alessandri (2001) indicate corporate visual identity, in the form of corporate symbols, influences the corporate image held by FLEs that is onwardly communicated to external stakeholders and customers. Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) also stipulate that the organisation, through its visual identity system, transmits messages to employees that influence their attitude, values, ethics and actions that in turn send out messages about corporate identity to the outside world.

It is therefore likely that FLE brand building behaviours are, in particular, both influence and are supported by an organisation's corporate visual identity, a dimension of an organisation's corporate identity.

Summary

It is therefore likely that the review of the models of corporate identity at the organisational level supports the FLE corporate identity dimension that FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by the organisation's corporate identity and also support it. It is also likely that FLE brand building behaviour both is influenced by and also supports an organisation's corporate visual identity, a dimension of an organisation's corporate identity.

2.2.4.6 Step 4 summary: model support for the five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity

Step four of the process of defining FLE corporate identity supports the five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity when scrutinised against a set of ten existing corporate identity models and their associated literature. The results are summarised in table 2.5 and are presented model by model in Appendices 2a to 2k.

The review of the corporate identity models, also further developed each of the five FLE corporate identity dimensions, thus adding further theoretical detail to each dimension's overarching principal. Each dimension is stated below:

- A) The corporate identity models indicate that FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.

- B) The corporate identity models indicate FLEs are internally influenced by the organisation's corporate identity, in particular the organisation's corporate visual identity and FLEs hold a set of associations associated with the internal influence of an organisation's corporate identity, termed organisational associations.

- C) FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity, specifically its corporate visual identity, during service encounters; these are termed construed associations.

- D) The corporate identity models indicate from an organisation's corporate identity FLEs hold an image of the organisation, which influences the development of an FLE's psychological relationship with the organisation. FLEs hold a set of associations associated with this image termed corporate associations. The organisation's corporate visual identity, as a dimension of corporate identity, influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.

FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity. FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate visual identity. The dimensions are contained in table 2.5 and form the basis upon which the definition of FLE corporate identity is developed in step 5, the final step of the definition development process.

2.2.5 A definition of FLE corporate identity

Thus far, this section of the literature review, with its intention to develop a definition of FLE corporate identity, has progressed through four sequential steps. After first scoping the corporate identity construct at an organisational level, five dimensions of FLE corporate identity are proposed, founded upon the characteristics of an FLE's operating environment. Third, the five proposed FLE corporate identity dimensions all found support when scrutinised against a set of corporate identity definitions and along with, fourth, ten corporate identity models that modelled corporate identity at the organisation level. A set of conclusions for each dimension that result from the analysis are shown in table 2.6. These conclusions further develop the theory associated with each of the FLE corporate identity dimensions and form the basis upon which a definition for the construct is to be developed.

2.2.5.1 An FLE corporate identity stakeholder group is formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity

The analysis indicates that FLEs are a corporate identity stakeholder group in their own right. FLEs fall under the influence of a number of corporate identity phenomena and the analysis strongly indicates that the organisation's corporate visual identity significantly influences FLEs. The organisation's corporate visual identity is not only an internal influencer of FLEs, it also influences FLEs' psychological identification with the

Table 2.5 Corporate identity model support for the five FLE corporate identity dimensions

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity	FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers' attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Model support	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported
Findings	The corporate identity models indicate that FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group	The corporate identity models indicate FLEs are internally influenced by the organisation's corporate identity, in particular the organisation's corporate visual identity, FLEs hold a set of associations associated with the internal influence of an organisation's corporate identity, termed organisational associations.	FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity, specifically its corporate visual identity, during service encounters; these are termed construed associations.	The corporate identity models indicate from an organisation's corporate identity, FLEs hold an image of the organisation that influences the development of an FLE's psychological relationship with the organisation. FLEs hold a set of associations associated with this image termed corporate associations. The organisation's corporate visual identity, as a dimension of corporate identity, influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity. FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate visual identity.

Table 2.5 continued

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity	FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers' attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Kennedy 1977	√	√	√	√	-
Dowling 1986	√	√	√	√	-
Abratt 1989	-	√	-	-	-
Stuart 1998	√	√	√	√	√
Stuart 1999	√	√	√	√	√
Alessandri 2001	√	√	-	√	√
Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt, 2003	√	√	-	-	-
Melewar 2003	√	√	-	√	√
Melewar and Karaosmanoglu 2006	√	√	√	√	√
Suvatjis and de Chernatony 2005	√	√	-	√	√
Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten 2006	√	√	√	√	√

organisation, and drives and is supported by FLE brand building behaviour and contributes to FLEs construing customer attitudes towards the organisation's corporate identity.

It is therefore concluded that an FLE corporate identity stakeholder group is formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity, of which individual FLEs are members, and that the corporate visual identity forms the principal representation of the organisation's corporate identity for FLEs.

2.2.5.2 The influence of FLE organisational associations and FLE construed associations

The analysis indicates that FLEs are internally influenced by a number of corporate identity phenomena, an influence collectively termed FLE organisational associations. The analysis also indicates that FLEs are externally influenced during service encounters with customers by construing customer attitudes towards the organisation's corporate identity, which is termed construed associations. Both sets of associations are in particular influenced by the organisation's corporate visual identity.

2.2.5.3 FLE membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group is formed around corporate visual identity

The analysis supports the conclusion that both an FLE's psychological relationship with the organisation and their brand building behaviour are influenced by corporate identity phenomena and in particular the organisation's corporate visual identity. It is proposed that corporate visual identity forms the basis of the formation of an FLE corporate identity stakeholder group and it is concluded that membership of the group influences an FLE's psychological relationship with organisation, as well as their brand building behaviour.

2.2.5.4 Definition of FLE corporate identity

The definition of FLE corporate identity is constructed in a manner common to corporate identity in defining both the phenomena and its components (Olins, 1995;

Table 2.6 Support for the five FLE corporate identity dimensions

Five dimensions of FLE corporate identity	FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers' attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity.
Definition support	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported
Model support	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported	Supported
Findings	The corporate identity models indicate that FLEs are a specific corporate identity stakeholder group	The corporate identity models indicate stakeholder groups cluster into two broad internal and external groupings. FLE' are internally influenced by the organisation's corporate identity, in particular the organisation's CVI, with this influence termed FLE member organisational associations.	The corporate identity models indicate FLEs construe customer attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity, specifically the organisation's corporate visual identity, during service encounters, which is termed construed associations.	The corporate identity models indicate from an organisation's corporate identity FLEs hold an image of the organisation, an FLE member organisational association, that influences the development of an FLE's psychological relationship with the organisation. The organisation's CVI significantly influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	FLEs exhibit different behaviours during service encounters, that are influenced by and support the organisation's corporate identity. FLE brand building behaviours are influenced by and support the organisation's CVI.

Balmer and Soenen, 1998; Melewar, 2003; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006).

Building on the Melewar 2003 definition of corporate identity, it is therefore concluded that FLE corporate identity is defined as:

A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers. These organisational associations and construed associations form the basis of an FLE's membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity, where membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support the CVI, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation.

2.2.6 Part A conclusions - The definition of FLE corporate identity

Part A of the literature review develops a definition of FLE corporate identity passing through five sequential steps. After firstly characterising the corporate identity construct at an organisational level, secondly five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity are developed based upon the characteristics of an FLE's operating environment. Third, the five FLE corporate identity dimensions all found support when scrutinised against a set of corporate identity definitions and ten corporate identity models (see tables 2.2 to 2.5). A set of conclusions for each dimension that result from the analysis are contained in table 2.6. These conclusions further develop the theory associated with each of the FLE corporate identity dimensions and specifically isolate the particular influence of the organisation's corporate visual identity. These conclusions form the basis upon which the following definition of FLE corporate identity is founded:

A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FL's construing the external performance of the

corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers. These organisational associations and construed associations form the basis of an FLE's membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity, where membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support the CVI, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation.

This definition of FLE corporate identity, is theoretically modelled in Part B of the literature review.

2.3 Part B - FLE corporate identity construct determination

Part A of the literature review developed a definition of FLE corporate identity formed from the constructs five dimensions. This section of the literature review, part B, appropriately reviews the services marketing, branding, organisational psychology and corporate identity literature for each of the three elements of FLE corporate identity definition, in order to establish a set of constructs for FLE corporate identity. **This includes development of the FLE corporate brand identification construct, the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.**

The definition of FLE corporate identity concluded in part A is:

A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers. These organisational associations and construed associations form the basis of an FLE's membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's

corporate visual identity. Where membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support it, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation.

First in section 2.3.1 the central element of the definition is considered. The central part of the definition of FLE corporate identity, *...FLEs' membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity*, is examined by comparing the corporate identity and corporate branding literature to compare and contrast the corporate visual identity and corporate branding constructs (2.3.1.1 to 2.3.1.4). Next FLEs are discussed as members of a corporate brand community and the organisational psychology literature is applied to determine the potential psychological implication for FLEs of their membership, as well as being seen to be members of, a corporate brand community (2.3.1.5 to 2.3.1.7). The FLE corporate brand identification construct is then proposed (2.3.1.7).

Second, the first element of the FLE corporate identity definition is considered: *A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers.* In reviewing the corporate identity, branding and services marketing literature, FLE corporate associations are discussed (2.3.2). The communication, via the corporate brand, of two of the corporate associations sub-constructs of FLE construed associations and FLE organisational associations, are addressed in sections 2.3.2.1 and 2.3.2.2. It is proposed that FLEs construe the corporate brand equity held by customers during service encounters, a form of FLE construed associations, and that this represents FLEs construing the external performance of the organisation's corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers. Following the establishment of the FLE construed corporate brand equity group of constructs, finally it is also proposed that FLEs hold organisational associations concerning mission and vision dissemination, consistent

image implementation of corporate image and corporate visual identity implementation. It is proposed that this group of constructs, termed FLE organisational associations, represents meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity

Third, the last element of the FLE corporate identity definition is discussed (2.3.3) where an FLE's membership of a corporate brand community...*encourages FLE actions that support the CVI, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation.* First the services marketing and branding literature are reviewed, establishing FLE brand building behaviour as the likely construct to represent FLE actions that support the corporate visual identity of the organisation. Next the organisational psychology literature is reviewed, determining that the FLE organisational identification and FLE affective organisational commitment constructs represent ties between an FLE and the organisation.

Finally Part B of the literature review is summarised and concluded (2.3.4).

2.3.1 FLE corporate brand identification

This section presents the theoretical foundations for a new construct, that of FLE corporate brand identification. **FLE corporate brand identification is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.** It addresses the central element of the definition of FLE corporate identity, ...*FLEs' membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity...*, and concludes by proposing a definition of FLE corporate brand identification construct as *"the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of a corporate brand community and where identification with the corporate brand community partly answers the question of who am I?"*.

The corporate brand identification construct is theoretically developed by examining the set of issues described in the following. First, the components of corporate visual identity and corporate branding are established, examining the definitions of both constructs to establish it is likely that CVI comprises the visual elements of an organisation's corporate brand and is a dimension of the brand. Corporate brands are then examined as part of an organisation's wider branding structure, determining that both corporate parent and divisional organisations are forms of corporate branding. The role of FLEs as brand advocates is then discussed, establishing FLEs as members of a corporate brand community. The psychological implications of an individual's membership, and being seen as such a member, are then discussed. It is then proposed that FLEs psychologically hold a form of social identity in relation to their membership of the corporate brand community. Finally, the individual psychological attachment to a corporate brand community, termed FLE corporate brand identification, is defined.

2.3.1.1 The components of Corporate Visual Identity

Part A of the literature review established that the corporate visual identity element of corporate identity is of significant relevance to FLEs, specifically in terms of its potential operational role in communicating organisational associations and construed associations to FLEs. It is therefore essential that the components Corporate Visual Identity are determined.

Within the corporate visual identity literature, CVI is considered to be a perspective of corporate identity in its own right (Balmer, 1995; Melewar and Saunders, 2000), as well as a component of other corporate identity perspectives. According to Bartholme and Melewar (2009; 2011) there is no single agreed set of terminology associated with corporate visual identity. However as a result of several empirical studies (Melewar and Saunders, 2000; Melewar, Saunders and Balmer, 2001), corporate visual identity is considered to comprise the corporate name, a symbol or logo type, typography, colour

and slogan (Dowling 1994). Van den Bosch et al (2006, p18) considers *“a corporate visual identity consists of a name, a symbol / and or logo, typography, colour, a slogan and very often graphical elements”*. Empirically, such components of CVI equally hold true when exploring the differences between the CVIs of manufacturing and service businesses and profit-making and non-profit organisations (van den Bosch et al 2006) and when considering a set of foundations for developing the internal management of corporate identity (Simoes, Dibb and Fisk 2005). Such CVI components are also present in the Melewar (2003) corporate identity taxonomy, as operationalised in empirical research with corporate identity practitioners (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu 2006). It is therefore concluded, for the purposes of this study, that a corporate visual identity comprises a corporate name, a symbol or logo type, typography, colour and slogan.

2.3.1.2 Corporate branding as a stakeholder based construct

As with the corporate identity construct and its literature, a common and widely accepted definition of corporate branding is not developed (de Chernatony et al, 2008). Recognised scholars have attempted to capture the construct in a single definition, for instance in defining corporate branding as *“the firm that will deliver and stand behind the offering that the customer will buy or use”* (Aaker, 2004, p.7) or branding in terms of products and services as the *“name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors”* (Keller, 2008 p.2).

Branding definitions are likely to reflect the stage of evolution the discipline has reached at the time of its development and also reflects the nature of the discipline’s debate at that time. It is recognised that the branding discipline has evolved through three important stages of development (Merz, He and Vargo, 2009). Prior to 1990, the literature focussed on brands as signifiers to customers, delivering an image and symbolism. The literature next moved onto a stage of development where brands were

considered to be the basis on which customers built knowledge about the organisation and its products, thus establishing a relationship with the customer based upon the organisation delivering against a promise the brand made with the customer. Importantly, from 2000 onwards the branding literature moved on taking a stakeholder focus. Here branding, in particular corporate branding, is considered to be dynamic, a result of social processes between the firm, brand communities and all stakeholders. Brand value is co-created through a continuous and interactive process between the firm, its brand and all stakeholders (Brodie et al, 2009). This latter assertion by Merz, He and Vargo (2009), is substantially supported by the corporate branding literature (McAlexander et al, 2002; Muniz et al, 2001; Muniz et al, 2005; Ballantyne and Aitken, 2007; Ind and Bjerke, 2007) and demonstrates a recent convergence between the branding and corporate identity literature.

2.3.1.3 The relationship between Corporate Visual Identity and Corporate Branding

The importance of CVI as a component of corporate identity is highlighted by Balmer (1995) who identifies the CVI perspective of corporate identity as a school of thought in its own right, along with it influencing a further four perspectives of corporate identity thought. Central to corporate identity, from the CVI perspective, are the components of CVI, namely corporate name, a symbol or logo type, typography, colour and slogan (Dowling, 1994; Olins, 1995). However, more recently, within this perspective, CVI and corporate branding are considered and treated as very much the same concepts and are used interchangeably. Olins (2008 p.22) introduces this change, stating that *“the tangible manifestation of a corporate personality is the corporate brand”*, with the CVI *“representing the visual elements of a corporate brand”* (Olins, 2008 p.31). Indeed, Melewar and Saunders (1998a) use corporate brand and CVI interchangeably when discussing the challenges of standardising CVI's globally, where some organisations opt for a unified global brand in spite of the negative reactions of governments and consumers. In proposing that the CVI, and its system of management, extend the conventional marketing mix, Melewar and Saunders (1998b) propose that most of the

world's greatest brands are corporate names where companies promote their products, divisions or subsidiaries across the world to project a single and powerful identity. This moves branding from a narrow domain of marketing and advertising into the broad domain of corporate identity, where the CVI, in representing the corporate brand, is used to position the company as a whole (Balmer 1995). If corporate brands are standardised internationally they not only bring significant commercial benefits (Melewar, Saunders and Balmer, 2001), but also extend the organisation's marketing mix. This creates not only a commercial environment where the buyer is buying the maker of the product, or provider of the service (Melewar and Saunders, 1999), but also enables the firm to gain further reach and exposure through placing the corporate brand on building interiors/exterior, vehicles, signs, clothing, stationary and publications (Melewar and Saunders, 1998b).

When the work of Melewar and Saunders, presented above, is contrasted with recognised branding definitions (Keller, 2008; Aaker, 2004), CVI and corporate branding emerge as separate but similar constructs. Aaker (2004, p.7) defines corporate branding as *"the firm that will deliver and stand behind the offering that the customer will buy or use"* and Keller (2008 p.2) defines branding as *the "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors"*. The elements Keller (2008, p.2.) proposes as components of a brand, i.e. name, term, sign, symbol or design, closely reconcile with those identified as components of corporate visual identity corporate name, a symbol or logo type, typography, colour and slogan (Melewar, 2003; Dowling, 1994; Olins, 1995). This suggests that both corporate brands and CVIs contain similar components, with the CVI encompassing the visual elements of the corporate brand. Although Aaker's definition is presented at the product and services level, Keller (2008) recognises that branding also operates at the organisation level, with a firm's brand standing behind the product and service offers of the firm. It is therefore proposed that the components

of a brand as proposed by Keller (2008) are likely to be equally as applicable to brands operating at the corporate level, with the CVI encompassing the visual elements of the corporate brand.

It is therefore likely that, for the purposes of developing the construct of corporate brand identification, CVI comprises the visual elements of an organisation's corporate brand, a dimension of the corporate brand. Therefore, when corporate branding is referred to in the remainder of this dissertation the assumption is made that the CVI is a component and intrinsic element of an organisation's corporate brand.

2.3.1.4 Corporate branding, its application at group and divisional levels in a firm

The branding definitions contained as part of this section of the literature review (Keller, 2008; Aaker, 2004) determine that branding operates at a number of levels within the firm. Several authors have established that brands operate at both a corporate as well as product and service level (Ind, 1998 and Bickerton, 2000), recognising that there are differences between the two. Corporate brands possess a number of specific characteristics, including the fact they are strategic in orientation, are a component part of corporate identity, have attendant brand communities and are multidisciplinary in scope (Balmer and Thompson, 2009; Balmer and Gray, 2003). In particular organisations do not tend to have just one single brand but have many at both the product and service and corporate levels (Laforet and Saunders, 1994). When pooled, a group of brands combine to form a firm's portfolio of brands that are structured and managed in differing ways from firm to firm (Laforet and Saunders, 1999).

Melewar and Jenkins (2002) and Melewar (2003) refer to the structuring of brands into brand portfolios as brand structures, an element of the corporate structure component of the corporate identity taxonomy. At one extreme firms use the corporate brand not just at the firm level but also for all of the branding of the products and services they offer. While at the other extreme individual brands are developed for individual products and services that are separate and do not in any way refer to or contain any

elements of the corporate brand. Respectively, Laforet and Saunders (2005) refer to the former as a corporate branded structure and the latter as a branded structure. In their research Laforet and Saunders, (2007) find that over a ten year period many different variants developed in between these two extremes, with firms using the corporate brand to varying degrees in the branding of a firm's products or services (Laforet and Saunders, 2007). Olins (1995) recognised that firms also potentially hold not just a portfolio of products and services but also a portfolio of organisations where a group company also owns, manages and brands subsidiary divisional organisations forming part of a wider group of companies. Olins (2008, p.45) proposes that the company's group corporate brand can be used throughout the group to also brand its divisions, termed a monolithic structure. Alternatively the divisional corporate brands might be branded separately, with no visual similarity between the group corporate brand and divisional corporate brands. This is termed a branded structure. If the company uses its group corporate brand as part of the corporate branding at a divisional level it is considered to be endorsing the divisional corporate brand and as such this combination is termed endorsed.

It is therefore likely, for the purposes of developing the concept of corporate brand identification, that corporate branding applies equally to group and divisional levels of the firm.

2.3.1.5 Corporate brands and FLE/employee brand advocacy

Corporate brands, irrespective of whether they operate at a group or divisional level, span both the internal and external environment of the firm (Davies and Chun, 2002). The corporate brand bridges the internal and external environment interfacing between an organisation's actions and customer interpretation of those actions (Merz, He and Vargo, 2009). The corporate brand represents a holistic experience across the firm, which is interpreted as everything experienced by the customer (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006). FLEs constitute the interface between a brands internal and external

environments and can have a powerful impact on consumers' perceptions of both the brand and the organisation (Harris and de Chernatony, 2001). As such, corporate brands, particularly those in a services environment, require enactment by FLEs in order for them to be rendered effective. Corporate branding literature recognises that staff influence customers' and other stakeholders' brand perceptions by significantly influencing what service is designed and how it is delivered (de Chernatony et al, 2001). FLEs are living the brand embodying its purpose and what it stands for (de Chernatony, 2002).

The branding literature describes FLEs as living the brand and as groups of brand evangelists, brand champions or brand ambassadors (Ind, 2003). This difference in terminology suggests that each term may represent a slightly different interpretation of living the brand, however at the core of each is that FLEs transform the vision for the brand into a reality (Berry, 2000). This transformation of the vision for the brand into a reality requires employee brand building behaviour, where FLEs represent the corporate brand to the customer (Miles and Mangold, 2004). Mohart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p.123) define employee brand building behaviour as an *“employee's contribution (both on and off the job) to an organisation's customer orientated branding efforts”*. At an operational level this contribution is termed In-role branding behaviour, referring to FLEs meeting the standards prescribed by their organisational roles as brand representatives; whereas extra role brand building behaviour refers to FLE actions that go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand and are discretionary.

Such a view of corporate branding is supported within the evolution of the branding literature. Recently, from 2000 onwards the branding literature has moved into a phase in its development where it has taken a stakeholder focus (Merz, He and Vargo, 2009). Branding is considered to be dynamic, a result of social processes between the firm, brand communities and all stakeholders. Brand value is co-created through a

continuous and interactive process between the firm, the brand and all stakeholders. FLEs are central to this interactive process, both as a stakeholder group and a brand community.

It is therefore likely, for the purposes of developing the FLE corporate brand identification construct, that FLEs are potential advocates of the corporate brand to customers exhibited in their brand building behaviour.

2.3.1.6 FLEs as members of corporate brand communities

According to Muniz et al (2001, p.14) a brand community is defined as *“a specialised, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of the brand”*. Thus a brand community consists of a number of members who form part of a collective social unit focussed on the brand. Members share a felt connection between themselves, a presence of shared traditions and rituals and a sense of moral responsibility (Muniz et al, 2001).

A brand community is made up of a number of stakeholder groups, through which a continuous social process co-creates brand value by stakeholder interaction and stakeholder-based negotiation (Brodie et al, 2009). Such negotiation is based upon a firm working with its internal and external stakeholders and responding to their input. This process of negotiation and dialogue leads to the development of brand meaning and value over time (Gregory, 2007). The corporate brand is dynamically constructed through this social interaction, its value located in the minds of its stakeholders including employees and customers (Ballantyne and Aitkin, 2007). Brand community members indirectly or directly share consumption and enhance their mutual experiences of the brand. Employees, customers and other stakeholders are, therefore, involved in the development of the brand (Ind and Bjerke, 2007).

It is therefore likely, for the purposes of developing the construct of corporate brand identification, that FLEs are not only advocates of the corporate brand to customers but

are members of a corporate brand community as one of a number of multiple stakeholder groups.

2.3.1.7 FLE corporate brand community membership and corporate brand identification

Within the organisational psychology literature it is concluded that at an individual level there are psychological phenomena that stem from an individual's membership of a group or community, which is termed social identity. The social identity approach (Halsam, 2004) consists of two related theories, social identity theory and self-categorisation theory (Van Dick, Grojean, Christ & Wieseke, 2006).

Social identity defined

Social identity is defined as *"the psychology of the causes and consequences of individuals seeing themselves, and being seen by others, as part of a social group"* (Tajfel and Turner, 1979, p.21). Research into social identity describes how the self may not only be defined in terms of unique, individualising characteristics that distinguish the individual from others, but may also be extended to include social groups (Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006; Hogg et al 2003; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al, 1987). Groups and group membership are internalised so that they contribute to the sense of self (Turner, 1982; Riketta, 2005; Meyer, Becker & Van Dick, 2006) with the sense of self definition in terms of 'we', social identity, rather than 'I', personal identity (Cornelissen, Haslam & Balmer, 2007). Therefore, having a salient social identity involves seeing oneself as part of a larger whole (Meyer, Becker & van Dick, 2006; Rousseau, 1998; Turner, 1985).

It is therefore likely, for the purposes of developing the corporate brand identification construct, that members of a corporate brand community hold a social identity concerning their membership of the community.

Self categorisation defined

Self categorisation theory (Turner et al., 1987, 1994) strove to formalise the conditions under which social identities become salient (Cornelissen et al., 2007). Self categorisation is defined as *“where individuals perceive their social environment, including themselves, in terms of similarities and differences, producing flexible categories whose elements are seen as more similar to one another than to elements of the other category”* (Ullrich, Wieseke, Christ, Schulze & van Dick, 2007, p.34). In order to be salient, active in guiding social perception, categories require accessibility and fit with the group and the prior meaning of the category (Turner, 1985; 1994). Categories become accessible by recent or frequent use, contextual likelihood, and the goals of the perceiver (Oakes, Turner and Haslam, 1991). The concept of fit (Turner et al, 1994) stipulates that to perceive a group of people in terms of a given category, less variability must be perceived within that group than between that group and other people (comparative fit) and the differences between that group and the other people and other people must conform to the prior meaning of that category (normative fit) (Ullrich, Wieseke, Christ, Schulze & van Dick, 2007). As a result a potential continuum exists. On one extreme an individual has a self perception of exclusively as a group member, defined by the shared characteristics of that group. Whereas on the other extreme. an individual is defined by his or her own unique personality (Turner, 1982). The former represents depersonalisation as a result of the salience of social categories brought about by category salience and fit.

It is therefore likely, for the purpose of developing the corporate brand identification construct, that FLEs as members of a corporate brand community hold the community as a social category that is informed by cues and content from an organisation’s corporate brand.

Organisational identification defined

Brown (2001) posits that both identity and identification within and across an organisation spans across multiple levels. The organisation domain spans the

individual (one's personal sense of self within the organisation), groups (the shared identity of teams and sections within an organisation), and organisational (the identity of an organisation as a whole). The social identity literature proposes a psychological linkage between an individual and an organisation (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.33; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Van Dick et al, 2004). This research concludes that the extent to which individuals experience a psychological linkage with an organisation is likely drive a number of outcomes related to an individual's job (Van Knippenberg & Sleebos, 2006). These outcomes include job motivation, in and extra role performance, job satisfaction, absenteeism and turnover (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Riketta, 2005; Podsakoff et al, 2000). Such an organisational identification is broadly defined as the *"extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of the organisation and where identification with an organisation partly answers the question of who am I?"* (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). This sense of perceived oneness with the organisation (Mael and Ashforth, 1992) reflects the psychological merging of the self and the organisation (Haslam et al, 2001; Tyler and Blader, 2001; van Knippenberg, 2000). Organisational identification represents the strength of an individual's psychological relationship with the organisation; *"the more an individual identifies with an organisation the more the organisation's values, norms and interests are incorporated into an individuals concept of their self"* (Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006, p.27).

It can therefore be said, for the purpose of developing the corporate brand identification construct, that the scope of an FLE's social identity concerning membership of a corporate brand community is organisation wide.

A definition of corporate brand identification

In summary it is therefore likely, for the purposes of developing the corporate brand identification construct, that FLEs, as members of a corporate brand community, hold a social identity in relation to their membership of that community. A corporate brand community spans the whole of the organisation; therefore the social identity that

potentially results resides not at a team or group level, but at an organisational level. Similar to that of organisational identification, the identification does not result from membership of the organisation but membership of a community centred around the organisation's corporate brand.

This new construct is termed corporate brand identification. Corporate brand identification concerns the psychology of the causes and consequences of individuals seeing themselves, and being seen by others, as part of a corporate brand community. However, corporate brand community group membership is organisation wide, and not embedded within one function or group. The construct is therefore defined as the *"the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of a corporate brand community, where identification with the corporate brand community partly answers the question of who am I?"*.

Therefore FLE corporate brand identification represents the strength of an individual's psychological relationship with the organisation's corporate brand community.

Distinguishing corporate brand identification from existing constructs

In previous studies, constructs with similar labels and names to FLE corporate brand identification have been empirically researched. These constructs are, however, distinctly different in definition from *"the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of a corporate brand community, where identification with the corporate brand community partly answers the question of who am I ?"*.

Burmann, Zeplin and Riley (2009, p.266) use the term brand commitment to label a construct that is defined as *"the extent of the psychological attachment of employees to the brand, which influences their willingness to exert extra effort towards reaching the brands goal"*. When operationalized this construct is a combination of aspects of the organisational identity and organisational commitment constructs, which in the organisational psychology literature are concluded to be separate phenomena (Meyer,

Becker & van Dick, 2006). The definition also proposes a direct psychological relationship between the FLE and the brand, making no reference to an FLE's membership of a corporate brand community. Finally, the form of brand that the FLE is psychologically attached to, i.e. corporate, service or product brand, is not stated and it is therefore assumed that the construct applies to all. It is therefore likely that brand commitment is a different construct to FLE corporate brand identification.

Punjaisri, Wilson and Evanschitzky (2009) also conclude that FLEs hold a direct psychological relationship with a brand but again make no reference to FLEs as members of a brand community. In its operationalization the brand identification construct mixes items that both refer to the hotel and the hotel's brand, mixing an FLE's organisational identification with the hotel and their direct psychological relationship with the hotels brand. It is therefore likely that brand identification (Punjaisri, Wilson and Evanschitzky, 2009) is a different construct to FLE corporate brand identification.

Hughes and Ahearne (2010) apply brand identification to FLEs that re-sell other organisation's manufactured products in a retail setting. The study demonstrates that FLEs sell more of a given manufacturer's branded products, in relation to its competitors, as a result of having stronger identification with one manufacturer's brand in favour of another. In this context brand identification is defined as *"the degree to which a person defines him- or herself by the same attributes that he or she believes defines a brand"* where *"membership of a group is not required for identification"* (p.84). It is therefore likely that brand identification (Hughes and Ahearne, 2010) is a different construct to FLE corporate brand identification.

Therefore, FLE corporate brand identification is proposed as a new construct that represents...*FLEs' membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity...* the central element of the FLE corporate identity definition.

2.3.2 Corporate associations

The first element of the definition of FLE corporate identity states FLE corporate identity is *A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers.* This section reviews the corporate identity and branding literature to establish two constructs that reflect the communication of meaning to FLEs through the organisation's corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers or as part of the organisation's internal environment.

Corporate associations, the set of mental associations about a company held by individuals (Brown and Dacin, 1997), concerns the types of beliefs, moods, emotions and evaluations about an organisation that are held by individuals and that are mentally associated with the organisation (Dacin and Brown, 2002). According to Brown and Dacin (1997, p.69), corporate associations are defined as *"all the information about a company that a person holds"*. Corporate associations apply not only to customers but also to all stakeholders of an organisation, including managers, employees, shareholders, financial analysts, competitors and government entities (Spears, Brown and Dacin, 2006).

Corporate associations are likely founded upon the associated network memory model (Scholder, Ellen, Webb and Mohr, 2006) where mental associations are held individually in a set of memory nodes and links that combine and are retrieved to represent an individual's knowledge of a particular domain (Anderson, 1983; Wyer and Srull, 1989), in this case an organisation or company. Held in the same way to the associated network memory model for brand knowledge, that comprises an individuals' set of brand associations (Keller, 1993; Hoeffler and Keller, 2003), corporate associations also vary in strength. Those that are more central, enduring and distinctive

are likely to be stronger than those that are less so (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006). Corporate associations influence specific corporate performance outcomes including influencing corporate and product brand evaluations (Gurhan-Canli and Batra, 2004; Mohr and Webb, 2005).

It is therefore likely that corporate associations influence the social identity of individuals within organisations, as social identities require certain conditions in order to be salient (Cornelissen et al, 2007). In order for a social identity to be salient, that is active in guiding social perception, individuals perceive their social environment, including themselves, in terms of similarities and differences, producing flexible categories whose elements are seen as more similar to one another than to elements of another category (Ullrich, Wieseke, Christ, Schultz and van Dick, 2007). Categories require accessibility and fit in order for the social identity to be salient. Corporate associations, *“all the information about a company that a person holds”* (Brown and Dacin, 1997, p.69) are likely to make social identity categories salient given their contribution to providing frequent cues about the organisation, thus communicating organisational context and conveying information that relates to the goals of the perceiver (Turner, 1985, 1994). In communicating differences between the members of a corporate brand community and those that are not, corporate associations contribute to category fit, where at the extreme an individual holds a self-perception exclusively as a member of a corporate brand community, that is defined by the shared characteristics of that group (Turner, 1982). Specifically, it is likely that two specific forms of corporate associations, construed associations and FLE organisational associations, influence the saliency of an individual’s social identity.

Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p.102) considered the contribution of corporate associations, within the corporate identity construct, to be to assist members of an organisation to answer two important questions. The first, *“who are we as an organisation?”* termed member organisational association, is defined as the *“mental*

associations about the organisation held by organisational members". The second, *"what do others think of the organisation?"*, is termed member construed associations and defined as *"mental associations that organisational members believe others outside the organisation hold about the organisation."*

2.3.2.1 FLE construed associations and corporate brand equity construct

Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p.102) propose that FLEs ask the question, *"what do others think of the organisation?"* when considering the organisation's corporate identity. Termed member construed associations, they are defined as the *"mental associations that organisational members believe others outside the organisation hold about the organisation."* Such a proposal assumes that stakeholders, external to the organisation, including consumers, also hold a set of associations about the organisation. Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p.102) propose this is the case, with external stakeholders holding a set of corporate associations that answers the question *what do stakeholders actually think of the organisation?* Such stakeholders not only include customers (Brown and Dacin, 1997), but also include a range of other entities, including shareholders (Berens Van Reil and Cees, 2004), suppliers (Suh and Houston, 2010) and governments (Ewing, Windisch and Newton, 2010).

Strong corporate brands influence external stakeholders

Corporate brands stand behind the organisation and what it offers to customers (Aaker, 2004), thus influencing differing stakeholder groups. Strong corporate brands, as well as positively influencing firm and business unit financial performance (Verbeeten and Vijn, 2010), also influence shareholders in the creation of shareholder value (Madden, Fehle and Fournier, 2006), financial institutions in reducing firm risk (Rego, Billett and Morgan, 2009) and other commercial organisations when considering mergers and acquisitions (Bahadir, Bharadwaj and Srivastava, 2008). Corporate brands, to varying degrees, form a component part in the branding of products, where the corporate brand

potentially features either in a dominant or less dominant manner in the branding of individual products (Laforet and Saunders, 2004, 2007). Strong product and service brands, in turn, positively influence consumer preference and purchase intention (Cobb- Walgren, Ruble and Donthu, 1995), consumer evaluation of brand extensions (Aaker and Keller 1990; Bottomley and Doyle, 1996) and consumer price insensitivity (Erdem, Swait and Valenzuela, 2006), and also reduces the negative effect of service failures (Brady, Cronin, Fox and Roehm, 2008).

Corporate brands convey corporate associations to consumers

The positive influence of strong brands on individuals, particularly consumers, as cited above, stems from associated network theory (Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder, 2002). It is proposed that consumers hold and store information in their memory in the form of associative networks (Anderson and Bower, 1973; Ellis and Hunt, 1992). Individuals hold knowledge of a particular domain, i.e. brands, that is represented in memory as links of associations among concept nodes (Sirsi, Ward and Reingen, 1996). The concept of nodes refers to units of information held in memory, i.e. brand names, brand attributes and so on, that are linked together to form a network of ideas, or a knowledge structure (Knoke and Kuklinski, 1982). Such links, the connections between nodes, are termed associations and have been used to form the basis of models developed to measure the strength of brands, termed brand equity (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991). Therefore as corporate associations are defined as *“all the information about a company that a person holds”* (Brown and Dacin, 1997 p.69) and corporate brands are defined as *“the firm that will deliver and stand behind the offering that the customer will buy or use”* (Aaker 2004, p.7), it is therefore likely that corporate brands convey corporate associations to consumers and other stakeholders of the organisation.

Consumers are part of a corporate brand community

Consumers, as a result of knowledge and experience of a brand, join brand communities as members (Algesheimer, Dholakia and Herrman, 2005). As discussed in section 2.3.1.6 of this thesis, brand communities are made up of a number of stakeholder groups, through which a continuous social process co-creates brand value by stakeholder interaction and stakeholder based negotiation (Brodie et al, 2009). FLEs and customers form part of this social process (Merz, He and Vargo, 2009) both of whom hold corporate associations (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006). During service encounters FLEs construe knowledge of the customer, which is known as customer need knowledge (Homburg, Wieseke and Bornemann, 2009). It is therefore likely that customer and FLE service encounters represent a source of FLE construed associations. Given that both parties are members of a corporate brand community, it is also likely that branding forms a component element of the service encounter and therefore FLE-construed associations.

Brand equity as a source of FLE construed associations

The strength of a brand is traditionally considered to be embodied within gaining strong and favourable associations with target consumers, termed brand equity (Falkenberg, 1996). Although there are numerous definitions of brand equity within the literature, two dominate, Christodoulides and de Chernatony (2010), and those of Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993). Both definitions and associated models are founded upon consumer associative network theory (Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder, 2002).

Operating at both the firm and consumer level, Aaker (1991, p.15) defines brand equity as *“a set of assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and its symbol, that add or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and /or that firms customers”*. At the customer level the four brand equity dimensions of brand awareness are, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty comprise a customer’s evaluation of the brand. The stronger the awareness, perceived quality and

brand loyalty, and the more favourable the associations, the stronger the customer's evaluation of the brand.

Alternatively, Keller (1993, p.2) defines brand equity as *"the differential effect of brand knowledge on the consumer response to marketing activity"*. Brand knowledge results from a consumer's associative network for a particular brand and comprising brand awareness and brand image. The stronger the consumer's awareness of a brand and the more favourable, unique and stronger the associations contained in the consumer's image of the brand, the stronger the consumer's evaluation of the brand.

According to Christodoulides and de Chernatony (2010) both approaches to brand equity have their relative merits but are operationally unproven as neither are supported with a set of empirically tested scales that effectively measure the respective constructs. For the purposes of this thesis a form of brand equity is required that is both conceptually and operationally reliable and valid. In reviewing the array of empirically tested brand equity scales Christodoulides and de Chernatony (2010) recommend the use of the scale developed and tested by Yoo and Donthu (2001), that is founded upon Aaker's conceptualisation of brand equity.

The brand equity dimensions that apply in Yoo and Donthu (2001) that measure brand equity at the consumer level are brand quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness and brand associations. Following the definitions of these dimensions as posited by Aaker (1991), brand quality is *"the consumers judgement about a products overall excScholder Ellence and superiority"* (Aaker, 1991, p.26), and brand loyalty is defined as *"the attachment that a customer has to a brand"* (Aaker, 1991 p.39). Brand awareness is defined as *"the ability for a buyer to recognise or recall that a brand"* (Aaker, 1991 p.61). Brand associations are defined as *"anything linked in memory to a brand"* (Aaker, 1991 p. 109). Yoo and Donthu (2001) considered that in addition to the measurement of the four brand equity dimensions that a measure of overall brand equity was required based upon the brand purchase of the consumer.

It is therefore likely brand equity as a measure of brand strength and favourability of consumers is applicable to FLEs construing the strength and favourability of a brand as held by consumers. This new group of constructs is therefore termed FLE-construed corporate brand equity and represents *FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers*, stated in the first element of the FLE corporate identity definition.

2.3.2.2 FLE organisational associations

The previous section proposes that FLEs hold organisational associations that answer the question *who are we as an organisation?* and are defined as *the “mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members”* (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006, p.102).

As part of the development of the FLE corporate brand identification construct, section 2.3.1.5 of this literature review discussed and established evidence that FLEs are likely span the internal and external environment of the organisation, represent the organisation’s brand to its customers and importantly live the brand by embodying its purposes and what it stands for. Section 2.3.1.6 discusses and establishes FLEs as members of a corporate brand community, along with other internal and external stakeholder groups. The literature concerning corporate branding has long contested that employees are an audience of the corporate brand and that the corporate brand carries cues and signals about an organisation to key stakeholder groups (Balmer, 1998; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001). The FLEs of an organisation are a stakeholder group and constituency of the corporate brand (Heskett et al, 1994; Balmer, 2001; Chun and Davies 2010). However, the internal aspects of corporate branding require management in the form of communicating the mission and vision of the organisation, an image of the organisation and a set of organisational signals through the consistent implementation of the corporate brands visual identity (Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005).

It is therefore likely that these three dimensions, when newly applied at an FLE not a management level, comprise a group of constructs termed FLE organisational associations, and represent *a set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity*, as stated in the first element of the FLE corporate identity definition.

2.3.3 The consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

The final element of the definition of FLE corporate identity states, in relation to FLE membership of a corporate brand community, that *membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support the CVI, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation*. This section respectively reviews the literature on branding and services marketing and the literature on organisational psychology to establish a number of constructs that reflect the potential consequences of FLE corporate brand community membership stated in the final element of the definition of FLE corporate identity.

2.3.3.1 Traditional services marketing and branding consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

The performance of FLEs is often considered in the effectiveness of their behaviours in support of the organisation during service encounters with customers and in interacting with other FLEs. In this context, highly committed FLEs strongly demonstrate up to 15 different supportive service behaviours (Furtmueller, van Dick and Wilderom, 2011). The services marketing literature distinguishes between two forms of FLE behaviour, in-role and extra-role behaviours. In-role behaviours concern those specified in job descriptions (Brown and Peterson, 1993; Podsakoff and Ahearne, 1998). Extra-role behaviours are discretionary to the FLE falling outside of the job description (Williams and Anderson, 1991; Ackfeldt and Coote, 2005). For example in an internal marketing context in-role and extra-role behaviours include customer orientation and sales

empathy with customers (Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam and van Dick, 2009), support for other FLE colleagues to meet their customer related objectives (Bell and Menguc, 2002), the delivery of service quality (Bell, Menguc and Stefani, 2004) and consequently the delivery of customer satisfaction (Mukherjee and Malhotra, 2003).

A number of recent studies have researched the potential influence of branding upon FLE behaviours. Burmann, Zeplin and Riley (2009, p.266) conclude that brand commitment, defined as *“the extent of psychological attachment of employees to the brand, which influences their willingness to exert extra effort towards reaching the brands goals”*, influence FLEs’ extra role behaviours. Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009) make a further distinction applying in-role and extra-role FLE behaviours to a branding context. Determining that FLEs exhibit in-role brand building behaviours and extra-role brand building behaviours, i.e. positive word-of-mouth, brand participation and relatedness to brand community, when they strongly identify with their services role. However, in an FLE context, Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p.123) precisely define employee brand building behaviours as *“employee’s contribution (both on and off the job) to an organisation’s customer-orientated branding efforts”*. In-role brand building behaviour is defined as *“FLEs meeting the standards prescribed by their organisational roles as brand representatives”* (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009, p.123); whilst extra role brand building behaviour is defined as *“employee actions that go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand and are discretionary”* (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak 2009, p.123).

It is therefore likely that FLE brand building behaviour construct represents *where membership [FLE corporate brand community] firstly encourages FLE actions that support the CVI*, as stated in the last element of the FLE corporate identity definition.

2.3.3.2 Organisational psychology consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

Recently corporate identity discourse has widened to encompass constructs that were previously exclusively the domain of the organisational psychology literature.

Specifically, social identity, at its organisational level, termed organisational identity, as presented in section 2.3.1.6, is debated in the context of its similarities and differences with corporate identity at the organisation level (Cornelissen, Haslam and Balmer, 2007; He and Balmer, 2007; Balmer 2008).

FLE organisational identification

The emergence of organisational psychology constructs is also the case in the services marketing and branding literature, in the investigation of the influence of organisational identification upon FLEs' brand and service performance. For example the organisational identification of FLEs is, *"the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of the organisation and where identification with an organisation partly answers the question of who am I?"* (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.33). This sense of perceived oneness with the organisation (Mael and Ashforth, 1992) reflects the psychological merging of the self and the organisation (Haslam et al, 2001; Tyler and Blader 2001; van Knippenberg 2000). Inherent in organisational identification is *"the more an individual identifies with an organisation the more the organisation's values, norms and interests are incorporated into an individuals' concept of their self"* (Van Knippenber and Sleebos, 2006, p.27).

Organisational identification strongly predicts FLE sales performance and the performance of their business unit (Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam and van Dick, 2009). FLE organisational identification also influences the customer orientation of FLEs (Wieseke, Ullrich, Christ and van Dick, 2007) and the effectiveness of the service-profit-chain, the internal chain of events that culminates in satisfied and loyal customers through FLEs delivering the requisite level of service quality (Homburg, Wieseke and Hoyer, 2009). Organisational identification is therefore a positive and significant influencer of FLEs.

It is therefore likely that the FLE organisational identification construct represents the *ties between the FLE and the organisation*, as stated in the last element of the FLE corporate identity definition.

FLE affective organisational commitment

Organisational identification in itself does not necessarily bind an FLE to a particular cause, course of action or objective (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006), i.e.

organisational goals, programs and change projects (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002).

Organisational commitment is a force that binds an employee with such a target (Meyer and Allen, 1991) as employees maintain an attachment to that target because they should (normative commitment), want to (affective commitment) or feel they have too much to lose (continuance commitment) by severing the connection (Meyer and Allen, 1997). The importance of affective organisational commitment's influence upon FLEs is emphasised by Mukherjee and Malhotra (2003) who establish a positive and significant relationship between affective organisational commitment and the level of service quality delivered by FLEs to customers. In addition Meyer, Becker and van Dick (2006), in their integration and modelling of organisational identity and commitment, posit that in particular affective commitment positively influences employee motivation and their willingness to exert effort. This is particularly the case in complex or ambiguous tasks where employee discretion is required, i.e. in service encounters.

Therefore in addition to FLE organisational identification, it is likely that the FLE affective organisational commitment construct also represents the *ties between the FLE and the organisation*, as stated in the last element of the FLE corporate identity definition.

2.3.4 Part B summary and conclusions

This section has reviewed the existent corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature to establish a set of constructs that likely

represent the three elements of the definition of FLE corporate identity developed in Part A of the literature review.

The above constructs presented in table 2.7, below, form the theoretical foundations from which the study's theoretical model is to be configured in Chapter three. The FLE corporate brand identification construct is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

Table 2.7 Foundation constructs of the proposed study

	Definition element	Constructs
First definition element	<i>"A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers..."</i>	New construct groups: FLE construed corporate brand equity (based upon Yoo and Dhontu, 2001, 2002) FLE organisational associations (based upon Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005)
Central definition element	<i>"...FLEs' membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity."</i>	New construct: FLE corporate brand identification (based upon Ashforth and Mael, 1989)
Last definition element	<i>"...Where membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support it, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation."</i>	Existing construct: FLE brand building behaviour (Mohart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009) FLE organisational identification (Ashforth and Mael, 1989) FLE affective organisational commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991)

2.4 Literature review summary and conclusions

2.4.1 Definition of FLE corporate identity

Part A of the literature review develops a definition of FLE corporate identity passing through five sequential steps. After firstly characterising the corporate identity construct at an organisational level, secondly five proposed dimensions of FLE corporate identity are developed based upon the characteristics of an FLE's operating environment. Third, the five FLE corporate identity dimensions all find support when scrutinised against a set of corporate identity definitions and ten corporate identity models (see tables 2.2 to 2.5). A set of conclusions for each dimension, that result from the analysis, are contained in table 2.6. These conclusions further develop the theory associated with each of the FLE corporate identity dimensions and specifically isolate the particular influence the organisation's corporate visual identity. These conclusions form the basis upon which the following definition of FLE corporate identity is founded:

A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers. These organisational associations and construed associations form the basis of an FLE's membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity. Where membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support the CVI, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation.

2.4.2 FLE corporate identity constructs

Part B of the literature review reviews the existent corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature to establish a set of constructs that likely represent the three elements of the definition of FLE corporate identity developed

in Part A of the literature review. This includes the FLE corporate brand identification construct which is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

Table 2.8 Foundation constructs of the proposed study

	Definition element	Constructs
First definition element	<i>"A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate visual identity and externally by FL's construing the external performance of the corporate visual identity during service encounters with customers..."</i>	New construct groups: FLE construed corporate brand equity (based upon Yoo and Dhontu, 2001, 2002) FLE organisational associations (based upon Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005)
Central definition element	<i>"...FLEs' membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate visual identity."</i>	New construct: FLE corporate brand identification (based upon Ashforth and Mael, 1989)
Last definition element	<i>"Where membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support it, while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation."</i>	Existing construct: FLE brand building behaviour (Mohart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009) FLE organisational identification (Ashforth and Mael, 1989) FLE affective organisational commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991)

The above constructs, presented in table 2.8, form the theoretical foundations from which the study's theoretical model is to be configured in Chapter three.

2.4.3 The research gap

The research gap that this thesis is to address is as follows, per the research objectives set for the study:

RO1 To extend the corporate identity literature by empirically testing the dimensions of the FLE corporate identity construct, in the form of a theoretical model, by

researching and testing the hypothesised relationships between its specific dimensions.

- RO2 To extend the corporate identity, branding and organisational psychology literature by developing a valid and reliable measure of the psychological strength of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, a community which represents the corporate identity stakeholder group for FLEs.
- RO3 To extend the branding, services marketing and corporate identity literature in developing a valid and reliable set of scales to measure to what extent FLEs construe customer corporate associations during service encounters, thus determining the influence of FLE-construed associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.
- RO4 To extend the branding and corporate identity literature by developing a valid and reliable set of scales in order to measure FLE organisational associations in an FLE operating environment, thus determining the influence of FLE organisational associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.
- RO5 To extend the services marketing and branding literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established services marketing and branding construct of FLE extra-role brand building behaviour.
- RO6 To extend the organisational psychology literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established organisational psychology constructs of organisational identification and organisational commitment.

An FLEs social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, referred to in RO2 to RO6 above, is the phenomena manifested in the FLE corporate brand identification construct proposed in this study. FLE corporate brand identification is the central construct of the studies FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as presented in table 3.4 of this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE - THEORETICAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three of this dissertation further uses the corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature to develop a theoretical model of the FLE corporate identity construct. The literature is applied to develop a series of hypothesised relationships between the constructs that are proposed to comprise FLE corporate identity in Part B of literature review.

Section 3.2 hypothesises the antecedents of the overall FLE construed corporate brand equity construct. Section 3.3 develops the antecedents of the central construct of the model, FLE corporate brand identification; namely the overall FLE construed corporate brand identification construct and three constructs that form a construct grouping termed FLE organisational associations. Next the consequences of FLE corporate brand identification are hypothesised. Section 3.4 hypothesises there is a direct effect upon three forms of FLE brand building behaviour and section 3.5 hypothesises the influence of FLE corporate brand identification upon FLE organisational identification and FLE affective organisational commitment, both of which are constructs from organisational psychology literature.

Hypotheses 1a to 1c as a group, and each individual hypothesis there on, is followed by a short summary that places it in the contexts of corporate identity at the corporate level, the corporate brand as a key component of corporate identity and developing corporate identity at an FLE level.

Section 3.6 concludes and summarises the chapter in presenting a theoretical model for the FLE corporate identity construct along with its set of hypotheses.

3.2 Three antecedents of the overall FLE construed corporate brand equity construct

Section 2.3.2.1 of the literature review established that consumers evaluate the strength of individual brands based upon the associative networks that they hold for an individual brand and the strength of the structured brand knowledge that results. It also established that the phenomena of brand strength is conceptually represented and defined by the brand equity construct. Brand equity comprises the dimensions of brand quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness/brand associations that in turn are likely to influence an overall assessment brand equity, as measured by Yoo and Donthu (2001, 2002). As in section 2.3.2 the likelihood was established that FLEs construe consumer based brand equity related to an organisation's corporate brand during service encounters, it is therefore hypothesised that:

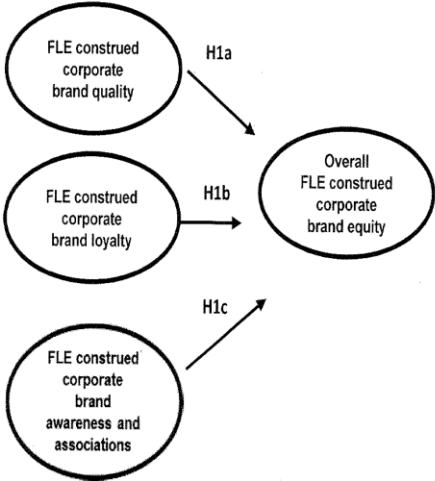
***Hypothesis 1a:* FLE construed corporate brand quality directly affects overall FLE construed corporate brand equity.**

***Hypothesis 1b:* FLE construed corporate brand loyalty directly affects overall FLE construed corporate brand equity.**

***Hypothesis 1c:* FLE construed corporate brand awareness/associations directly affects overall FLE-construed corporate brand equity.**

The hypotheses above comprise stage one of FLE corporate identity theoretical model development, as indicated in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Theoretical model development stage one



At the corporate level, corporate identity models place FLEs as boundary spanning employees, placing them directly operating between the organisation and its set of external corporate identity stakeholders (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986). By interacting with customers, as a specific corporate identity stakeholder group (Abratt, 1989; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), FLEs directly receive feedback from customers concerning the performance of the organisation and its corporate identity (Stuart, 1999). Customers are an audience of the corporate brand, and feedback information on the corporate brand to FLE's during service encounters (Alessandri, 2001; Suvatjjs and de Chernatony, 2005). FLE's construe this information as part of the process of developing construed associations that answer the question "*What do members of the organisation think others think of the organisation?*" (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten ,2006, p.100). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H1a to H1c represent an FLE's construed associations relating to customer evaluation of the organisations corporate brand. These three FLE corporate identity phenomena are FLE construed brand quality, FLE construed corporate brand loyalty and FLE construed corporate brand awareness / associations.

3.3 Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity and FLE organisational associations as antecedents of corporate brand identification

This section considers overall FLE overall construed corporate brand equity and FLE organisational associations as antecedents to FLE corporate brand identification. Each is discussed in turn.

3.3.1 Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity

As presented in section 2.3.2 above, corporate associations, "*all the information about a company that a person holds*" (Brown and Dacin (1997, p.69), are likely to make the corporate brand identification category salient given their contribution to providing

frequent cues about the organisation, communicating organisational context and conveying information that relates to the goals of the perceiver (Turner, 1985; 1994). In communicating differences between the members of a corporate brand community and those that are not, corporate associations contribute to category fit, where at the extreme an individual holds a self-perception exclusively as a member of a corporate brand community, which is defined by the shared characteristics of that group (Turner, 1982). Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity, as a construed association, is therefore likely to influence FLE corporate brand identification. It is therefore proposed that:

Hypothesis 2: Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity directly affects FLE corporate brand identification.

Corporate identity models, developed at the corporate level, identify FLEs as a specific stakeholder group (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1989; Stuart, 1998) and an audience of the organisations corporate brand (Alessandri, 2001; Melewar, 2003). At an FLE level, during their interaction with customers, FLEs not only construe consumers attitudes towards the corporate brand they also contribute to the development of a corporate brand community of which FLEs are members (Gregory, 2007; Brodie et al, 2009). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H2 proposes that an FLEs overall construed brand equity directly affects FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of FLE membership of a corporate brand community.

3.3.2 FLE organisational associations and the corporate brand

Section 2.3.2.3 of the literature proposes that FLEs hold organisational associations that answer the question *who are we as an organisation?*, which are defined as the *“mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members”* (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006, p.102). Held by FLEs as part of the knowledge resulting from an individual’s associative network memory (Scholder Ellen, Webb and Mohr, 2006) section 2.3.2.2 proposes that FLE organisational associations make an

FLE's corporate brand identification salient, as is the case presented above for FLE-construed consumer brand equity.

Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005) establish that it is essential to internally manage the implementation of the corporate brand, in order to establish a set of measurement scales that evaluate the effectiveness of a corporate brands internal management. In applying these principals at the FLE level it is proposed that FLEs hold organisational associations concerning the mission and vision of the organisation, the organisation's corporate image and its corporate visual identity, all of which are likely to influence the salience of an FLE's corporate brand identification.

3.3.2.1 Mission and vision dissemination

The corporate vision and corporate brand feature as components of Melwar's (2003) corporate identity taxonomy within the corporate culture and corporate design dimensions of the model. When researched from a practitioner perspective Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) considered the corporate mission and vision to be reflected in the organisation's corporate brand, as part of the corporate branding structure, and visualised through corporate design influencing corporate communications. Savutjjs and de Chernatony (2005) consider the mission and vision of the organisation to have a direct influence on the organisation's corporate brand. Harris and de Chernatony (2001) consider the corporate brand a significant vehicle to communicate the vision of the organisation to the organisation's employees. In order for the vision to be communicated by the corporate brand, the involvement of employees in the development of an organisation's mission and vision is essential (de Chernatony, 2002). Historically, the mission and vision of an organisation and its corporate brand have been considered by some organisations to be used interchangeably with both considered as synonymous with the other (Ind, 2001). It is therefore concluded that FLEs, as members of a corporate brand community, are an audience of an organisation's dissemination of its mission and vision and that the organisation's

mission and vision comprise part of an FLE member's organisational associations. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 3: FLEs' organisational associations concerning the dissemination of the organisation's mission and vision directly affect FLE corporate brand identification.

Corporate identity models, developed at the organisation level, indicate that FLEs are influenced by a number of corporate identity phenomena internal to the organisation (Stuart, 1999; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt; 2003 and Melewar, 2003). Such phenomena contribute to the organisational associations held by FLEs, that are a set of mental associations that answer the question of "*Who are we as an organisation?*" (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetton, 2006). The mission and vision of an organisation are considered to be internal corporate identity phenomena (Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005) that are communicated via an organisations corporate brand (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H3 proposes that an FLEs organisational associations concerning the dissemination of the organisation's mission and vision directly affect FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of FLE membership of a corporate brand community.

3.3.2.2 Consistent image implementation of corporate image

In the literature the source of individuals' organisational associations are attributed to a number of separate, but related, constructs including corporate identity, corporate image and corporate reputation (Dacin and Brown, 2002). In dis-aggregating these constructs, by reviewing their respective sets of definitions, Barnett, Jermier and Lafferty (2006) consider corporate image as an individual's impressions of the firm, irrespective of whether the individual is internal and external to the firm. This concurs similarly with Walker (2010), whose later study considers corporate image again as a different construct from corporate identity, with corporate image comprising of what stakeholders know and think about the firm. Melewar (2003, p.209), in the definition of

corporate image, indicates corporate branding as a method of presenting the organisation, playing a role in building corporate image, and considering the holding of a corporate image to be “*the totality of stakeholders’ perceptions of the way an organisation presents itself, either deliberately or accidentally. It is the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge and impressions that each stakeholder has about an organisation*”. In recognising that organisational members are in a unique position to view the organisation, in spanning the boundary of the firm, this group is distinguished from other stakeholder groups (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006). In order to be effective the organisation’s corporate image requires internal management (Zinkhan, Ganesh, Jaju and Hayes, 2001) to co-ordinate its internal operations so that the corporate image is consistent across all stakeholder groups (Dowling, 1993; Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005).

It is therefore proposed that FLEs as members of a corporate brand community are an audience of an organisation’s consistent implementation of the corporate image and that the organisation’s corporate image forms part of the organisational associations FLEs hold about the organisation. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 4: FLEs’ organisational associations concerning the organisation’s consistent implementation of its corporate image directly affects FLE corporate brand identification.

Corporate identity models, developed at the organisation, level indicate that FLEs are influenced by a number of corporate identity phenomena internal to the organisation (Stuart, 1999; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt; 2003 and Melewar, 2003). Such phenomena contribute to the organisational associations held by FLEs, that are a set of mental associations that answer the question of “*Who are we as an organisation?*” (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetton, 2006). The corporate image of an organisation is considered to be an internal corporate identity phenomena (Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005) that is communicated via an organisations corporate brand (Suvatjis and de Chernatony ,

2005). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H4 proposes that an FLEs organisational associations concerning the organisation's consistent implementation of its corporate image directly affects FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of FLE membership of a corporate brand community.

3.3.2.3 Corporate visual identity implementation

A detailed discussion concerning corporate visual identity is contained in section 2.3.1.1 where it is concluded that corporate visual identity are the visual elements of a corporate brand. However, the corporate visual identity of an organisation is considered to be a key component of an organisation's corporate identity (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003; Melewar, and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), a component that is considered to be one of the dominant dimensions of a corporate identity (Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). Although the terminology surrounding corporate visual identity and the construct definitions are not consistent, there is a clear categorisation of its key components as a visual dimension of corporate identity (Bartholme and Melewar, 2011). As discussed in section 2.3.1.1 there is a consensus between authors that the components of corporate visual identity consist of corporate name, a symbol or logo type, typography, colour and slogan (Olins, 1995; Dowling 1993; Melewar and Saunders, 1998b, Melewar 2003). Employee awareness of the corporate symbols that comprise corporate visual identity, and their associated meaning, is vital as these visual aspects communicate signals about the organisation to employees (Berry, 2000) and in doing so create a physical recognition of the organisation (Dowling, 1993). As such Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005, p158) consider corporate visual identity *as "the most tangible facet of corporate identity"*. In that, in line with Melewar, Saunders and Balmer (2001), it requires internal management and standardisation to develop a consistency in its implementation across the organisation in order enhance its influence.

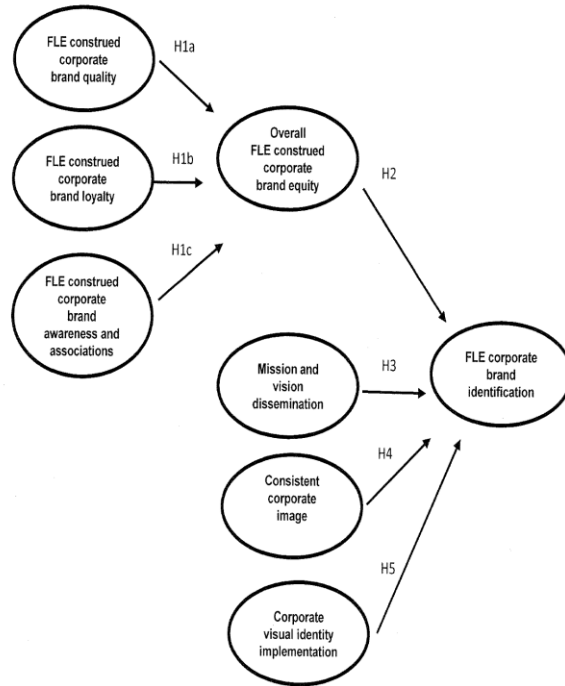
It is therefore proposed that FLEs, as members of a corporate brand community, are an audience of the implementation of an organisation's corporate visual identity which form part of the associations FLEs hold about the organisation. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 5: FLEs' organisational associations concerning the organisation's corporate visual identity implementation directly affect their corporate brand identification.

Corporate identity models, developed at the organisation level, indicate that FLEs are influenced by a number of corporate identity phenomena internal to the organisation (Stuart, 1999; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt; 2003 and Melewar, 2003). Such phenomena contribute to the organisational associations held by FLEs, that are a set of mental associations that answer the question of *"Who are we as an organisation?"* (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetton, 2006). The corporate visual identity of an organisation, the visual element of an organisations corporate brand (Melewar and Saunders, 1998; 1999), is considered to be an internal corporate identity phenomena (Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H5 proposes that an FLEs organisational associations concerning the organisations corporate visual identity implementation, directly affect FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of FLE membership of a corporate brand community.

Hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5 comprise stage 2 of FLE corporate identity theoretical model development as indicated in table 3.2.

Table 3.2 **Theoretical model development stage two**



3.4 The services and brand marketing consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

Section 2.3.3.1 of the literature review established that FLE behaviour in the services literature is categorised as in-role and extra-role behaviours. In-role behaviours concern those specified in job descriptions, whereas extra role behaviours are discretionary to the FLE and fall outside of the job description. Organisational identification, a form of social identity, strongly influences elements of an FLE's role that require appropriate in-role and extra-role behaviours such as FLE sales performance and the performance of their business unit (Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam and van Dick, 2009).

FLE organisational identification also influences the customer orientation of FLEs (Wieseke, Ullrich, Christ and van Dick, 2007) and the effectiveness of the service-profit-chain, the internal chain of events that culminates in satisfied and loyal customers through FLEs delivering the requisite level of service quality (Homburg, Wieseke and Hoyer, 2009).

As stated in section 2.3.3.1 Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009) apply the in-role and extra-role principles to FLE behaviours to their brand building behaviour, where extra-role brand building behaviours are considered to be of significant influence as they concern actions that are discretionary and go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand. Such extra-role brand building behaviours concern positive word-of-mouth, corporate brand participation and relatedness to brand community. It is therefore considered that as organisational identification, a form of social identity, influences FLEs service behaviours, FLE corporate brand identification, another form of social identity, is also likely to influence FLE extra-role brand building behaviours.

3.4.1 FLE positive word-of-mouth

Previous research studies indicate that when consumers have a strong identification with a brand this has favourable consequences for consumer loyalty and word-of-

mouth (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Bagozzi and Bergami, 2000). Such identification, considered from an organisational identification perspective, positively and strongly influences consumers to promote a company's product, services and brands (Bettencourt and Brown, 2003), recommend the company's products more often (Ahearne, Bhattacharya and Gruen, 2005), and, when identifying with a brand's community, make positive recommendations about the brand (Algesheimer, Dholakia and Herrmann, 2005).

Similarly, FLEs, as members of a brand community, are one of a number of stakeholders who continuously interact and negotiate through a continuous social process that over time co-creates brand value (Brodie et al 2009). Such negotiation is based upon a firm working with its internal and external stakeholders and responding to their input. This process of negotiation and dialogue leads to the development of brand meaning and value over time (Gregory, 2007), therefore implying that FLEs interaction and negotiation is not limited to customers, but is also seen with other stakeholders who are also members of a brand community. Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p.123) consider such interaction and negotiation with all stakeholders as discretionary, an extra-role brand building behaviour, that is termed positive word-of-mouth and defined as *"employees' personal advocacy of the organisation's product or services brands outside the job context"*. As this thesis and research study concerns FLEs as members of a corporate brand community, positive word-of-mouth is to be termed FLE positive word-of-mouth and is defined as *"employees personal advocacy of the organisation's corporate brand outside the job context"*.

It is therefore concluded, for the purposes of establishing the consequences of FLE corporate brand identification, that FLE corporate brand identification directly influences FLE positive word-of-mouth concerning an organisation's corporate brand. It is therefore hypothesised that

Hypothesis 6: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE positive word-of-mouth.

Several corporate identity models, developed at the corporate level, indicate that FLEs interact and communicate with numerous external stakeholder groups (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Stuart, 1998). This interaction between FLEs and external stakeholders, over time, develops brand meaning and contributes to building a corporate brand community (Gregory, 2007; Brodie et al, 2009). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H6 proposes that FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE positive-word-of-mouth.

3.4.2 FLE corporate brand participation

The services marketing literature posits that FLEs are boundary spanning employees who form a link between the organisation and the customer (Bettencourt and Brown, 2003; Bettencourt, Brown and MacKenzie, 2005). The corporate identity literature, as reviewed in section 2.2.4.3 of this literature review, supports this position. It further posits that FLEs are not passive bystanders but actively participate in the affairs of the organisation by feeding back the views and concerns of customers and other external stakeholders to the organisation through its management structure (Dowling, 1986; Kennedy, 1977; Stuart, 1998).

FLEs participate as part of a corporate brand community in a number of ways. FLEs enact the corporate brand, where the *“staff are the embodiment of the [corporate] brand providing a welcomed difference, not just through what the customer receives but also how they receive it”* (de Chernatony, 2002 p.114). Ind (2003, p.74) finds some FLEs participate more than others, with some *“spreading the brand idea”* and others only *“interested and not committed”*. Also, through the brand FLEs challenge the norms of an organisation and participate in the brand’s development (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006), to the extent that FLEs interact with each other and their managers on brand related matters (de Chernatony, Cottam and Segal-Horn, 2006; Wallace and de

Chernatony, 2009). Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p123) conclude that FLEs participate in a brand's *development "by internally passing on branding relevant customer feedback from customer touchpoints"*. This represents extra-role brand building behaviour and is termed brand participation, where *"employees provide a company with high quality input for its brand management"*(Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009, p123).

It is therefore concluded that FLEs, as members of a corporate brand community, participate in the development of an organisation's corporate brand, termed FLE corporate brand participation. For the purposes of this study FLE corporate brand participation is defined as *FLEs internally passing on corporate branding relevant customer feedback from service encounters with customers*. It is therefore concluded, for the purposes of establishing the consequence of FLE corporate brand identification, that FLE corporate brand identification directly and positively influences FLE brand participation. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 7: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE corporate brand participation.

Several corporate identity models, developed at the corporate level, indicate that FLEs feedback the views and concerns of customers and other external stakeholders to the organisation via its management structure (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Stuart; 1998). As members of a corporate brand community FLEs gather such information through interaction with external corporate identity stakeholders (Gregory,2007; Brodie et al, 2009). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H7 proposes that FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of corporate brand community membership, directly affects FLE corporate brand participation.

3.4.3 FLE relatedness to corporate brand community

Consumer brand communities are strengthened by members sharing in brand experiences (McAlexander, Schouten, Koenig, 2002), where a brand community is centred around a structured set of social relations among admirers of a brand (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Such social interaction leads to social influence between the community members (Algesheimer, Dholakia and Herrman, 2005). In an FLE context Devasagayam, Buff, Aurand and Judson (2010) proposed and verified in their research that such social interaction, in the form of employee interaction, results from employee membership of a brand community; corresponding with the same contention of Miles and Mangold (2004, 2007). Brodie et al (2009), and Merz, He and Vargo (2009) consider employees to be a stakeholder group and an operand resource that co-creates brand value through continuous, highly dynamic and social interaction. Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009) contend that the effectiveness of this social interaction is to be found in the strength of the perceived relatedness between individual members of a corporate brand community. The construct is termed as relatedness to corporate brand community and defined by Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009 p.123) as *"the strength of the perceived relatedness to other individual members of a brand community"* (Morhart et al, 2009, p.123). For the purposes of determining the consequences of FLE corporate brand identification FLE relatedness to corporate brand community is defined as *the strength of FLEs' perceived relatedness to other individual members of a corporate brand community.*

As FLE corporate brand identification is defined in this dissertation as a form of social identity that results from the *extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of a corporate brand community, where identification with the corporate brand community partly answers the question of who am I?*, it is concluded that the stronger FLE corporate brand identification the stronger FLE relatedness to the corporate brand community. For the purposes of determining the consequences of FLE corporate identity

Hypothesis 8: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE relatedness to corporate brand community.

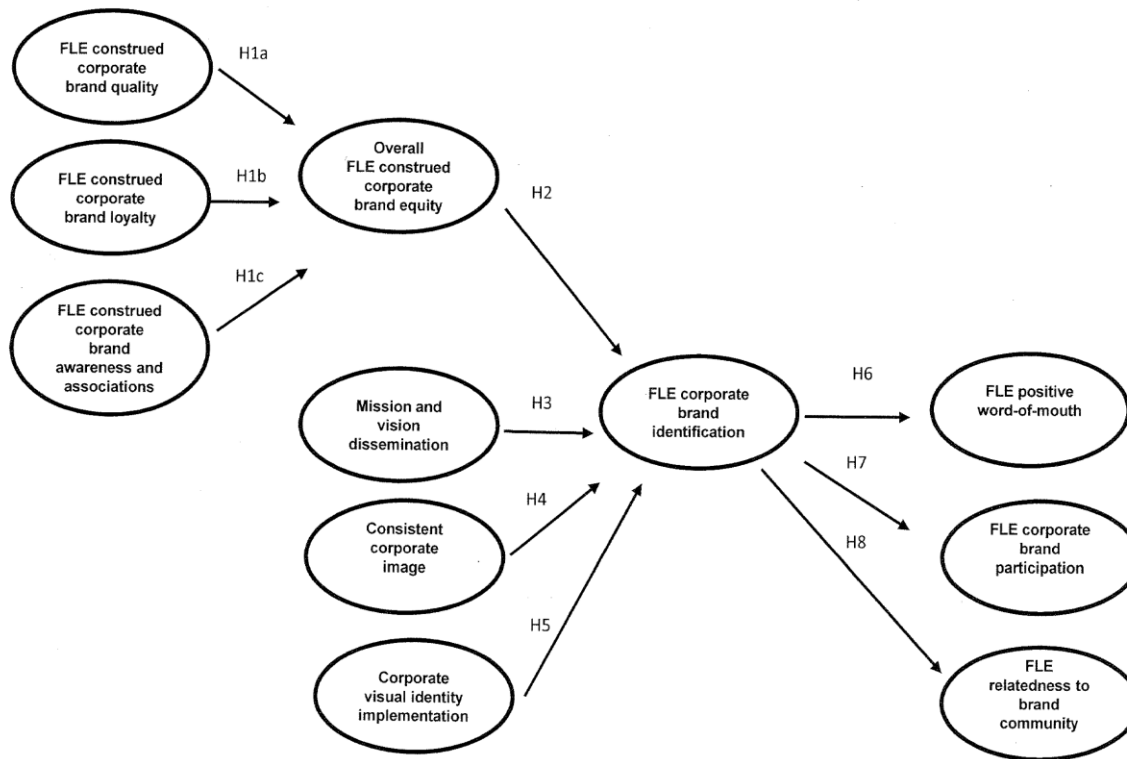
At the corporate level, certain corporate identity models place FLEs as boundary spanning employees, placing them directly operating between the organisation and its set of external corporate identity stakeholders (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986). The interaction between FLEs and external stakeholders, over time, develops brand meaning and contributes to building a corporate brand community (Gregory, 2007; Brodie et al, 2009) of which FLEs are members. It is recognised that corporate identity, of which an organisation's corporate brand is a dimension, provides meaning to stakeholders that allows them to describe, remember and relate to the corporate brand and the organisation (Melewar, 2003). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H8 proposes that FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of corporate brand community membership, directly affects FLE relatedness to corporate brand community.

Hypotheses 6, 7 and 8 comprise stage 3 of FLE corporate identity theoretical model development, as indicated in table 3.3.

3.5 Organisational psychology consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

Section 2.3.3.2 of the literature review cited that organisational psychology constructs, once purely the domain of the organisational psychology literature, have recently been the subject of discourse in the corporate identity literature, together with the services marketing and branding literature. Section 2.3.3.2 established it is likely that organisational identification and affective organisational commitment, both existing organisational psychology constructs, are likely to represent consequences of FLE

Table 3.3 Theoretical model development stage three



membership of a corporate brand community. As recognised in the definition of FLE stating FLE corporate brand identification influences closer ties between the FLE and the organisation. This section proposes that FLE corporate brand identification influences both FLE organisational identification and FLE affective organisational commitment.

3.5.1 The influence of FLE corporate brand identification on FLE organisational identification

Organisational identification is one of a number of potential social identities held by FLEs (Haslam, 2004). Employees potentially hold social identities that correspond with their membership of groups not just at the organisation level, but also at a team and divisional level (Brown, 2001).

The multiple social identities held by employees are not mutually exclusive from each other; rather they interact by virtue of an individual's membership of more than one group (Cornelissen, Haslam and Balmer, 2007). The comparisons an individual makes between these groups contributes to the salience of his or her respective social identities (Turner, 1985, 1994). It is therefore likely that an FLE's organisational identification is influenced by his or her corporate brand identification.

It is therefore proposed a social identity, in this case an organisational identity, becomes salient by making comparisons between relevant comparison objects on the same level of abstraction, i.e. the corporate brand and the organisation as a whole. For instance the presenting of University colours to students made their organisational identification with the University salient (James and Greenberg, 1989). Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher and Christ (2004) found that teachers more strongly identified with their schools when their school type was made more salient; and when teachers were told that they were being compared with other professional groups they more strongly identified with their professional groups. It is therefore concluded that FLE

corporate brand identification influences the salience of an FLE's organisational identification.

It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 9: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE organisational identification

At the corporate level, certain corporate identity models place FLEs as boundary spanning employees, placing them directly operating between the organisation and its set of external corporate identity stakeholders (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986). The interaction between FLEs and external stakeholders, over time, develops brand meaning and contributes to building a corporate brand community of which FLEs are members (Gregory, 2007; Brodie et al, 2009). It is recognised that corporate identity, of which an organisations corporate brand is a dimension, provides meaning to stakeholders that allows them to describe, remember and relate to the organisation (Melewar, 2003). Several corporate identity models, at the corporate level, indicate a relationship between FLEs and the organisation (Kennedy, 1977; Dowling, 1986; Stuart, 1998). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H9 proposes that FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of corporate brand community membership, directly affects FLE organisational identification.

3.5.2 The influence of FLE corporate brand identification on FLE organisational commitment

However, as stated in section 2.3.3.2 of the literature review, social or organisational identity in itself does not necessarily bind an FLE to a particular cause, course of action or objective (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006), i.e. organisational goals, programs and change projects (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002).

Affective organisational commitment, when an employee is attached to a target because they want to be (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006), is driven by value

congruence between the organisation and the individual (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005; Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). Employees as part of their organisational identification hold such value-based content that in turn influences their affective organisational commitment (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006).

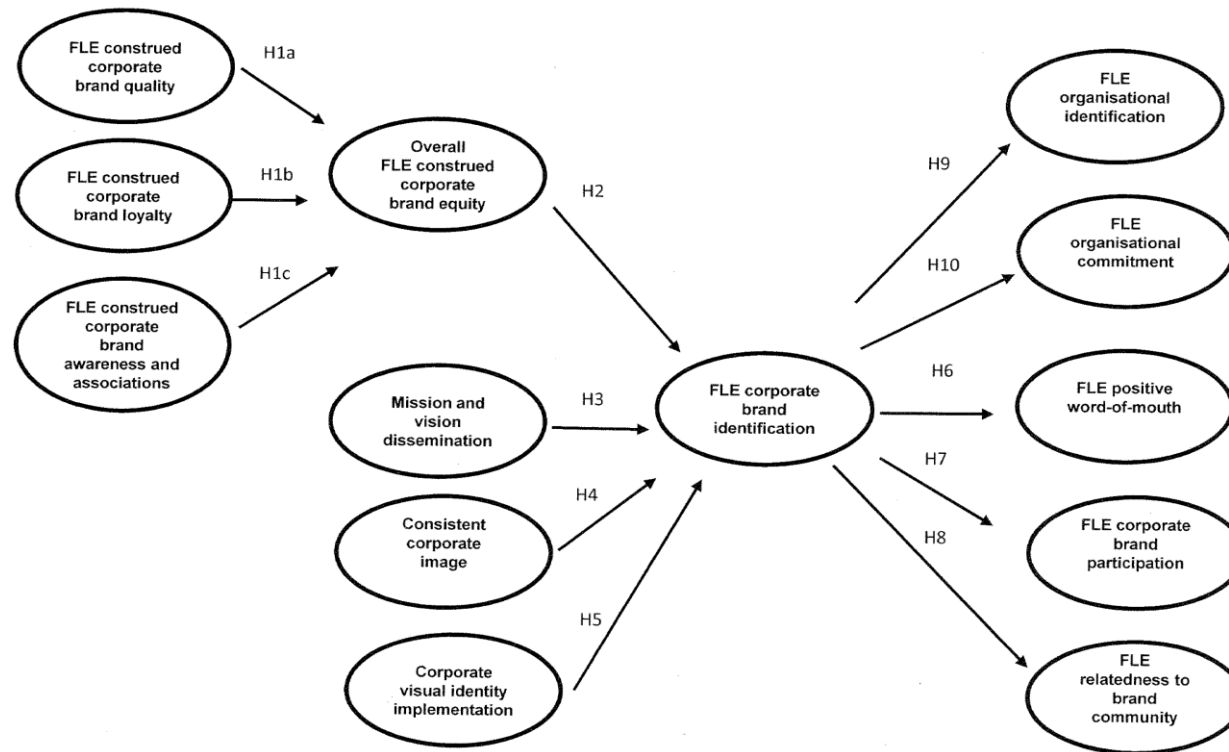
In a similar manner it is proposed that FLEs, as a component part of holding corporate brand identification, hold such content relating to their brand community. Specifically, corporate brands symbolise and visualise an organisation's objectives, vision, mission and values along with the strategy of the organisation (Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). This form of communication contains cues from and about an organisation (van Rekom, 1997), with the corporate brand forming individual components of a larger communications mix (Melewar and Saunders, 2000). The corporate brand, therefore communicates cues to employees that contain the desired targets and actions of an organisation, along with its objectives, which represent the organisation as a whole (van Rekom, van Riel and Wierenga, 2006).

It is therefore likely that the content of an FLE corporate brand identification contains value-based content that is likely to influence the value congruence between an FLE and the organisation. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 10: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE affective organisational commitment.

A considerable number of corporate identity models, developed at the corporate level, consider employee behaviour as a key component of corporate identity (Stuart, 1999; Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt, 2003; Melewar, 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). Further models propose that employee behaviour represents both the organisation and its corporate brand (Melewar, 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005) during service encounters with customers. Affective

Table 3.4 Theoretical model of FLE corporate identity



organisational commitment influences such behaviours (Mukherjee and Malhotra, 2003) and represents an employee's attachment to and involvement in the organisation because they wish to be (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Therefore, in developing corporate identity at an FLE level, H10 proposes that FLE corporate brand identification, the psychological influence of corporate brand community membership, directly affects FLE affective organisational commitment.

Hypotheses 9 and 10 complete the development of the FLE corporate identity theoretical model, as indicated in table 3.4.

3.6 Chapter summary and conclusions

Chapter three of the dissertation develops a theoretical model of FLE corporate identity as presented in table 3.4 above.

The theoretical model comprises 10 hypothesised relationships:

Hypothesis 1a: FLE construed corporate brand quality directly affects overall FLE construed corporate brand equity.

Hypothesis 1b: FLE construed corporate brand loyalty directly affects overall FLE construed corporate brand equity.

Hypothesis 1c: FLE construed corporate brand awareness/associations directly affects overall FLE-construed corporate brand equity.

Hypothesis 2: Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity directly affects FLE corporate brand identification.

Hypothesis 3: FLEs' organisational associations concerning the dissemination of the organisation's mission and vision directly affect FLE corporate brand identification.

Hypothesis 4: FLEs' organisational associations concerning the organisation's consistent implementation of its corporate image directly affects FLE corporate brand identification.

Hypothesis 5: FLEs' organisational associations concerning the organisation's corporate visual identity implementation directly affect their corporate brand identification.

Hypothesis 6: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE positive word-of-mouth.

Hypothesis 7: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE corporate brand participation.

Hypothesis 8: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE relatedness to corporate brand community.

Hypothesis 9: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE organisational identification

Hypothesis 10: FLE corporate brand identification directly affects FLE affective organisational commitment.

Next, chapter four of this dissertation proposes a research methodology for the FLE corporate identity empirical research study.

CHAPTER FOUR - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four of this dissertation presents and justifies a research methodology for the research study. First the research objectives are presented (4.2), followed by a description of the philosophical research position to be taken in the study (4.3) and then a description of the research design of the study (4.4). Next, the deployment of a combined exploratory and descriptive research design for the study is justified (4.4.1 to 4.4.4), along with the deployment of a quantitative research method (4.5), including the benefits, implications and process involved in deploying structural equation modelling (4.5.5). Measurement development and the operationalization of the proposed study are addressed in section 4.6, whilst measure reliability and validity are discussed in section 4.7. Finally the validity of structural models is presented and discussed (4.8) along with the implications of common method bias, non-response bias and intra-construct correlation (4.9). The chapter is summarised and concluded in section 4.10.

4.2 Research study objectives

This study concerns the definition and operationalization of corporate identity at an FLE level. The objectives of this study concern eliciting theoretical and empirical evidence regarding the FLE corporate identity construct. Specifically, the six research objectives of the study are:

RO1 To extend the corporate identity literature by empirically testing the dimensions of the FLE corporate identity construct, in the form of a theoretical model, by researching and testing the hypothesised relationships between its specific dimensions.

- RO2 To extend the corporate identity, branding and organisational psychology literature by developing a valid and reliable measure of the psychological strength of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, the corporate brand community representing the corporate identity stakeholder group for FLEs.
- RO3 To extend the branding, services marketing and corporate identity literature in developing a valid and reliable set of scales to measure FLEs' construing customers corporate associations during service encounters. Determining the influence of FLE construed associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.
- RO4 To extend the branding and corporate identity literature by developing a valid and reliable set of scales in order to measure FLE organisational associations in an FLE operating environment. Determining the influence of FLE organisational associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.
- RO5 To extend the services marketing and branding literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established services marketing and branding construct of FLE extra-role brand building behaviour.
- RO6 To extend the organisational psychology literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established organisational psychology constructs of organisational identification and organisational commitment.

The above objectives form the scope of the proposed research study and are taken into account when considering the underlying research philosophy of the study, the

development of its research design and the selection of individual research methods.

4.3 Research philosophy

4.3.1 Philosophical options

This study intends to conduct research in the social science domain, specifically in the context of a commercial services organisation, and researches the attitudes of front-line service employees. In researching the operationalization of FLE corporate identity, the study significantly utilises the literature in corporate identity, services marketing and branding segments of the literature and, to a lesser extent, the social identity segment of the organisational psychology literature. Within the marketing research discipline, Hunt (1991) stipulates that research is likely to significantly benefit from an awareness of the underlying research philosophy assumptions researchers make in their research designs. Such literature on the philosophy of science posits a number of epistemological approaches, however two major approaches dominate, the scientific method and the interpretive method (Lee and Lings, 2008).

4.3.2 Research implications of the scientific and interpretative methods debate

The scientific methods aim, in establishing relationships between phenomena, is to formulate theories and general laws (Crotty, 1998) and is widely referred to as positivism (Thomas, 2004). In believing that the world is independent of the researcher, and people in general, positivists contend that the world can be objectively measured, with each logical and rational assertion proven or verified scientifically either by logic or mathematics (Walliman, 2005). As such scientific claims in the form of hypotheses are shown to true or false (Anderson, 1983). The proposed study is structured around a theoretical model, the constructs within which

are derived from an existing base of quantitative measurement scales. In testing the theoretical model, by testing the hypothesised theoretical relationships between the phenomena contained within, the proposed research study falls within the scientific and positivist research tradition.

In contrast, the interpretive method considers individual human beings as having a considerable impact upon their environment and the processes within it (Thomas, 2004). Reality is not objectively measured, rather it is subjective and interpreted by its participants where knowledge is collaboratively constructed and context-specific, instead of collectively agreed upon by researchers and thus considered generalizable (Blaikie, 2004). In considering reality as a construction in the mind of the observer, that is consequently interpreted (Walliman, 2005), interpretive methods are criticised as subjective and heavily rely on the interpretation of information to construct theory. In addition they are questioned for favouring description and generating local understanding of phenomena over explanation, prediction and creating general laws (Hirschman, 1989). The aim of the proposed research study is not to substantially interpret the research findings but to simply to report them. Therefore the pure interpretative method does not appear to be suited to the proposed study, further supporting the conclusion that the proposed study is of a positivist orientation.

4.3.3 The scientific realist stance within the scientific tradition

The scientific tradition of positivism contains further competing epistemologies, those of logical positivism, logical empiricism and realism (Feyerabend, 1985).

In taking a deductive logic to establish its knowledge claims, logical positivism considers all knowledge claims to be conclusively true or false (Anderson, 1983). It takes the position that ideas are only meaningful if they can be verified and empirically tested; knowledge of anything that is not directly observable is considered to be impossible (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997). By implication

knowledge claims should be constrained to relationships between directly observable variables and if a phenomena cannot be seen, hear, touched smelled or tasted it cannot exist (Deshpande, 1983). Such a stance, however, rejects the possibility of latent variables as they represent unobserved phenomena.

Logical empiricism, an incremental development of logical positivism, concurs that a theory must be linked to observed variables, but differs in that knowledge and statements need only be verified by gradually increasing confirmation instead of immediate and absolute confirmation (Anderson, 1983). Again such a stance rejects the possibility of unobserved latent variables.

However, realism, a further iteration of positivism, incorporates broad positivist principals but posits it is not possible to view the world without to greater or lesser degree a form of interpretation (Thomas, 2004). Realism accepts that constructs that do not physically exist may manifest as a result of interpretation (Lee and Lings, 2008), supporting the use of latent variables in research. However, in order to constrain the interpretative element of realism, the realist view is combined with scientific principles to form scientific realism; which guides explicitly or implicitly the majority of marketing researchers (Hunt, 1990).

Scientific realism considers knowledge claims to be fallible; they can be known but not with absolute certainty (Feyerabend, 1995), accepting that the world is imperfect and only an approximate truth (Hunt, 1991). In maintaining an objectivity regarding the research, researchers aim to construct theories moving closer and closer to the truth without influencing and being influenced by the subject under investigation (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Therefore scientific realism is more open to latent constructs that are not directly observable but can be manifested in a set measurement items that attempt to operationalize the construct in a given context or environment. Such is the case with the proposed research study. As the study contains latent constructs that are associated with the psychological consequences

of membership and being seen to be a member of a corporate brand community (FLE corporate brand identification) that are not directly observable. FLEs construing the brand equity judgements of customers (FLE-construed corporate brand equity) and FLE organisational associations are also not directly observable. The study aims to establish if relationships exist between constructs that are not directly observable and if these relationships are predictable. If the study can show these relationships exist, and are relatively stable, the researcher comes closer to the acceptance of the theory that guides the conceptualisation of the theoretical model and its component relationships. However, in the implied evaluation of the analysis and theory, there is a certain amount of room for interpretation. It is therefore concluded that scientific realism, rather than a pure positivist approach, is more applicable as a research philosophy for the proposed study.

4.4 Research design

Iacobucci and Churchill (2010) classify research designs into three categories; namely, exploratory research, descriptive research and causal research. Each category is discussed below in the context of the proposed study.

4.4.1 Exploratory research

Exploratory research is deployed to gain background information into the nature of a research problem, define and clarify terms, formulate hypotheses and establish research priorities (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). It is particularly relevant to the early stages of a research project (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2000) and has five main purposes (Selitz, Wrightsman and Cook, 1976): formulating a problem for more precise investigation or developing hypotheses, establishing priorities, gathering information about the practical problems of carrying out research on particular statements, thus increasing the analyst's familiarity with the problem and clarifying concepts. Posited in the literature as the most flexible research design,

exploratory research consists of four types (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010); namely literature search, experience survey, focus groups and analysis of selected cases. The techniques associated with conducting an exploratory analysis include secondary data analysis, experience surveys, case analysis, focus groups, in-depth interviews and projected techniques.

For the purposes of this study exploratory research is deployed to construct a definition and theoretical modelling of FLE corporate identity. Aiming to both increase the researchers familiarity with the research problem and to clarify its associated concepts. The precedent set for exploratory research in the development and empirical testing of corporate identity models, at the corporate level (Stuart, 1998, 1999; Alessandri, 2001; Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005), is to review of the existent corporate identity literature and its incumbent models in order to modify existing or develop new models of corporate identity. As such, in this context, the use of experience surveys, focus groups and in-depth interviews are not considered as research methods deployed for exploratory purposes. Rather, previous research studies indicate these research methods are potentially deployed to test the applicability and relevance of corporate identity models (Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005), and are therefore considered as descriptive research methods. The proposed study adopts the exploratory research design in the form of a literature review with the aim of developing a definition and theoretical model of FLE corporate identity. The empirical testing of this is discussed in the next section, which is devoted to addressing descriptive research.

4.4.2 Descriptive research

Based upon an initial proposition or hypothesis, descriptive research seeks to identify the frequency of a particular occurrence, or the relationship between two variables (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). This is achieved by extracting a sample

from a population and estimating the behaviour of the population based upon the results. In contrast to exploratory research, descriptive research is characterised by being very rigid, with a clear specifications and well-defined boundaries (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). Both longitudinal or cross-sectional research studies are features of a descriptive research design (Webb, 2001). Cross-sectional research studies utilise a sample that is considered to be representative of a wider population, with data being collected from the selected sample at one point in time only (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). Alternatively, longitudinal studies employ panel data and panel methods where a fixed sample is taken from a given population and measured on a number of different occasions.

Historically, for the purpose of testing corporate identity models, and verifying the relationships between constructs within them, in-depth interviews were deployed using a cross-section of senior marketing practitioners (Melewar, Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). Both Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006) and Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005) represent widely recognised empirically tested and formative studies in the corporate identity literature. They deploy qualitative research techniques to test and validate the relationships between constructs in their respective models of corporate identity. The proposed study builds on this foundation in adopting such a cross-sectional approach (see section 4.5.4.3), whilst developing it further by refining the testing of the frequency of the proposed relationships between constructs by adopting a quantitative research method (see section 4.5.3). Iacobucci and Churchill (2010) suggest taking a quantitative approach to descriptive research provides the added advantage of the research results, specifically quantifying the frequency of a particular occurrence and strength of the proposed relationships between constructs. A quantitative descriptive research design therefore supports the testing of the study research hypotheses developed in Chapter 2 of this thesis; and a descriptive research design is thus deployed.

4.4.3 Causal research

A causal research design concerns identifying cause and effect relationships (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010), to attempt to address the inherent weaknesses of the causality established in a descriptive research study. Whilst a descriptive research design establishes relationships between constructs it does not explain the causality of the relationship (Webb, 2001). Therefore causal research attempts to identify the nature of the relationship under investigation, rather than concentrating on the identification of a hypothesised relationship. Typically an experimental approach is taken with causal research designs (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010), which requires a high degree of control by the researcher in order to be able to convincingly manipulate the dependent and independent variables and the measure if X causes Y (Burns and Bush, 2001). As the scope of the proposed study is concerned with establishing the frequency of particular occurrences and the strength of the proposed relationships between constructs, causal research is not proposed as a component of the studies research design.

4.4.4 The study research design

In order to present a clear overview, the three research designs presented above were grouped in distinct sections. The intention is not to imply that each are mutually exclusive, rather that each, in its own specific way, may potentially contribute to a research study depending on the objectives of the study. Specifically the literature is very emphatic in stating that all research problems require their own special emphasis and approach, because each marketing research problem is unique in some way (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). This therefore supports a flexible and pragmatic approach in applying prescribed formula. Therefore in the study a descriptive approach is adopted, and supported by elements of an exploratory research design.

To develop a definition and theoretical model of FLE corporate identity, an exploratory research design is deployed. Following the precedent set for developing corporate identity models in the corporate identity literature, a review of the corporate identity literature, including existent corporate identity definitions and models, is deployed to define and model the FLE corporate identity construct. The hypotheses that result from this exploratory stage justify the adoption of a descriptive research design, in that the research outcomes of a quantitative, cross-sectional study, related to the specified occurrences and relationships between constructs hypothesised in the theoretical model.

The question of causality, while not addressed specifically in the research design, has not been dismissed and is discussed in the limitations section 8.3 of chapter eight.

4.5 Research methodology options

In line with the traditional methodology adopted in the corporate identity literature to developing corporate identity models, the proposed study takes a deductive approach to developing a definition and model of FLE corporate identity. In the literature corporate identity models are developed from the existent literature, including existent definitions and models, to arrive at adapted or new models of the construct (Melewar and Jenkins 2002; Melewar 2003; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005). In such studies, this exploratory element of the research design also develops a series of potential relationships between the model's constructs which are then tested through data collection, analysis and interpretation (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). This forms a descriptive element to the research design, where historically such corporate identity studies use qualitative research methods to test corporate identity models.

Alternatively, an inductive approach to defining and modelling FLE corporate identity could be implemented, using observations and research findings to develop theory rather than to test it (Bryman, 2012). Arriving at theory by collecting data, analysing and interpreting it aligns closely to the interpretive philosophy of research, which tends to be subjective, descriptive, collaboratively constructed and very context specific (Lee and Lings, 2008). Very valuable inductive research studies contribute to the branding and corporate identity literature (Cushen, 2009; Russell, 2012; Smith and Buchanan-Oliver, 2012). They are very detailed and organisationally specific research studies, that interpret corporate identity phenomena to arrive at numerous detailed, specific and alternative conclusions. However such an inductive approach does not address the purpose of the proposed study, to not only specifically define FLE corporate identity but also model the construct and test the relationships between its hypothesised phenomena. It is therefore proposed that an inductive approach would not take full advantage of the extensive extant corporate identity literature, including current models. Nor would it rigorously test the frequency of occurrence and relationships between phenomena or arrive at a set of generalisable hypotheses concerning such relationships. Whilst it is recognised in this dissertation that inductive research makes a very valuable contribution to the corporate identity literature, for the reasons stated above it is not considered appropriate for the proposed study.

In undertaking a deductive research study to define and theoretically model FLE corporate identity, it is also necessary to decide upon whether a qualitative or quantitative methodology is to be deployed to determine the relationships between the constructs contained in the FLE corporate identity theoretical model, along with their frequency. For this purpose both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies are reviewed to determine which methodology is best deployed in the descriptive design element of the research study.

4.5.1 Qualitative research methodologies

Ethnography, action research and grounded theory are commonly cited qualitative research methodologies (Lee and Lings, 2008; Bryman, 2012).

Ethnography concerns the idea that first-hand experience of a culture or environment is a much better basis of understanding than studying and examining it from the outside. A researcher immerses themselves through observation in a given situation and context in order to understand and describe the situation, without directly influencing the situation itself (Hammersley, 1992). Ethnographic studies, in the main, result in content rich descriptions of a social context, while not generalising such descriptions to other contexts, conveying what it is like to be part of the culture, environment or social setting (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995).

In acting as an agent for change the researcher, in action research, is not a passive bystander, apart from the research and the subject of the study. Rather the researcher is part of the research itself, intervening to test theory by putting it into action and in doing so collaborating with the research subjects (Gibson, 2004). The researcher and a client collaborate in the diagnosis of a problem and in the development of a solution based upon the diagnosis (Gibson, 2004). Theory coming from action research has a tendency to be very context-specific and takes many studies over a long duration to develop general theories (Bryman, 2012)

Put simply, grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), an analytic inductive research method, involves setting a general research question, using theory to hypothetically explain the research question and then deploying qualitative interviews with research subjects to refine the theory, which is then further tested and iteratively refined in further sets of interviews (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). After a number of iterations the researcher reaches a point of theoretical saturation, where no more new information comes to light about the concept in repeated interviews. The researcher understands well what the concept is, how it varies and

that the relationships between it and other concepts are well defined (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Grounded theory is a very complex and rigorous form of qualitative research that uses complex processes of coding and categorisation to develop and test theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Both ethnography and action based research do not readily fulfil the needs of the descriptive research element of the proposed study, as both are context specific methods that in general are content heavy and descriptive. Action research has the potential to determine the relationships between FLE corporate identity constructs, but only after many studies and generally, because of the direct collaboration of the researcher with the research subjects, moves away from the scientific realist research philosophy upon which the study orientated. However, grounded theory is a potential qualitative research option that meets the overall requirements of the descriptive element of the proposed research study.

4.5.2 Quantitative research methodologies

In taking a deductive approach to research, quantitative methodologies set a research question, develop research concepts in the form of theoretical models, determine measures upon which to test hypothesise relationships between constructs, collect data, analyse the data, interpret the results and form conclusions (Hammersley, 1996).

In particular quantitative research methodologies concern explanation, prediction and creating generalised laws by developing and testing hypotheses that propose relationships between different phenomena and constructs (Bryman, 2012).

Multivariate analysis, a form of quantitative research analysis, is applied to analyse the data collected in quantitative studies in order to estimate the relationships between two or more constructs in a theoretical model (Hair et al, 2010). There are many multivariate techniques available including simple and multiple regression,

canonical correlation, conjoint analysis, cluster analysis and structural equation modelling, to name but a few (Hair et al, 2010). Each technique is deployed under different research conditions and has its own uses, benefits and limitations (Hair et al, 2010). In the domain of marketing research, structural equation modelling, in favour of multiple regression, is increasingly being deployed as a quantitative multivariate analysis technique, used to test theoretical models as a whole and individual relationships between constructs in particular (Singh, 2009).

Structural equation modelling (SEM) tests a theoretical model by estimating both the influence and significance of hypothesised relationships between a models constructs and also estimating the goodness-of-fit between the data collected and the hypothesised theoretical model. SEM primarily tests theory and not data (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2000), providing the capability to estimate components of theory through individual latent constructs. Even though a latent construct may not be directly observable by the researcher, each latent construct is measured by a set of items that represent the manifestation of the construct (Hair et al, 2010). This enables not only for relationships between constructs to be determined, but also for the estimation of the strength of the influence one construct has over another, the coefficient, and the significance of that relationship, i.e. to what degree the relationship between the two constructs is down to chance (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2000). SEM also captures the effects of measurement error, which if not taken into account, as with other multivariate techniques, is likely to seriously bias the potential strength and significance of structural relationships (Bollen, 1989).

The multivariate data analysis techniques of a quantitative research methodology, in particular structural equation modelling, meet and exceed the requirements of the descriptive research element of the proposed research study. SEM not only estimates a hypothesised relationship between two constructs, it also calculates the

likely frequency of this, in terms of the strength of one construct's influence over another, and calculates the degree to which this influence is down to chance. In addition SEM estimates the overall effectiveness of a hypothesised theoretical model in calculating the goodness-of-fit between the data collected and structural model. SEM therefore fully meets the descriptive research requirements of the proposed study.

4.5.3 The research methodology of the study

The review of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies concludes that both grounded theory, a qualitative research method, and structural equation modelling, a quantitative research method, are suitable for deployment in the descriptive element of the proposed research study. The requirements of the descriptive element of the proposed study are to determine the relationships between FLE corporate identity constructs along with the frequency of occurrence of such relationships.

Previous research studies designed to test corporate identity models, and the relationships between the model's constructs, effectively deploy qualitative methods (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). In researching proposed corporate identity models with managers in differing organisations, through a series of in depth interviews, these studies reach a set of conclusions concerning the benefits and applicability of the corporate identity model and the relationships between constructs, making a significant contribution to the corporate identity literature (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu and Paterson, 2005; Suvatjis and de Chernatony, 2005; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006). As such these studies sample managers across an array of organisations, the findings and conclusions of which are considered as generalisable.

However, the context of the proposed study differs from previous studies. Deploying the proposed study within seven stores of a national retailer and researching FLEs, not managers, applies certain contextual constraints and opportunities to the study. Having access to a significant number of FLEs presents the opportunity to thoroughly research the FLE corporate identity construct. Deploying a grounded theory approach throughout this population is likely to be relatively time consuming and costly, as against data collection for SEM purposes. It is also likely that the organisation concerned is unlikely to put aside the time available for FLEs to participate in an extensive grounded theory research study. As the study is restricted to one organisation, rather than sampling a number, it is important that the descriptive element of the study captures as much detail as possible concerning the determination of the relationships between FLE corporate identity constructs and the frequency of occurrence of such relationships. SEM, in addition to establishing the relationships between constructs, as with grounded theory, also estimates the strength of one construct's influence over another and the degree to which this influence is down to chance. SEM also estimates the overall effectiveness of a hypothesised theoretical model in calculating the goodness-of-fit between the data collected and the structural model.

It is therefore concluded, given the research context of the research study, that SEM can be justified for use in the study's descriptive research phase and that SEM fully meets the descriptive research requirements of the proposed study. It is also recognised that given a different research context, grounded theory, is an equally applicable research method for the descriptive element of a research study concerning the FLE corporate identity construct.

4.5.4 Requirements for deploying a quantitative methodology

In justifying the selection of a quantitative methodology, consideration is to be given in this section to the use of primary and secondary data, the use of survey research, the deployment of either a cross-sectional or longitudinal study and survey administration.

4.5.4.1 Primary or secondary data

Operationalising FLE Corporate Identity would be difficult based upon secondary data. Secondary data has already been collected for other reasons than for studying the problem or research question at hand (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). Conversely, primary data is specifically collected in order to answer the research question at hand and is therefore, for this study, the most appropriate data on which to test the FLE corporate identity theoretical model (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010).

4.5.4.2 The use of survey research

In order to test the theoretical model presented in section 3.4, there are certain conditions implied when adopting a quantitative research method. Large amounts of data are required to make the model and its associated hypotheses in the study generalisable for the organisation in which the study is based (Hair et al, 2010; Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). Therefore, large amounts of data must to be collected in an efficient manner that minimises resources and labour and uses a research method that utilises modified and existing measures for the constructs that comprise the theoretical model. In doing so, the study is made easier to administer, code, analyse and interpret, and its reliability increases as a result of the survey being standardised with fixed alternative answers that respondents select from (Malhotra et al, 1996). It is for these reasons that survey research has been adopted (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010) to meet the requirements of the proposed research study.

4.5.4.3 The selection of a cross sectional study

In adopting survey research there is a choice of two survey designs, longitudinal and cross-sectional (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010).

A longitudinal study measures a set of constructs and their relationships at two or more different times, studying changes over time. Its major advantage is that the researcher controls the timing and sequence between the constructs and in doing so is truly able to assess causality (Edwards and Bagozzi, 2000). However, longitudinal surveys not only take a number of years to complete, they are typically costly and given the need for following up respondents at least once limits the potential for the study to gather a large sample of data (Weiss and Heide, 1993).

The alternative, a cross-sectional study, involves sampling constructs and their relationships at one point in time. Although there are proposed limitations concerning the measurement of causal relationships at only one point in time (Bowen and Wiersema, 1999; Edwards and Bagozzi, 2000) for the purposes of this study cross-sectional research delivers the necessary sample size and volume of data required to test the hypothesised theoretical model. Such benefits have been derived by other scholars when adopting a cross-sectional approach to related quantitative studies and quantitative research in the services marketing and branding domain (Yoo and Dhonthu, 2001; Morhart, et al, 2009; Hughes and Ahearne, 2010). Therefore due to time, cost and potential sample size constraints, a cross-sectional research study has been selected in favour of taking a longitudinal approach.

4.5.4.4 Survey administration method

Finally, a method of survey administration requires selection between a range of three commonly used alternatives, namely telephone, mail and personal interviews (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2000).

It is not always a straightforward decision to select a method of survey administration, as context and culture largely dictate which form of survey administration is used (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). In the context of the present study, where the research is to be conducted in seven large retail stores with FLEs who spend the majority of their working day on the shop floor, telephone and mail surveys are not appropriate. Face-to-face contact is needed in order to gain FLE agreement to complete the survey questionnaire and therefore a degree of personal contact is needed to explain the purpose of the study and to answer any questions concerning its completion. After this point the survey is self-completion, in the sense that respondents complete the surveys themselves and return the completed instrument to the researchers in a sealed envelope (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). Adopting a self-completion method of administration has the benefits of offering the researcher a high degree of control, in addition, a diversity of questions may be asked and perceived sensitive information may be obtained as respondents consider themselves to have high levels of perceived anonymity (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2000). Undertaking self-completion administration in store, with face-to-face contact, reduces the stated disadvantages of the usual self-completion by post method of administration. The disadvantages of postal self-completion, slow data collection, low social desirability and low response rates (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2000), are likely to be significantly reduced, although this is offset by the cost of having researchers in store for a number of days. Therefore the method of survey administration adopted for the study is a combination of personal interview and respondent self-completion.

4.5.5 Structural equation modelling

Broadly, SEM is a method of multivariate data analysis that uses covariance rather than variance, the conventional base of multiple regression and other popular forms of statistical analysis. SEM, by incorporating a number of statistical models attempts to explain relationships among multiple variables (Chin, 1998). Diamantopoulos and

Siguaw (2000) contend that SEM combines methodological contributions from two disciplines, from psychological theory, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and from econometrics, structural equation models. Whilst the CFA concerns identifying and confirming a structure within a set of observed variables (Stewart, 1981), the structural equation model can be thought of as the simultaneous testing of a number of multiple regression equations (Hair et al, 2010). Similar to multiple regression, structural equation models contain their own form of independent and dependant variables, termed exogenous and endogenous constructs.

4.5.5.1 Exogenous and endogenous constructs

Exogenous constructs are the latent multi-item equivalent of independent variables. They are determined by factors outside of the model and visually as a component of a structural equation model their independence is depicted in not having any paths from another construct going into them (Hair et al, 2010). Endogenous constructs are the latent multi-item equivalent to dependant variables. They are theoretically determined by other constructs in the model and their dependence is visually represented by a path to an endogenous construct from an exogenous construct (Hair et al, 2010).

4.5.5.2 Construct definition

Hair et al (2010, p.735) stipulates that a pre-requisite to successful deployment of the SEM process is to define individual constructs, stating “a good measurement theory is a necessary condition to obtain useful results from SEM ”. As presented in section 3.4.6 of this thesis, each construct requires precise definition at the conceptual level, forming the basis upon which individual indicator items are selected or designed to operationalize the construct. Operationalising a construct often involves a series of scale items in a common format such as Likert scales (see section 3.4.6). In many cases, as with this study, both definitions and scales are

adopted and potentially modified from previous published research studies where the definitions and the scales have performed well (Hair et al, 2010).

4.5.5.3 Specification of the measurement and structural models

Having defined and operationalized each of the constructs that comprise the research study, the next stage of SEM is to specify the study's measurement and structural models.

Specifying the measurement model requires the researcher to identify the latent constructs to be included within the model, assigning the measured indicator variables, i.e. items, to the latent constructs (Hair et al, 2010). In doing so the measurement model specifies the relationship between the items of each construct, the observed measures, and the latent constructs they are associated with (Schumaker, Randall and Lornax, 2004). In the literature a measurement model is sometimes referred to as a confirmatory factor analysis, or CFA (Byrne, 1998; Kline, 1998). This CFA, when estimated, assesses the validity of the measurement model by deploying a number of goodness-of-fit measures, as further discussed in section 3.4.7 of this chapter. Accurate specification and estimation of the measurement model is essential before estimating and drawing any significant meaning from the structural model (Aaker, Kumar and Day, 1995), the next step of the SEM process. Therefore, the estimation of an SEM measurement model, a CFA, forms an integral part of this research study.

A structural model is specified by assigning relationships from one construct to another based upon a proposed theoretical model (Hair et al, 2010). Hair et al (2010) recommend drawing a path diagram that is a graphical representation of dependence relationships between the various constructs within the model. In SEM terms the path diagram depicts the multiple dependencies between exogenous and endogenous constructs (Holmes- Smith, 2000), with arrows and curves depicting the nature of relationships between constructs. Arrows indicate direct causal

relationships between constructs and curve lines indicate the correlations between them. When estimated the structural model calculates goodness-of-fit indices assessing the model validity of the structural model, along with a coefficient for each relationship between constructs. Each estimated coefficient is supported by an unstandardized parameter estimate, a standard error, an error variance and a t-value. The t-value determines the statistical significance of the structural path coefficient (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993). A higher t-value means that there is a lower chance of the parameter estimate having been generated by chance (Hayduk, 1987). Section 4.8 of this chapter discusses structural model identification, goodness-of-fit and the testing of structural relationships in more detail. The specification and estimation of a structural model therefore forms an integral part of this research study.

4.5.5.4 Confirmatory modelling strategy

Hair et al (2010) recommend that at the outset the researcher define a modelling strategy, from a choice of three alternatives: confirmatory modelling, competing modelling or a model development strategy. The confirmatory modelling strategy uses a single model that is assessed for its fit to the observed data. It is the simplest of the options and is not as rigorous as the competing models strategy as it does not consider alternative models. Alternatively, the competing modelling strategy demonstrates that from a number of alternative and competing models one particular model fits the data the best. Finally, model development, the third strategy, is driven by theory and allows researchers to study alternative models based upon theory and then select the most appropriate. This research study concerns the testing of a single FLE corporate identity theoretical model and therefore adopts a confirmatory modelling strategy.

4.5.5.5 Advantages of using structural equation modelling for the study

The requirement of this research study is to operationalize the theoretical model of FLE corporate identity as developed in the literature review of this thesis. The FLE corporate identity theoretical model contains a set of theoretical constructs with hypothesised directional relationships between them.

The full testing of the theoretical model developed in the literature review of this dissertation requires an analytical technique that first estimates multiple and interrelated dependence relationships and secondly tests the validity of the whole model, not just the dependence relationships. Structural equation modelling fully addresses each of these three requirements (Hair et al, 2010).

In addition SEM primarily tests theory and not data (Diamantopoulos and Sigauw, 2000), providing the capability to estimate components of theory through individual latent constructs and their associated estimated manifest variables using empirical data. This is important as the researcher intends to operationally test a construct definition founded upon and derived from theory. In particular, SEM uniquely, relative to other multivariate data analysis techniques, captures the effects of measurement error (Hair et al, 2010). If measurement error is not accounted for then it is likely to severely bias parameter estimates and the potential strength and significance of structural relationships (Bollen, 1989).

Finally, SEM represents an analytical technique that both fits the requirements of the study and offers greater flexibility than other multivariate analysis techniques (Hair et al, 2010). SEM is therefore adopted as the multivariate data analysis technique used in this study.

4.5.6 Sampling methodology

Malhotra and Birks (2006) stipulate five stages to the sampling process. These are, defining the target population, determining the sampling frame, selecting the sampling technique, determining the sample size and executing the sampling process.

4.5.6.1 Definition of the target population

The focus of the current study is the operationalising of the FLE corporate identity theoretical model. A target population is required, i.e. a collection of objects or elements that have the information required to research the operationalization of FLE corporate identity so that deductions are able to be made by researchers (Malhotra et al, 2006). As the target population of the research is FLEs then a sample of FLEs are required for this research study.

4.5.6.2 Determining the sampling frame

The next step, the sampling frame, is defined as a list of members of a population that generates a random sample (Aaker, Kumar and Day, 1995). Sampling frame error is a risk and arises if there is a difference between the target population and the sampling frame (Molhotra et al, 1996). In this respect, for the proposed study, there is no difference between the target population and the sampling frame, as the sampling frame of the study is identical to the target population, i.e. FLEs in a service organisation. Prior published research demonstrates that retailers are an appropriate and relevant source of a population of FLEs that accurately reflect a wider population of such employees (Ullrich, Wieseke, Christ, Schulze and van Dick, 2007; Homburg Wieseke and Hoyer, 2009; Hughes and Ahearne, 2010).

4.5.6.3 Selection of the sampling technique

In selecting the appropriate sampling technique a choice is to be made between probability and non-probability sampling (Malhotra et al, 1996) where a sampling design falls into one or other of the two categories (Burns and Bush, 2000).

In non-probability sampling each member of a population has an unknown chance of being chosen, whereas with probability sampling each member of a population has a known, non-zero probability of selection. In the case of the proposed study probability sampling is selected given its relative sampling efficiency, taking into account the ratio of accuracy over cost (Aaker, Kumar and Day, 1995). A further consideration during the selection of a sampling technique is the potential for non-response error, a form of non-sampling error that occurs when some of the respondents included in the sample do not respond (Malhotra, 1993). Please see section 3.4.9 for a discussion of this issue and its proposed solution within this study.

4.5.6.4 Determining the sample size

Determining the sample size is the penultimate step in the sampling process, and refers to the number of elements to be included within the study. Malhotra et al (2006) propose a number of considerations be taken into account when determining the size of a sample. For a particular unit of analysis these include the nature of the research, number of variables, incidence and completion rates and resource constraints. In this study the unit of analysis is at the individual FLE level.

Sample size is an important element of SEM and is of interest, as with all other statistical methods, as it is the foundation for establishing sampling error. The larger the sample size the less sampling error and the greater likelihood that the results are statistically significant. SEM is described as a large sample technique, where the number of observations needed differs depending upon the number of parameters in the model to be estimated. Hair et al (2010) contend that as model

complexity increases so should the sample size. A rule of thumb is provided by Bentler and Chou (1987), who recommend a minimum ratio of sample size to free parameters of 5:1, under the conditions of normal distribution theory. To increase effectiveness, a further recommendation is made to increase the ratio to 10:1 from 5:1. There is little universal agreement in the literature as to what constitutes an adequate sample size; however there are concerns small samples sizes lead to unstable results (Hulland, Chow and Lam, 1996). Sample size recommendations vary from 100 (Bollen, 1989) to greater than 200 (Boomsma, 1982; Kelloway 1998). However, there is broad consensus that at least 200 cases are recommended for a more complex model (Hulland, Chow and Lam 1996; Sharma, Mukherjee, Kumar and Dillon, 2005). Section 4.2 of this study analyses the sample size and characteristics of the study. However, in general, the study's sample size corresponds with the broad guidance stated above, with a total sample size of 601 cases and 31 parameters and a case to parameter ratio of 19:1.

4.5.6.5 Execution of the sampling process

With the target population defined, the sample frame set, the sampling technique determined and the sample size determined, the sampling process can be executed.

4.5.7 Selection of SEM technical options

Hair et al (2010) stipulates a number of technical decisions are necessary for a researcher to make in the deployment of SEM. These concern the use of either covariance or correlation matrices during model estimation, the treatment of missing data, selection of an estimation technique from a number of alternatives and selection of SEM computer software. Each of these issues is addressed in turn in the following.

4.5.7.1 Use of co-variance matrix

Researchers conducting SEM analyses in the past faced using two input alternatives, using either a covariance matrix or a correlation matrix (Hair et al, 1998). The use of either matrix is determined by the type of data and the outcomes of the appropriate diagnostic tests, even though the co-variance and correlation matrices are very similar (Hair et al, 1998). In the literature there are competing positions as to whether correlation matrix input is more appropriate than the covariance matrix (Bollen, 1989) or vice versa (Kelloway, 1998). Researchers have tended to prefer using co-variance matrix input as the correlation matrix removes important information from the data about the scale measurement of individual variables, and the hypothesised test in SEM assumes the use of a co-variance matrix (Kelloway, 1998). It is for these reasons that use of co-variance matrix input is preferred for the present study. However, most modern SEM software computes a model solution from raw data without the researcher computing a correlation or covariance matrix separately. As in this research study, the debate concerning correlation matrix versus co-variance matrix SEM input is no longer relevant. However, the researcher is faced with the alternative of using the correlations or covariance matrix generated by SEM from the base data on which their SEM testing and analysis is based. Although again there are relative advantages and disadvantages attached to both, Hair et al (2010 p.78) states that *"in comparing the use of correlations versus co-variances we recommend using co-variances whenever possible. Co-variance provides the researcher with far more flexibility due to the relatively greater information they contain"*. Therefore the proposed study adopts the use of co-variance.

4.5.7.2 Missing data

Three methods are commonly used to replace missing data; list-wise deletion, pair-wise deletion and model based, all of which are considered to be adequate methods of replacing missing data (Hair et al, 2010).

List-wise deletion concerns the exclusion of any cases in the analysis that have missing observations (Kline, 1998). One of its draw backs is for instance if the sample is poor its application may eliminate a significant number of cases. Pairwise deletion concerns excluding cases only if they have missing data on the variables involved for a particular computation (Kline, 1998). The main disadvantage here is different calculations in an analysis might be based on different sample sizes (Malhotra and Birks, 2006).

The aim of the third alternative, model based imputation, at the most basic level is to maximise the effective sample size by substituting missing observations of a particular variable with the sample mean for that variable (Schafer and Graham, 2002). Another more advanced procedure, the Expectation-Maximisation (EM) algorithm method (Dempster, Laird and Rubin, 1977), uses a two step iterative procedure. A potential disadvantage of imputation is that the imputed values can produce exaggerated variances (Bollen, 1989).

For this dissertation two methods are selected for managing missing data. First, cases with 20% or more missing data are list-wise deleted. Secondly, missing data in the cases that remain after list-wise deletion is imputed using the EM algorithm method. Missing data in the research study is discussed further in section 5.2.2 of chapter five.

4.5.7.3 Estimation technique

Having specified a measurement model, the most appropriate technique for model estimation requires selection (Hair et al, 2010). The objective of estimation is to minimise the difference between the estimated co-variance, generated by the model, and the co-variance of the sample, i.e. the co-variance matrix (Holmes-Smith, 2000). There are a number of estimation procedures available to estimate parameters and compute test statistics. Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2000) identify seven methods that may be used to estimate parameters, some of which are categorised as partial information techniques, with the remainder classified as full. Two-stage least squares (TSLS) and instrument variables (IV) are partial techniques and estimate every parameter equation separately; whereas maximum likelihood estimator (MLE), un-weighted least squares (ULS), diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS), generalised least squares (GLS) and generally weighted least squares (WLS) are full information techniques that estimate all the parameters simultaneously. Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2000) consider full information techniques to be superior to partial information techniques as partial information techniques are relatively less statistically efficient.

The most common full information techniques are ULS, GLS and MLE, each operating effectively under different conditions. For instance the performance of GLS estimation on small samples is not as good as MLE (Bollen, 1989). On the other hand ULS does not in the main lead to the most efficient estimation of model parameters when compared to MLE (Bollen, 1989). Generally maximum likelihood estimation is the most popular technique (Anderson and Gerbing, 1982; Hayduk, 1987) and is recommended as the preferred technique for parameter estimation and results reporting (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2000). Therefore maximum likelihood estimation is the technique used in this study to estimate parameters and report results, if the conditions of normality are met. If not other estimation methods are available other methods, i.e. OLS, WLS and GLS, will be considered.

4.5.7.4 Computer Software

A number of computer programs are readily available and are convenient for performing SEM (Hair et al, 2010). According to Hair et al (2010) LISREL, EQS, AMOS and CALIS are the four most recognised. LISREL can be applied in cross-sectional, experimental, quasi-experimental and longitudinal studies (Byrne, 1998). EQS performs regression and factor analysis (Bentler, 1993), whilst AMOS performs similar functions to LISREL and is an addition to SPSS. CALIS is an SEM program available within SPSS. As researchers in many fields have applied SEM using LISREL, it has significant flexibility and has become almost synonymous with SEM (Hair et al, 2010); thus, LISREL is used as the SEM computer software for the research study.

4.6 Measurement development

The conceptual and operational definitions of the constructs that comprise the theoretical model of the study are presented in this section. The latent constructs of the study are operationalized using pre-existing scales, that where necessary are adapted to suit the research context. The pre-existing scales are to be found in existing organisational psychology, services marketing and branding literature. Prior to conceptually and operationally defining each of the constructs, it is essential that their measurement is discussed.

Indicators for the constructs that comprise the theoretical model are measured on Likert scales. As summated scales, Likert scales are comprised of two parts, an item and an evaluative element (Aaker, Kumar and Day, 2002). In the case of the present study the item is a statement about a particular attitude, whereas the evaluative element consists of a list of response categories that, in this study, range from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”. “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” are also termed scale points (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010), representing the two

extreme scale points within a range. As such it is concluded that Likert scales are appropriate for use in this research study as it is assumed that the resulting scales are uni-dimensional (Kumar, Aaker and Day, 2002).

There is debate as to the optimal number of response alternatives and scale points within a Likert scale, with little agreement within the literature. Research suggests that the reliability of a measure increases when the number of scale points increase (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). Cox (1980) found in the literature a range of scale points have been used, starting at two and finishing at twenty, although the recommendation of that study is to use seven, plus or minus two data points/response alternatives. The Cox (1980) study suggests that five to seven data points/response options are appropriate in subject centred research. All the pre-existing scales used as the basis for operationalizing FLE corporate identity use seven point Likert scales. Thus it is concluded that seven point Likert scales are used for this study, where respondents are asked to circle one of the seven data points/response options that best captures their beliefs and attitudes toward each item. Using “1 = Strongly Disagree” and “7 = Strongly Agree” as anchors for each items statement.

Having determined that Likert scales are to be used for the proposed study, this section turns to the conceptual and operational definition of each of the study's constructs.

4.6.1 FLE construed corporate brand equity

The first four constructs in the theoretical model are collectively termed FLE construed corporate brand equity. The overall measure of FLE construed corporate brand equity is an antecedent of the central construct of the study, FLE corporate brand Identification. The three other constructs that comprise FLE construed corporate brand equity are FLE construed corporate brand quality, FLE construed corporate brand loyalty and FLE construed corporate brand awareness and

associations. These three constructs are antecedents of overall FLE construed brand equity.

FLE construed brand equity is defined as *FLE construed associations that result from service encounters with customers, in the form of construing the brand equity held by customers concerning an organisation's corporate brand.*

Yoo and Dhonthu (2001, 2002) operationalize brand equity at the customer level using four dimensions: brand quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness and brand associations, and finally the customer's overall evaluation of a brand. The three former constructs are antecedents of the latter. In measuring the brand equity of product brands the developed measures for each of the four constructs of the Yoo and Dhonthu studies result in acceptable Cronbachs Alpha scores for all four sets of measures (as specified below) and is recommended by Christodoulides and de Chernatony (2010) as the most suitable set of measures for measuring brand equity at the customer level. The scales for the four dimensions of Yoo and Dhonthu's (2001) measurement of brand equity at the customer level are adopted for this study and are adapted for the purpose of measuring how FLEs construe customers' brand equity at the corporate brand level.

For example Item 1 of Yoo and Dhonthu's (2001,2002) scale for measuring customer brand loyalty reads *"I consider myself to be loyal to X product brand"*. In the context of this study this item is changed to read as *"Customers consider themselves to be loyal to X corporate brand"*.

4.6.1.1 FLE construed corporate brand quality

Yoo and Donthu (2001) define the perceived quality dimension of customer based brand equity as *"the consumer's judgement about a products overall excellence and superior quality"*.

FLE construed corporate brand quality is therefore defined as *FLEs' construed associations regarding a customers judgement about a corporate brands overall excellence and superiority.*

The Cronbachs Alpha for the original scale for perceived quality, when applied in the Yoo and Dhontu (2001) study, was .92. It is therefore adopted as the base scale for FLE-construed corporate brand quality, the items for which are adapted for FLE construed brand equity and corporate brand context.

FLE-construed corporate brand quality is therefore operationalised as follows:

Customers consider the Corporate Brand X is of high quality. ECBEPQ1

Customers consider the likely quality of the Corporate Brand X is extremely high. ECBEPQ2

Customers consider the likelihood that the services and products of the Corporate Brand X would be functional is extremely high. ECBEPQ3

Customers consider the likelihood that the services and products of the Corporate Brand X are reliable is very high. ECBEPQ4

Customers consider Corporate Brand X must be of good quality. ECBEPQ5

Customers consider Corporate Brand X to appear to be of very poor quality. ECBEPQ6

4.6.1.2 FLE construed corporate brand loyalty

Yoo and Donthu (2001) define the brand loyalty dimension of customer based brand equity as *"the attachment that a customer has to a brand"*.

FLE construed corporate brand loyalty is defined as *FLEs' construed associations regarding the strength of attachment a customer has to the corporate brand.*

The Cronbachs Alpha for the original scale for brand loyalty, when applied in the Yoo and Dhontu (2001) study, was .88. It is therefore adopted as the base scale for FLE construed corporate brand loyalty, the items for which are adapted for the FLE construed brand equity and the corporate brand context.

FLE construed corporate brand loyalty is therefore operationalised as follows:

Customers consider themselves to be loyal to the Corporate Brand X.

ECBELO1

Customers consider the Corporate Brand X would be their first choice.

ECBELO2

Customers will not buy from other brands/retailers if the Corporate Brand X is available. ECBELO3

4.6.1.3 FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations

Yoo and Donthu (2001) define the brand awareness and associations dimension of customer based brand equity as *“the ability of a customer to recognise, recall, and associate with a brand”*.

FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations is defined as *FLEs’ construed associations regarding the ability of a customer to recognise, recall and associate with the corporate brand.*

The Cronbachs Alpha for the original scale for brand awareness and associations, when applied in the Yoo and Dhontu (2001) study, was .92. It is therefore adopted as the base scale for FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations, the items for which are adapted for the FLE construed brand equity and the corporate brand context.

FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations is therefore operationalised as follows:

Customers know what Corporate Brand X looks like. ECBEBA1

Customers can recognise Corporate Brand X among other competing brands. ECBEBA2

Customers are aware of the Corporate Brand. X ECBEBA3

With customers some characteristics of Corporate Brand X come to mind quickly. ECBEBA4

Customers can quickly recall the symbol or logo of Corporate Brand X. ECBEBA5

Customers have difficulty in imagining the Corporate Brand X in their minds. ECBEBA6

4.6.1.4 Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity

This construct is based upon Yoo and Donthu's (2001, 2002) original composition of the overall brand equity dimension of customer based brand equity. No definition of this construct is offered. However the nature of the items in the scale concern customers selecting a product brand over other available competitive alternatives e.g. *"If there is another brand as good as product x, I would prefer to buy product x"*.

Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity is defined as *FLEs' construed associations regarding customers' selection of the corporate brand in favour of other competitor alternatives.*

No Cronbachs Alpha for the original scale for overall brand equity was reported in the Yoo and Dhontu (2001) study. However, given Christodoulides and de Chernatony (2010) recommend the use of all the measures that reflect all four

dimensions of the Yoo and Donthu (2001) study, it is therefore adopted as the base scale for FLE overall construed corporate brand equity. The items for which are adapted for the FLE construed brand equity and corporate brand context.

FLE overall construed corporate brand equity is therefore operationalised as follows:

Customers consider it makes sense to buy from Corporate Brand X instead of any other brand/retailer, even if their services and products are the same.

ECBEBE1

Customers consider even if another brand/retailer services and products have the same features as Corporate Brand X, they would prefer to buy from Corporate Brand X. ECBEBE2

Customers consider if there is another brand/retailer as good as Corporate Brand X, they prefer to buy from Corporate Brand X. ECBEBE3

Customers consider if another brand/retailer is not different from Corporate Brand X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase from Corporate Brand X. ECBEBE4

4.6.2 FLE organisational associations

The second group of constructs in the theoretical model form a grouping collectively termed FLE organisational associations. Each of the three constructs that fall into this grouping are separate and individual constructs in their own right. These three constructs are mission and vision dissemination, the consistency of the organisation's corporate image and the implementation of the organisation's corporate visual identity. These three constructs are antecedents of the FLE corporate brand identification, the central construct of both theoretical models.

Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005) operationalize the above three constructs at the management not the employee level, as measures of how effectively an

organisation's corporate identity is internally managed. The measures for each of the three constructs computed a Cronbach's alpha of greater than .76. Therefore, the scales used to measure mission and vision dissemination, consistent image implementation and visual identity implementation by Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005) are adopted as measures for each of the three separate FLE organisational associations constructs.

4.6.2.1 Mission and vision dissemination

Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005, p.160) define mission and vision dissemination as *“the companies internal sense of purpose and how it is communicated in the organisation”*.

The mission and vision dissemination construct, as an element of FLE organisational association is therefore defined as *FLEs' organisational associations regarding the companies' internal sense of purpose and how it is communicated in the organisation*.

The Cronbachs Alpha for the scale when applied by Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005), at a manager not employee level was .81. It is therefore the scale adopted to measure the mission and vision dissemination construct.

Mission and vision dissemination is therefore operationalised as follows:

There is total agreement of our mission across all levels and business areas.

MVD1

All employees are committed to achieving the company's goals. MVD2

There is a clear concept of who we are and where we are going. MVD3

The company's values and mission are regularly communicated to employees. MVD4

Employees view themselves as partners in charting the direction of the company. MVD5

We do have a well-defined mission. MVD6

All employees are aware of the relevant values. MVD7

4.6.2.2 Consistent image implementation

Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005, p.160) define consistent image implementation as consistent implementation of *“corporate symbols, staff understanding of corporate symbols, specific marketing image development and tangible aspects of identity”*.

The consistent image implementation construct as an FLE organisational association is therefore defined as *FLEs’ organisational associations regarding the consistent implementation of corporate symbols, staff understanding of corporate symbols, specific marketing image development and tangible aspects of identity*.

The Cronbachs Alpha for the scale when applied by Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005), at a manager not employee level was .79. It is therefore the scale adopted to measure the consistent image implementation construct.

Consistent image implementation is therefore operationalised as follows:

Our company name is part of our image. CII1

Our company symbols (Logo, slogan, colours/visual style, signage) are constituents of our image. CII2

Much of our marketing is geared to projecting a specific image. CII3

Employees and staff understand visual symbols (or visual branding) of our company. CII4

Employees are dressed in a manner to project the company image. CII5

Merchandising and brochures are an important part of our company marketing. CII6

4.6.2.3 Corporate visual identity implementation

Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005, p.160) define visual identity implementation as *“the activities or operations that are undertaken to enhance visual identity”*.

The corporate visual identity implementation construct as an FLE organisational association is therefore defined as *FLEs’ organisational associations regarding the activities or operations that are undertaken to enhance visual identity*.

The Cronbachs Alpha for the scale when applied by Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005), at a manager not employee level was .78. It is therefore the scale adopted to measure the visual identity implementation construct.

Corporate visual identity implementation is therefore operationalised as follows:

A visual audit of our facilities is undertaken periodically. VII1

Our company has formal guidelines for brand and visual elements. VII2

Our company transmits a consistent visual presentation through facilities, equipment, personnel and communications material. VII3

Our consumables (e.g. e-mails, letters) are designed to match the overall visual elements/image of our company. VII4

4.6.3 FLE corporate brand identification

Corporate brand identification is the central construct of the theoretical model.

It is founded upon the organisational and social psychology construct of social identity. When applied at the organisational level the construct is termed organisational identification and is defined as *“the extent to which individuals define*

the self in terms of membership of the organisation and where identification with an organisation partly answers the question of who am I?" (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.33).

FLE corporate brand identification concerns FLEs considering themselves to be members of a corporate brand community and is defined as *the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of a corporate brand community, where identification with the corporate brand community partly answers the question of who am I?*

FLE corporate brand identification is therefore operationalised as follows:

When someone criticizes the Corporate Brand, it feels like a personal insult.

CBI1

I am very interested in what others think of the Corporate Brand. CBI2

When I talk about the Corporate Brand I usually say we rather than they.

CBI3

The Corporate Brand Brands success is my success. CBI4

When someone praises the Corporate Brand it feels like a personal compliment. CBI5

If a story in the media criticised the Corporate Brand I would feel embarrassed. CBI6

4.6.4 FLE extra-role brand building behaviours

In this study, FLE extra-role brand building behaviours are concluded as a likely consequence of the FLE corporate brand identification construct. This grouping contains three individual and separate constructs.

Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009) therefore define extra role brand building behaviour as *“employee actions that go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand and are discretionary”* (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009, p.123). This definition and its associated constructs posited by Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak 2009 are used in this study along with their respective scales, namely positive word-of-mouth, brand participation and relatedness to brand community.

4.6.4.1 FLE positive word of mouth

Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p.123) define employee positive word-of-mouth as *“employees personal advocacy of the organisation’s corporate brand outside the job context”*.

For the purpose of this study FLE positive word-of-mouth is defined as *FLEs’ personal advocacy of the organisation’s corporate brand outside the job context*.

The scale used by Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009) is adopted as the scale to measure the FLE positive word of mouth construct in this study. No Cronbachs Alpha was reported for this measure however it formed part of an effectively operationalized structural equation model that reported acceptable fit measures ($\chi^2(498) = 737.114$ $p=.000$; CFI = .94; TLI = .932; RMSEA = .042 and SRMR = .068).

FLE positive word-of-mouth is therefore operationalised as follows:

I “talk up” Corporate Brand X to people I know. WOM1

I bring up Corporate Brand X in a positive way in conversations I have with friends and acquaintances. WOM2

In social situations I often think and speak favourably about Corporate Brand

X. WOM3

4.6.4.2 FLE corporate brand participation

Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009 p.123) define brand participation as *“internally passing on branding relevant customer feedback from customer touch points”*.

For the purpose of this study FLE corporate brand participation is defined as *FLEs’ internally passing on corporate branding relevant customer feedback from service encounters with customers*.

The scale used by Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009) is adopted as the scale to measure the FLE corporate brand participation construct in this study. No Cronbachs Alpha was reported for this measure however it formed part of an effectively operationalized structural equation model that reported acceptable fit measures ($\chi^2(498) = 737.114$ $p = .000$; CFI = .94; TLI = .932; RMSEA = .042 and SRMR = .068).

FLE corporate brand participation is therefore operationalised as follows:

I let my manager know of ways how we can strengthen our brand image.

PART1

I make constructive suggestions on how to improve our customers’ brand experience. PART2

If I have a useful idea on how to improve our brands performance, I share it with my manager. PART3

4.6.4.3 FLE relatedness to corporate brand community

Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009, p.123) define relatedness to brand community as *“the strength of the perceived relatedness to other individual members of a brand community”*.

For the purpose of this study FLE relatedness to corporate brand community is defined as *the strength of FLEs’ perceived relatedness to other individual members of a corporate brand community*.

The scale used by Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak (2009) is adopted as the scale to measure the FLE relatedness to corporate brand community construct in this study. No Cronbachs Alpha was reported for this measure however it formed part of an effectively operationalized structural equation model that reported acceptable fit measures ($\chi^2 (498) = 737.114$ $p=.000$; CFI = .94; TLI = .932; RMSEA = .042 and SRMR = .068).

FLE relatedness to corporate brand community is therefore operationalised as follows:

I really like the people from Corporate Brand RBC1

I get along with people from Corporate Brand RBC2

I consider the people from Corporate Brand to be my friends. RBC3

4.6.5 FLE organisational identification

Organisational identification is concluded as a consequence of FLE corporate brand identification in the FLE corporate identity theoretical model.

Organisational identification is a form of social identity, an organisational psychology construct, that concerns individuals as members of an organisation and is defined as, *“the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of the*

organisation and where identification with an organisation partly answers the question of who am I?" (Ashforth and Mael, 1989,p.33).

A developed scale to measure organisational identification (Mael and Ashforth, 1992) is widely used to measure organisational identification across the organisational psychology literature. For example van Dick deploys this scale in a number of studies computing Cronbachs Alpha scores of .76, .77 (van Dick, Grojean, Christ and Wieseke, 2006) and .81 (Ullrich, Wieseke, Christ, Schulze and van Dick, 2007). Therefore the Mael and Ashforth (1992) scale is adopted as the organisational identification scale for use in this study.

FLE organisational identification is therefore operationalized as follows:

When someone criticizes organisation X, it feels like a personal insult. OID1

I am very interested in what others think about organisation X. OID2

When I talk about organisation X I usually say we rather than they. OID3

Organisation X's s success is my success. OID4

When someone praises organisation X, it feels like a personal compliment.
OID5

If a story in the media criticised organisation X I would feel embarrassed.
OID6

4.6.6 FLE affective organisational commitment

FLE affective organisational commitment is concluded as a consequence of FLE corporate brand identification in the FLE corporate identity theoretical model.

Affective commitment is defined *as "an employees attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation"* (Allen and Meyer, 1990, p.63).

A developed scale for affective commitment is widely used in the literature (Allen and Meyer, 1990), which computes acceptable Cronbachs Alpha scores in an array of studies including .84 (Bagozzi and Bergami, 2000), .84 (Markovits, Davis, Fay and van Dick, 2010) and .84 (Markovits, Ullrich, van Dick and Davis, 2008). This scale is therefore adopted in this study to measure FLE affective commitment.

FLE affective organisational commitment is therefore operationalized as follows:

I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation. OCA1

I enjoy discussing my work at this organisation with the people outside it.

OCA2

I really feel as if the organisation's problems are my own. OCA3

I don't think I could easily become attached to as attached to another organisation as I am to this one. OCA4

I feel like "part of the family" at my organisation. OCA5

I feel emotionally attached to this organisation. OCA6

This organisation has a great deal of meaning for me. OCA7

I feel a strong sense of belonging to this organisation. OCA8

4.6.7 Measurement deployment in the survey instrument

The questionnaire for the research study is divided into five sections and is contained in Appendix 3. The first four sections contain items used to measure the constructs that comprise the FLE corporate identity theoretical model, with the last section collecting demographic data.

Section one intends to capture FLEs' construed corporate brand equity containing the four constructs of FLE construed corporate brand quality, FLE construed

corporate brand loyalty, FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations and overall FLE construed corporate brand equity.

Section two intends to capture FLE organisational associations containing the three constructs of mission and vision dissemination, consistent image implementation and visual identity implementation, along with the organisational identification construct.

Section three intends to capture the three constructs of FLE extra-role brand building behaviour, namely FLE positive word of mouth, FLE corporate brand participation and FLE relatedness to corporate brand community, along with affective organisational commitment.

Section four intends to capture the FLE corporate brand identification construct, while section five contains items concerning demographic information.

Having designed the questionnaire, including the pool of items associated with the constructs contained in both theoretical models, it was also necessary to pre-test the questionnaire, in order to test the instrument as a whole. The test was comprised of two stages. In the first it was necessary to test the length of the questionnaire together with the language used for each of the items. The questionnaire was therefore pre-tested with fifteen front-line employees in the retail store selected for the study. The next stage was to collect data from FLEs in one store within the group to test the measurement item performance of each of the constructs and the constructs as a whole model. The second stage test was performed using both the measurement model and structural model stages of structural equation modelling.

Therefore self-reports were used for the study, a common method used for researching FLE brand building behaviours (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009), FLE organisational identification (Ullrich, Wieseke, Christ, Schulze and van Dick,

2007), FLE in a services environment (Homburg Wieseke and Hoyer, 2009) and FLEs in a retail setting (Hughes and Ahearne, 2010).

The survey pack comprised a questionnaire, containing an agreed explanation of the purpose of the study on its front, and an envelope in which the completed questionnaire was to be placed into and sealed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Completed responses were either handed directly back to the researcher upon completion or placed into post boxes sited across the store. The data was collected from 7 stores of the UK retailer over a continuous 3 week period. In each store data was collected over a continuous 5 day period.

Pre-notification was undertaken by senior managers within each store using a pre-prepared and agreed statement. Line managers and FLEs were briefed in team meetings the week before research commenced. The study was featured in each of the branch's weekly newsletter and posters were placed by employee entrances to the stores during the period of data collection

4.7 Measure reliability and validity

Reliability concerns the internal consistency of indicators and reflects the degree to which indicators measure a shared latent construct in the measurement model (Hair et al, 2010). Both scale reliability (Holmes-Smith, 2001) and construct reliability (Steenkamp and van Trijp, 1991) are addressed. In addition, within SEM, a construct's measures may not satisfactorily load upon their hypothesised constructs adversely affecting overall CFA goodness-of-fit (Hair et al 2010). Extraction of poor performing items that adversely affect CFA performance, measurement reduction, is also addressed. Validity refers to the extent to which a measurement item measures what it is intended to measure (Bollen, 1989). Therefore, the CFA is also used to assess discriminant validity which determines if a latent construct explains more of

the variance in its own observed variables than it does in the observed variables of other constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Finally assessing the validity of an SEM measurement model via goodness-of-fit indices is addressed.

4.7.1 Scale reliability

Scale reliability in SEM is estimated via average variance extracted (AVE) analysis, using the structural equation modelling parameters of a study's measurement model (Holmes-Smith, 2001). AVE calculates the amount of variance in items or indicators that is accounted for by its associated construct. An AVE of ≥ 0.50 indicates that more than 50% of the variance in each individual item is explained by its associated construct, thus indicating good reliability (Hair et al, 2010).

4.7.2 Construct reliability

Construct reliability uses the structural equation modelling parameters of a measurement model to capture the size of the relationship between a latent construct and the indicators that relate to the construct (Steenkamp and van Trijp, 1991). It measures the internal consistency of a set of indicators, rather than the reliability of a single indicator, and estimates of ≥ 0.70 are desirable (Hair et al 2010).

4.7.3 Measure purification

Within SEM, a CFA is required to generate the output necessary to calculate both scale and construct reliability as well as discriminant validity. Often, for these purposes, constructs that are theoretically considered to be closely related are included and estimated together as part of a CFA (Hair et al, 2010). Once, for reliability purposes, indicators are removed from a CFA's constructs, a further CFA is estimated to assess goodness-of-fit. At this stage the CFA's theta delta modification indices and the item's standardised residuals are reviewed and used as the basis to reduce each construct's items so that the goodness-of-fit measures are

optimised, and that where possible the remaining items standardised residuals do not exceed 2.58 (Byrne, 1998; Diamantopolas and Siguaw, 2000) and their modification indices do not exceed 3.84 (Byrne, 1998; Diamantopolas and Siguaw, 2000). Such item extraction is also subject to theoretical support (Diamantopolas and Siguaw, 2000). The ultimate aim is to refine a construct's indicators to eliminate those that do not contribute to the reliability of the scale or do not load satisfactorily on their hypothesised construct, termed measurement purification (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010).

4.7.4 Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity estimates if a latent construct explains more of the variance in its own observed variables than it does in the observed variables of other constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). By comparing the AVE of a construct with the square of the construct's correlation between that and any other construct, a construct's AVE should ideally be greater than that of the square of its correlation between that and another construct.

4.7.5 Measurement model validity

With the measurement model specified, data collected and key decisions made concerning the estimation technique to be used, Hair et al (2010) stipulate that the researcher next turns to the most fundamental event of SEM testing, that of measurement model validity, while in particular considering measurement model goodness of fit.

4.7.5.1 Measurement model goodness of fit

In turning first to goodness-of-fit, by undertaking a confirmatory factor analysis, the measurement model stipulates the causal relationships between the observed variables (the scale items in the questionnaire) and the latent constructs under investigation (Hunter and Gerbing, 1982). As there is normally a discrepancy in the relationships between the observed and the theoretical variables, assumed as

measurement error, tests of model acceptability are required. Such tests are termed goodness-of-fit indices. Hair et al (2010) recommend the application and evaluation of a number of fit indices to assess measurement model validity, stipulating three major types.

The first, absolute fit indices concern the ability of the model to reproduce the actual covariance matrix (Kelloway, 1998). The second set of indices, comparative fit, concerns comparing two or more competing models to assess which provides the better fit to the data (Kelloway, 1998). Whereas, the third set of indices, parsimonious fit, operate on the premise that a better fitting model can always be obtained by estimating more parameters (Kelloway, 1998). There are a number of different fit indices available for each of the above model fit categories. It is common for researchers to only calculate and report a subset of the measures available (Hulland, Chow and Lam, 1996).

The most popular absolute fit measure is the chi-square statistic, tests the null hypothesis in that the estimated co-variance matrix differs from the sample co-variance matrix solely due to sampling error (Baumgarnter and Homburg, 1996). The smaller the chi-square value the better the fit, so long as it is insignificant at the >0.05 level, signifying that the close differences between the models predicted and observed co-variance matrices are assumed to be the result of sampling fluctuations (Hayduk, 1987). Researchers also aim to produce models with high degrees of freedom to predict an acceptable fit between the predicted and observed co-variance model. Other examples of absolute fit indices are the standardised root mean residual (RSMR) and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Both indices run on a continuum from zero to one. For RSMR a value of ≤ 0.08 indicates an acceptable fit for above 250 cases, whilst for RMSEA a value of ≤ 0.07 is expected for an acceptable fit for a volume of cases above 250 (Hair et al 2010).

The Chi-square statistic has several weaknesses. It increases in line with the sample size unlike RMSEA and has no upper threshold unlike RMSEA and SRMR. As these three indicators complement each other, Hair et al (2010) recommends using more than one absolute fit indices. Chi-square, SRMR and RMSEA are reported for each of the models estimated in this study.

Incremental fit indices compare the fit of the estimated model against a base line model often called the null model (Hair et al, 2010). Examples of incremental fit measures are comparative-fit-index (CFI) and relative fit index (RFI). These indices range from zero to one with values of ≥ 0.92 considered to indicate good fit in a data set or 250 or more cases. Hair et al (2010) stipulate that as a minimum, in addition to reporting the chi-square statistic and degrees of freedom, a researcher reporting at least one absolute fit index and one incremental fit index. In the case of this study CFI and RFI are reported.

Parsimonious fit measures allow for the comparison of different model formulations or competing models. Examples of parsimonious fit measures include parsimonious normed fit index (PNFI), parsimonious goodness of fit index (PGFI) and the normed chi-square. Whilst no absolute threshold levels exist for PNFI, PGFI scores range between 0 and 1 (Byrne, 1998) and the normed chi-square should range from one to five (Fan and Wang 1998). Specifically PNFI and PGFI should be used and reported to compare one or more competing models, with the model that returns higher PNFI and PGFI scores demonstrating a better fit (Kelloway, 1998). There are no competing models in the proposed study as only one model is to be tested; there is therefore no requirement to report parsimonious fit indices.

In conclusion the proposed study is to report for all measurement model estimations the chi-square, degrees of freedom, SRMR and RMSEA absolute fit measures along with CFI and RFI measures of incremental fit. No parsimonious fits measures are reported, as only one model is to be estimated.

4.8 Structural model validity

The final step of the SEM process concerns determining structural model validity (Hair et al, 2010). Hair et al (2010) stipulate three stages to this step: identification of the structural model, evaluating the models goodness-of-fit and testing structural relationships.

4.8.1 Structural model identification

Identification of a structural model concerns whether sufficient information is provided by the empirical data to allow for a single solution of the model's structural equations, given the models parameters. A model is said to be identified when it is theoretically possible to calculate a unique estimate of every one of its parameters (Kline, 1998). A basic requirement for identification is that there must be as many distinct elements in the co-variance matrix of the observed variables as there are model parameters (Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996). For a model to be considered as identified its degrees of freedom must be ≥ 0 (Hair et al, 2010) according to the order condition t-rule (Bollen, 1989). An under identified model is indicated by negative degrees of freedom, where the number of parameter estimates to be estimated in the model exceeds the number of data points available (Byrne, 1998). A just identified model has zero degrees of freedom and equal numbers of parameters and observations (Byrne, 1998). An over identified model has positive degrees of freedom where there are fewer parameters to be estimated in the model than there are data points (Byrne, 1998). Over identification is considered to be a positive outcome, as a greater number of degrees of freedom, when combined with acceptable model fit, means the model is generalisable (Hair et al, 2010). It is the aim of this study for both structural models to be specified so that they have positive degrees of freedom and are therefore considered to be over identified.

4.8.2 Structural model goodness of fit

The options available for goodness of fit indices in estimating a structural model are the same as those available for estimating a measurement model. As with estimating the measurement model, Hair et al (2010) stipulate that at least one absolute measure and incremental measure should be used in support of the chi square statistic and degrees of freedom. Therefore the same goodness-of-fit indices used to measure the measurement model of the study are to be applied to the estimation and assessment the studies structural models. The study therefore reports chi-square, degrees of freedom, RSMR and RMSEA absolute measures and the CFI and RFI measures of incremental fit for all structural models.

4.8.3 Testing structural relationships

Once the goodness of fit of the structural model is established as acceptable the researcher turns to the testing of structural relationships within the model, the hypothesised structural paths, to determine whether or not they are significant (Hair et al, 2010). Diamantopoulos and Sigauw (2000) observe that for each structural path in the model a coefficient is computed. Each co-efficient is supported by an unstandardized parameter estimate, a standard error, a t-value, an error variance and an R2. The t-value determines the statistical significance of the of the structural path coefficient and is obtained by dividing the value of the parameter by its standard error (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993). A higher t-value means that there is a lower chance of the parameter estimate having been generated by chance (Hayduk, 1987). Therefore the structural path coefficient is considered to be significant at a particular level of significance, if a t-value is greater than a certain value. For a directional, one tailed hypothesis, the following t-values are applied to indicate specific levels of significance: 1.28 (10%), 1.645 (5%), 2.326 (1%) and 3.090 (0.1%) (Hair et al, 2010). For a two tailed hypothesis, the following t-values are applied to indicate specific levels of significance: 1.645 (10%), 1.96 (5%), 2.58 (1%) and 3.291 (0.1%) (Hair et al, 2010). For the purposes of this study all structural paths

contained within the structural model are directional and are therefore assessed for significance against the one tailed significance criteria.

4.9 Methodological and measurement biases

Prior to progressing through the methodological stages proposed in this Chapter, the methodological literature proposes that certain tests are applied to ensure that bias is not present in the research study due to the research methods deployed (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff, 2003), the spread and timing of responses received for quantitative surveys (Armstrong and Overton, 1977) and within the data collected from multiple sites (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). Respectively, common method variance, non-response bias and intra-construct correlation are discussed and their respective tests recommended for inclusion in the proposed research methodology of this study.

4.9.1 Common method variance

Common method variance is the variance in a research study that “*is attributable to the studies measurement method rather than the constructs the measures represent*” (Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Lee and Podsakoff, 2003, p.879). As a form of systematic measurement error, common method bias is important as it provides an alternative explanation for the observed relationships between measures of different constructs that is independent of the one hypothesised (Bagozzi, Yi and Phillips, 1991). One means of controlling for common method bias is to adopt a multi method research design (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff, 2003). As proposed in this section of the methodology chapter a cross-sectional, quantitative study is proposed in this study. Therefore, as this is the case, common method bias is to be tested by deploying a surrogate measure in a confirmatory factor analysis that is assumed to represent common method variance (Lindell and Brandt, 2000). As long as the surrogate measure on theoretical grounds is not related to at least

one other measure in the study it can be assumed that any observed relationship between it and the other variables is due to common method variance (Lindell and Whitney, 2001). As a single-method-factor approach, items in the CFA load onto their theoretical constructs along with the surrogate construct. If the factor loadings and their associated t-values remain the same when the CFA is estimated including and excluding the surrogate, the study is assumed not to be subject to common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Lee, 2003).

4.9.2 Non-response bias

Even though the quantitative study does not involve mailing potential respondents, having to then optimise the response over a period of time, it remains that a proportion of potential respondents may not complete the survey instrument. Such non-response potentially may lead to non-response bias, a form of non-sampling error that occurs when some of the respondents included in the sample do not respond (Malhotra, 1993 p.106). The concern is that non-response may lead to a non-sampling error introduced when a segment of the defined population is either not represented or under represented in the data collected (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2000). Even though Morgan and Hunt (1994) do not consider non-response bias an issue when initially testing a theoretical model, non-response bias is to be tested in this study, as data was collected from seven stores over a three week period.

In their formative journal article Armstrong and Overton (1977) propose that late respondents have more in common with non-respondents than they do early respondents. Therefore a sample of late respondents' data is to be compared in a t-test with a sample of early respondents data, for all the constructs contained in the studies theoretical model, to establish if there are differences between the two groups.

4.9.3 Intra-construct correlation

Data collected from multiple sites, even though it is collected from the same research subjects at the same level, i.e. FLEs, cannot be automatically pooled into one data set. In the case of the proposed study, prior to the pooling of the data, it must first be established if the calculated variance between FLEs is different from the variance present between stores. Such an intra-construct correlation measures the degree of similarity between the two clusters, for each construct, and if the ICC test indicates a score of ≤ 0.10 for each construct then the clusters are considered to be dis-similar (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). Calculated by estimating a MANOVA, if the store level variance represents less than 10% of combined variance, for each construct, then the data for all seven stores may be pooled (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002).

4.10 Methodology summary and conclusions

This chapter first debated the underlying research philosophy to be adopted in the proposed study and concluded that the study significantly leaned towards adopting a scientific realist philosophy. Having discussed the relative merits and implications of the exploratory, descriptive and causal research designs, it is concluded that the proposed research design comprises both exploratory and descriptive elements. In following previous corporate identity model research, an extensive literature review to determine a model of FLE corporate identity is proposed as the exploratory research element of the proposed study's research design. The hypotheses that result are to be tested as the descriptive element of the research design to determine the relationships between FLE corporate identity constructs along with the frequency of occurrence of such relationships. In debating the relative merits of deploying either qualitative or quantitative methodologies for this stage of the

proposed research study, both grounded theory, a qualitative research method, and structural equation modelling, a quantitative research method, are considered as potentially appropriate in meeting the requirements for the descriptive element of the research design. However, given the research context of researching one single organisation, not multiple organisations, and deploying the research at an employee not a management level, structural equation modelling (SEM), a quantitative methodology, is considered the most appropriate method to deliver the requirements of the descriptive element of the research design.

In selecting SEM it is also proposed that primary data is collected, using a survey instrument, on the basis of a cross-sectional rather longitudinal study. Having discussed the sampling methodology for the study it is concluded that a sample of FLEs from a retail organisation, per the services literature, is considered a representative sample of the overall population of FLEs.

The operationalizing of the study is addressed by conceptually and operationally defining each of the latent constructs in the FLE corporate identity theoretical model. The means of measuring the reliability and validity of the constructs concludes that each are tested for scale and construct reliability; their measurement items are purified via confirmatory factor analysis to ensure that their items effectively represent and load onto their latent constructs and that discriminant validity is also tested. Finally the validity of both the measurement model and structural model are discussed, establishing that the goodness-of-fit for each are to be evaluated in the reporting of chi-square, degrees of freedom, RSMR and RMSEA absolute fit indices and the CFI and RFI measures of incremental fit.

Finally the chapter recommends that the data collected be tested for common method variance, non-response bias and intra-construct correlation

In the next chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented.

CHAPTER FIVE - DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis results of the study and is comprised of five parts in addition to this introduction.

First, the data is screened for missing data and descriptive statistics are reported (5.2).

Within the next section (5.3) confirmatory factor analyses are estimated for all constructs within the four main construct groupings of the measurement model; FLE-construed corporate brand equity, FLE organisational associations, FLE extra-role corporate brand building behaviours and the FLE organisational behaviour constructs. The FLE corporate brand identification construct is included with the FLE organisational behaviour construct grouping CFA, as this is theoretically where the construct is most aligned. Within these groupings each construct is assessed for scale reliability and construct reliability, with poor performing measurement items extracted in order for each constructs scale to meet the requirements set for each form of reliability. Next each construct's measures are purified to increase CFA overall goodness-of-fit by disregarding items with excessive standardised residuals and theta-delta modification indices. Finally, discriminant validity is assessed to arrive at a set of constructs and their associated measurement items that comprise the final measurement model.

Common method bias, Non-response bias and intra-construct correlation are then tested and reported (5.4), before estimating and reporting the studies measurement model (5.5).

Finally, the study's structural model and its results are reported, including the goodness-of-fit indices and the significance of the hypothesised structural model paths (5.6). The Chapter is summarised and concluded in section 5.7.

5.2 Data screening, descriptive statistics and data testing

SPSS (Version 19) was used to initially analyse the study's data, prior to exporting the data to an SEM data analysis package, LISREL 8.80, to estimate the CFAs, the measurement models and the structural models.

5.2.1 Data screening

The study's data, prior to analysis, was screened for missing data. The data collection from the seven branches, conducted over the three week period, resulted in the submission of 621 completed cases, comprising the sample for the study.

After review 20 cases contained over 20% missing data and were rejected, leaving a final sample of 601 cases.

Of the final sample of 601 cases, 112 contained missing values ranging from one missing value per case to a maximum of seven missing values per case.

Table 5.1 Missing values

Values missing	1	2	3	4	7
Number of cases	76	24	6	4	2

In total 172 values were missing from the 601 cases, amounting to 0.002% of the total number of values contained in the data set. The data was assumed to be

missing at random across the data set as the values were missing completely at random for all cases and all variables. Per section 4.5.2 of this thesis the Expectation-Maximisation (EM) algorithm method (Dempster, Laird and Rubin, 1977) was used within SPSS to impute and replace missing values.

5.2.2 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics for the demographic variables and indicators of the latent constructs are presented in Table 5.2 below.

In overall terms respondents are characterised as both male and female, with tenure in the majority spanning up to nine years length of service, with an education of A level or below, and their working week spanning between two to five or more days per week. Given 48% missing data for age, the age profile of respondents is difficult to characterise. However in the majority respondents receive and undertake training.

5.3 Measure purification, reliability and validity

5.3.1 Introduction

This section of the data analysis estimates four confirmatory factor analyses in preparation for the estimation of the study's measurement model. In preparation for the estimation of the study's measurement model it is necessary to assess the reliability of the measures for each latent construct, testing to assess if the variance in each individual item is explained by its associated construct (scale reliability) and the size of the relationship between a latent construct and the indicators that relate to the construct (construct reliability). In addition it is also necessary to establish if the measurement items of a construct, in relation to those of constructs that are theoretically similar, load satisfactorily on their hypothesised construct. This ensures

that those measures that do not are removed in order to purify a latent construct's measurement items. Such measure purification is iteratively estimated to a standard

Table 5.2 Demographics of survey respondents

Category	Specific category	Respondents (n)	Respondents (%)
Gender	Male	261	43.7%
	Female	335	56.3%
Age	18 or under	61	19.6%
	19 - 29	102	32.9%
	30 - 39	27	8.7%
	40 - 49	51	16.5%
	50 - 59	46	14.8%
	60 or over	23	7.4%
Tenure	0 - 4 yrs	282	47.4%
	5 - 9 yrs	172	28.9%
	10 - 14 yrs	49	8.2%
	15 - 24 yrs	45	7.6%
	25+ yrs	47	7.9%
Training	Yes	392	81.0%
	No	92	19.0%
Education	O Level	224	40.1%
	A Level	198	35.4%
	Bachelor Degree	85	15.2%
	Other	52	9.3%
Days PW	1	40	7.4%
	2	105	19.3%
	3	118	21.7%
	4	85	15.6%
	5 or more	196	36.0%

that render them useful for subsequent analysis (Iacobucci and Churchill, 1979). Finally, prior to inclusion in the estimation of the study's measurement model, it is also necessary to establish if each latent construct explains more of the variance in its own measurement items than it does in the measurement items of other constructs (discriminant validity).

For the purposes of the above it is necessary estimate four confirmatory factor analyses for four groups of constructs, FLE construed corporate brand equity (section 5.3.2), FLE organisational associations (section 5.3.3), FLE extra-role corporate brand building behaviours (section 5.3.4) and FLE organisational behaviour constructs (section 5.3.5).

5.3.2 FLE construed corporate brand equity

This section reports the results of the estimated confirmatory factor analysis for the constructs of FLE construed corporate brand quality (ECBEPQ), FLE construed corporate brand loyalty (ECBELO), FLE-construed corporate brand awareness and associations (ECBEBA), and FLE overall construed corporate brand equity (ECBEBE). In estimating a CFA for the group of constructs, scale and construct reliability are assessed for each. Measurement items that perform poorly in this context are removed. Goodness of fit indices are then reported prior to and post measure purification with poor performing items disregarded for each construct as a result of theory and high Theta Delta modification indices. Each constructs final standardised item residuals and modification indices are also considered. The discriminant validity of each construct is then reported and considered prior to finally reporting the constructs for inclusion in the estimation of the study's measurement model along with their associated measurement items.

5.3.2.1 Scale and construct reliability

The estimated scale reliabilities, in the form of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) report AVEs of ECBEPQ (0.55), ECBELO (0.51), ECBEBA (0.47) and ECBEBE (0.59). All constructs with the exception of ECBEBA report AVE's of ≥ 0.50 , indicating that more than 50% of the variance in each individual item within the ECBEPQ, ECBELO and ECBEBE construct is explained by its associated construct (Hair et al 2006).

Measurement item ECBEBA6 with low standardised Lambda-X coefficient of 0.346 is disregarded from ECBEBA, resulting in an AVE of 0.54 exceeding the ≥ 0.50 AVE threshold.

The estimated composite reliabilities report ECBEPQ (0.87), ECBELO (0.75), ECBEBA (0.84) and ECBEBE (0.85). All constructs report composite reliabilities of ≥ 0.70 , all be it that ECBELO is marginal, indicating a more than acceptable relationship between the ECBEPQ, ECBEBA and ECBEBE latent constructs and their measurement items (Hair et al, 2010).

5.3.2.2 Measure purification

The CFA estimation post the disregarding of the ECBEBA6 resulted in goodness of fit indices of chi-square 483.063 ($p=0.0$) with 146 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.063), SRMR (0.055), CFI (0.972) and RFI (0.953). Scale items were purified as guided by theory and twenty-six Theta-Delta modification indices reported as >3.84 .

The following items were disregarded:

ECBEPQ: ECBE2PQ, ECBE3PQ

ECBELO: ECBE1LO

ECBEBA: ECBE4BA

ECBEBE: ECBE3BE

Post measure purification, an improvement of goodness-of-fit indices, resulted upon CFA estimation, reporting a chi-square of 81.885 ($p=0.001$) with 48 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.0336), SRMR (0.03), CFI (0.994) and RFI (0.98), indicating that remaining items for the four constructs fit the data very well. However a number of the reported standardised residuals for ECBELO exceed 2.58 and along with a number of theta delta modification indices for ECBELO exceeding 3.84. The implications for ECBELO are addressed in the following validity and reliability analysis.

5.3.2.3 Discriminant validity

Table 5.3 below reports the discriminant validity for each of the four constructs, post measure purification, showing average variance extracted for each on the diagonal with construct correlations below the diagonal and squared construct correlations above the diagonal.

Table 5.3 Discriminant validity: FLE construed corporate brand equity constructs

	ECBEPQ	ECBELO	ECBEBA	ECBEBE
ECBEPQ	0.61	0.20	0.26	0.15
ECBELO	0.45	0.57	0.27	0.53
ECBEBA	0.51	0.52	0.59	0.19
ECBEBE	0.39	0.73	0.43	0.59

Below diagonal: construct inter-correlations

Above diagonal: squares of construct inter-correlations

The squares of construct inter-correlations for ECBEPQ and ECBEBA, and ECBEBE are less than their respective individual AVE, indicating to a more than acceptable degree that each are distinctive constructs that differ from each other (Hair et al, 2010).

However, the AVE of 0.57 for ECBELO only marginally exceeds the squares of the construct inter-correlations for ECBEBE of 0.53. The AVE of 0.27 for exceeds the squares of the construct inter-correlations for ECBELO of 0.53. Both constructs are closely correlated with each other, with each significantly contributing to and explaining the variance in their respective latent construct measurement. Although in principal both constructs are considered to possess discriminant validity, it is clear from the CFA that ECBELO suppresses the goodness-of-fit of the remaining constructs given its very high associated modification indices and it generating the remaining eight standardised residuals above the cut off of 2.58. Also ECBEBE's construct reliability of 0.85 is greater than that for ECBELO of 0.73. Therefore the ECBELO construct, along with its measurement items, is not carried forward for inclusion in the estimation of the study's measurement model. The theory support for the discarding of the construct is discussed in section 6.2.2.1 of this thesis.

5.2.3.4 Finalised constructs and measurement items

Therefore the following constructs and items are included in the CFA estimation of the studies measurement model:

ECBEPQ: ECBE1PQ, ECBE4PQ, ECBE5PQ

ECBEBA: ECBE2BA, ECBE3BA, ECBE4BA

ECBEBE: ECBE1BE, ECBE2BE, ECBE4BE

5.3.3 FLE organisational association constructs

This section reports the results of the estimated confirmatory factor analysis for the independent constructs of mission and vision dissemination (MVD), consistent image implementation (CII) and visual identity implementation (VII). In estimating a CFA for these constructs, scale and construct reliability are assessed for each. Measurement items that perform poorly in this context are removed. Goodness-of-fit indices are then reported prior to and post measuring purification, with poor performing items disregarded for each construct as a result of theory and high Theta Delta modification indices. Each construct's final standardised item residuals and modification indices are also considered. The discriminant validity of each construct is then reported and considered prior to finally reporting the constructs for inclusion in the estimation of the study's measurement model along with their associated measurement items.

5.3.3.1 Scale and construct reliability

The estimated scale reliabilities, in the form of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) report AVEs of MVD (0.57), CII (0.48) and VII (0.55). All constructs report AVEs of ≥ 0.50 , except CII, indicating that more than 50% of the variance in each individual item within the MVD and VII constructs is explained by its associated construct (Hair et al 2006).

Measurement item CII5 and CII6 with relatively low standardised Lambda-X coefficients of 0.60 and 0.56 are disregarded from CII, resulting in an AVE of 0.55 exceeding the ≥ 0.50 AVE threshold.

The estimated composite reliabilities report MVD (0.91), CII (0.83) and VII (0.83). All constructs report composite reliabilities of ≥ 0.70 indicating a more than acceptable relationship between the MVD, CII and VII latent constructs and their measurement items (Hair et al, 2006).

5.3.3.2 Measure purification

The first CFA estimation, post the disregarding of measurement items CII5 and CII6 resulted in goodness of fit indices of chi-square 660.814 ($p=0.0$) with 132 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.0831), SRMR (0.0521), CFI (0.970) and RFI (0.957). Scale items were purified as guided by theory and twenty-one Theta-Delta modification indices reported as >3.84 .

The following items were disregarded:

MVD: MVD2, MVD7, MVD7, MVD8

CII: CII4

VII: VII2

Post measure purification, an improvement of goodness-of-fit indices, resulted upon CFA estimation, reporting a chi-square of 44.371 ($p=0.007$) with 32 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.021), SRMR (0.045), CFI (0.998) and RFI (0.988), indicating that remaining items for the three constructs fit the data very well. This is further supported as only five of the reported standardised residuals marginally exceed 2.58 along with a very limited number of modification indices exceeding 3.84, both relating to item CII3.

5.3.3.3 Discriminant validity

Table 4.4 below reports the discriminant validity for each of the three constructs showing average variance extracted for each on the diagonal with construct correlations below the diagonal and squared construct correlations above the diagonal.

Table 5.4: Discriminant validity: FLE organisational associations constructs

	MVD	CII	VII
MVD	0.61	0.38	0.47
CII	0.62	0.65	0.37
VII	0.68	0.61	0.52

Below diagonal: construct inter-correlations
 Above diagonal: squares of construct inter-correlations

The squares of construct inter-correlations for MVD, CII and VII are less than their respective individual AVE, indicating to a more than acceptable degree that each are distinctive constructs that differ from each other (Hair et al, 2010).

5.3.3.4 Finalised constructs and measurement items

Therefore the following constructs are considered and included in the CFA estimation of the studies measurement model:

MVD: MVD 1, MVD4, MVD5, MVD6

CII: CII1, CII2, CII3

VII: VII1, VII3, VII4

5.3.4 FLE extra-role brand building behaviour constructs

This section reports the results of the estimated confirmatory factor analysis for the independent constructs of FLE relatedness to brand community (RBC), FLE positive word of mouth (WOM) and FLE corporate brand participation (PART). It also includes the FLE corporate brand identification construct (CBI) as this construct is theoretically similar and related to the prior constructs given they theoretically are phenomena related to an FLE corporate brand community. In estimating a CFA for the group of constructs, scale and construct reliability are assessed for each.

Measurement items that perform poorly in this context are removed. Goodness-of-fit indices are then reported prior to and post measuring purification, with poor performing items disregarded for each construct as a result of theory and high Theta Delta modification indices. Each construct's final standardised item residuals and modification indices are also considered. The discriminant validity of each construct is then reported and considered prior to finally reporting the constructs for inclusion in the estimation of the study's measurement model along with their associated measurement items.

5.3.4.1 Scale and construct reliability

The estimated scale reliabilities, in the form of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) report AVEs of CBI (0.71), RBC (0.73) WOM (0.83) and PART (0.78). All constructs report AVEs of ≥ 0.50 indicating that more than 50% of the variance in each individual item within the CBI, RBC, WOM and PART constructs is explained by its associated construct (Hair et al 2006).

The estimated composite reliabilities report CBI (0.93), RBC (0.89), WOM (.94) and PART (0.91). All constructs report composite reliabilities of ≥ 0.70 indicating a more than acceptable relationship between the CBI, RBC, WOM and PART latent constructs and their measurement items (Hair et al, 2010).

5.3.4.2 Measure purification

The CFA estimation resulted in goodness of fit indices of chi-square 385.69 ($p=0.0$) with 84 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.081), SRMR (0.038), CFI (0.982) and RFI (0.972). Scale items were purified as guided by theory and twenty-six Theta-Delta modification indices reported as >3.84 .

The following items were disregarded:

CBI: CBI4, CBI5, CBI6

RBC: RBC3

PART: PART3

Post measure purification, an improvement of goodness- of fit indices resulted from CFA estimation, reporting a chi-square of 75.928 ($p=0.0$) with 29 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.052), SRMR (0.021), CFI (0.993) and RFI (0.983) indicating that remaining items for the four constructs fit the data very well. This is further supported as only a limited number of the reported standardised residuals marginally exceed 2.58, relating to the WOM construct. Along with a very limited number of modification indices exceeding 3.84, again for the WOM construct.

5.3.4.3 Discriminant validity

Table 5.5 below reports the discriminant validity for each of the four constructs showing average variance extracted for each on the diagonal with construct correlations below the diagonal and squared construct correlations above the diagonal.

Table 5.5 Discriminant validity: FLE extra-role brand building behaviour constructs and FLE corporate brand identification construct.

	CBI	RBC	WOM	PART
CBI	0.65	0.28	0.67	0.32
RBC	0.53	0.67	0.44	0.10
WOM	0.82	0.67	0.83	0.24
PART	0.56	0.31	0.49	0.71

Below diagonal: construct inter-correlations

Above diagonal : squares of construct inter-correlations

The squares of construct inter-correlations for RBC, WOM and PART are less than their respective individual AVE, indicating to a more than acceptable degree that each are distinctive constructs that differ from each other (Hair et al, 2010). The

squares of construct inter-correlations for RBC and PART are less than the AVE for CBI indicating to a more than acceptable degree that CBI is a distinct construct that differs from RBC and PART.

However the CBI and WOM constructs are highly correlated (0.82), to the extent that the square of the constructs inter-correlation of 0.67 is marginally greater than the AVE for CBI of 0.65. Such a result is marginal, however it remains that both constructs are each significantly contributing to and explaining the variance in their respective latent construct measurement. From the CFA the WOM construct surpresses the goodness-of-fit of the remaining constructs given its very high associated modification indices and it generating six out of the eight remaining standardised residuals above the cut off of 2.58. From theory and empirically the WOM construct is a dependant variable and endogenous construct of a number of organisational psychology identification in the consumer branding literature. This and the sampling context and theoretical reasoning for the discarding of the WOM construct is discussed in section 6.2.2.2 of the discussion chapter of this dissertation. Therefore the WOM construct, along with its measurement items, is not carried forward for inclusion in the estimation of the study's measurement model.

5.3.4.4 Finalised constructs and measurement items

Therefore the following constructs and items are included in the CFA estimation of the studies measurement model:

CBI: CBI1, CBI2, CBI3

RBC: RBC1, RBC2

PART: PART1, PART2

5.3.5 Organisational behaviour constructs

This section reports the results of the estimated confirmatory factor analysis for the independent constructs of organisational identification (OID) and affective organisational commitment (OCA). In estimating a CFA for the group of constructs,

scale and construct reliability are assessed for each. Measurement items that perform poorly in this context are removed. Goodness-of-fit indices are then reported prior to and post measuring purification with poor performing items disregarded for each construct as a result of theory and high Theta Delta modification indices. Each construct's final standardised item residuals and modification indices are also considered. The discriminant validity of each construct is then reported and considered prior to finally reporting the constructs for inclusion in the estimation of the study's measurement model along with their associated measurement items.

5.3.5.1 Scale and construct reliability

The estimated scale reliabilities, in the form of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) report AVEs of OID (0.64) and OCA (0.66). Both constructs report AVEs of ≥ 0.50 , indicating that more than 50% of the variance in each individual item within the OID constructs is explained by its associated construct (Hair et al 2010).

The estimated composite reliabilities report OID (0.91) and OCA (0.94). Both constructs report composite reliabilities of ≥ 0.70 indicating a more than acceptable relationship between the OID and OCA latent constructs and their measurement items (Hair et al, 2010).

5.3.5.2 Measure purification

The CFA estimation resulted in goodness of fit indices of chi-square 431.82 ($p=0.0$) with 76 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.093), SRMR (0.042), CFI (0.982) and RFI (0.974). Scale items were purified as guided by theory and thirty-two Theta-Delta modification indices reported as >3.84 .

The following items were disregarded:

OID: OID3, OID6

OCA: OCA5, OCA6, OCA8

Post measure purification, an improvement of goodness-of-fit indices resulted upon CFA estimation, reporting a chi-square of 89.401 ($p=0.0$) with 26 degrees of freedom, RMSEA (.063), SRMR (0.025), CFI (0.992) and RFI (0.984), indicating that remaining items for the two constructs fit the data very well. This is further supported as only a limited number of the reported standardised residuals marginally exceed 2.58 along with a very limited number of modification indices exceeding 3.84.

5.3.5.3 Discriminant validity

Table 5.6 below reports the discriminant validity for each of the two constructs showing average variance extracted for each on the diagonal with construct correlations below the diagonal and squared construct correlations above the diagonal.

Table 5.6 Discriminant validity: Organisational behaviour constructs.

	OID	OCA
OID	0.68	0.74
OCA	0.86	0.63

Below diagonal: construct inter-correlations

Above diagonal: squares of construct inter-correlations

The OID and OCA constructs are highly correlated (0.86), resulting in the square of the construct inter-correlation for OID and OCA being greater than the AVE for OID of 0.68 and the AVE for OCA of 0.63. Such a result is not surprising as in the organisational psychology literature organisational identification (OID) and affective organisational commitment are recognised as separate but related constructs (see 6.2.2.3). This issue from a research and theoretical perspective is discussed in section 6.2.2.3 of the discussion chapter of this dissertation. In concluding that OCA

is theoretically and research evidenced as distinct from social identity constructs, the OID construct in this study is disregarded and not carried forward to the estimation of the study's measurement and structural models.

5.3.5.4 Finalised constructs and measurement items

Therefore, the following constructs and items are included in the CFA estimation of the studies measurement model:

OCA: OCA1, OCA2, OCA3, OCA4, OCA7

However, the results of the study relating to OCA are to be very carefully elaborated on in the discussion section of this thesis, taking into account both the organisational commitment and organisational identification literature.

5.4 Method, response and sampling biases

Chapter three, which presented the research methodology, identified three potential biases that require testing prior to progressing onto the estimation of the study's measurement model. They are common method variance, non-response bias and inter-construct correlation.

5.4.1 Common method variance

Common method variance is the variance in a research study that is attributable to the study's measurement method rather than the constructs the measures represent (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff, 2003 p.879). As a form of systematic measurement error, common method bias is important as it provides an alternative explanation for the observed relationships between measures of different constructs that is independent of the one hypothesised (Bagozzi, Yi and Philips, 1991).

In this study common method bias was tested by deploying a surrogate measure in a confirmatory factor analysis that is assumed to represent common method

variance (Lindell and Brandt, 2000). The surrogate measure, continuance organisational commitment, is theoretically not related to any other measure in the study and therefore it can be assumed that any observed relationship between it and the other variables is due to common method variance (Lindell and Whitney, 2001). Continuance commitment in the literature is considered to be a theoretically independent construct from the two most closely related constructs in the model, affective organisational commitment and organisational identification.

Using a single-method-factor approach, items in the CFA loaded onto their theoretical constructs along with the surrogate construct (continuance organisational commitment). The factor loadings and their associated t-values remain the same when the CFA is estimated including and excluding the surrogate, and therefore the study is assumed not to be subject to common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie Lee and Podsakoff, 2003).

5.4.2 Non-response bias

Even though this quantitative study does not involve mailing potential respondents, it remains that a proportion of potential respondents did not complete the survey instrument (52.3%). Such non-response potentially may lead to non-response bias, a form of non-sampling error that occurs when some of the respondents included in the sample do not respond (Malhotra, 1993 p.106). The concern is that non-response may lead to a non-sampling error introduced when a segment of the defined population is either not represented or under represented in the data collected (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2000). Even though Morgan and Hunt (1994) do not consider non-response bias an issue when initially testing a theoretical model, non-response bias is tested in this study, as data was collected from seven stores over a three week period.

Therefore a sample of late respondents' data is to be compared in a t-test with a sample of early respondents data, for all the constructs contained in the study's

theoretical model, to establish if there are differences between the two groups. This follows the principal established by Armstrong and Overton (1977) that proposes late respondents have more in common with non-respondents than they do early respondents.

Table 5.7 Non-response bias test

Variable	Early Respondents n = 78		Late Respondents n = 94		Significance of t
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	
ECBEPQ	6.282	0.607	6.200	0.603	0.379
ECBELO	4.790	1.032	4.670	0.991	0.439
ECBEBA	5.160	0.943	5.214	0.857	0.673
ECBEBE	4.740	0.921	4.579	1.002	0.276
MVD	4.899	1.158	5.145	1.229	0.179
CII	5.746	0.918	5.832	0.871	0.533
VII	5.167	0.949	5.407	0.961	0.102
OCA	4.997	1.329	4.717	1.366	0.176
RBC	6.051	1.038	5.954	0.889	0.514
WOM	5.530	1.362	5.401	1.414	0.543
PART	4.603	1.464	4.614	1.215	0.958
OID	5.299	1.347	5.165	1.348	0.516
CBI	4.977	1.428	4.917	1.473	0.788

Table 5.7 indicates that early respondents for each of the constructs comprising the theoretical model have no significant t-test relationship at $p \leq .05$, with late respondents indicating no non-response bias.

5.4.3 Intra-construct correlation

Prior to pooling the data collected from each of the seven stores into one data set it is necessary to determine if the variance within each is generated from differences in FLEs and not the differences between each of the stores. Such an intra-construct correlation measures the degree of similarity between the two clusters and if the ICC test indicates a score of ≤ 0.10 the clusters are considered to be dissimilar (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002).

Such, ICC, is calculated prior to pooling the data. The ICC is tested by way of an MANOVA, in SPSS, that calculates the differences attributed at the individual and store level, for each construct that comprises the theoretical model. If the store level variance represents less than 10% of combined variance for each construct then the data for all seven stores may be pooled (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002).

Table 5.8 ICC calculation

Construct	Sum of squares	Sum of squares	ICC
	between groups	within groups	
ECBEPQ	7.551	254.901	2.96
ECBELO	9.452	598.196	1.58
ECBEBA	8.039	396.486	2.03
ECBEBE	16.139	621.115	2.60
MVD	50.848	706.698	7.20
CII	9.943	330.244	3.01
VII	14.282	482.437	2.96
OCA	22.161	1031.107	2.15
RBC	12.754	579.505	2.20
WOM	8.11	969.144	0.84
PART	14.187	956.539	1.48
OID	31.469	852.388	3.69
CBI	22.2	1040.171	2.13

From the table above it is evident that the ICC computed for each construct falls within the threshold set. Therefore the data for all seven stores can be pooled for data analysis purposes.

5.5 Measurement model estimation

This section of the data analysis uses confirmatory factor analysis to estimate the study's measurement model. The measurement model is first estimated, its results reported and its goodness-of-fit assessed.

5.5.1 Measurement model constructs

The results of a confirmatory factor analysis for the study's measurement model are presented and assessed in this section. The study's measurement model is comprised of the following constructs:

FLE construed brand quality (ECBEPQ)

FLE construed brand awareness and associations (ECBEBA)

Overall FLE construed brand equity (ECBEBE)

Mission and vision dissemination (MVD)

Consistent image implementation (CII)

Corporate visual identity implementation (VII)

FLE corporate brand identification construct (CBI)

FLE affective organisational commitment (OCA)

FLE relatedness to brand community (RBC)

FLE corporate brand participation (PART)

The above constructs are contained in the theoretical model that operationalizes FLE corporate identity. Each of the construct's measurement items were purified in section 5.3 to the extent that each construct demonstrated acceptable scale reliability, construct reliability and discriminant validity. However, three constructs did not demonstrate acceptable discriminant validity and are unable to be estimated in the measurement model CFA:

FLE construed corporate brand loyalty (ECBELO)

FLE positive word of mouth (WOM)

FLE Organisational identification (OID)

All three constructs formed components of the theoretical model that operationalizes FLE corporate identity, with ECBELO as an antecedent of FLE overall construed brand equity (ECBEBE) and WOM and OID as separate consequences of FLE corporate brand identification construct (CBI). The theoretical implications of not including these constructs in the estimation of the study's measurement model are considered as limited, as presented in section 6.2.2 of the discussion chapter of this thesis.

In total eight constructs were estimated, totalling thirty-two measurement items for 601 complete cases. First, the completely standardised factor loading (Λ), and their associated standard error (Θ) and t-values are reported for each item, supported with an overview of the estimated t-values. Next, the correlations of latent constructs are presented including their squared multiple correlations. Finally the goodness-of-fit of the study's measurement model is assessed.

5.5.2 Estimated measurement model

As indicated in table 5.9, all the reported standardised factor loadings (λ -X) are above a minimum of 0.50, with a significant number reporting above 0.70, and all are significant with t-values ranging from 13.74 to 26.63 indicating significance at $p < .001$ (see Appendix 5a). None of the reported standardised Theta-Delta (standard error) give cause for concern.

The correlations for the constructs of the measurement model, as presented in table 5.10, are in the directions expected and correlate positively with each other. All are significant at $p < .05$.

The goodness of fit indices for the study's measurement model report a significant chi-square 772.368 ($P=0.000$) with 389 degrees of freedom. The remaining goodness of fit indices are reported in table 5.11 below. Although there are no commonly agreed thresholds for individual goodness-of-fit indices in the literature, all the reported indicators show a good fit with the data (Hair et al 2010). RMSEA reports under the 0.07 threshold, SRMR reports under the 0.08 threshold, with CFI reporting over the 0.97 threshold and RFI reporting above the 0.95 threshold. The results are therefore considered as excellent.

Table 5.11 Goodness-of-fit indices for measurement model

X² / df	1.98
RMSEA	0.041
SRMR	0.037
CFI	0.988
RFI	0.971

Table 5.9 Standardised Lambda-X and Theta Delta for measurement model

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ECBE1PQ	0.798 (0.363)									
ECBE4PQ	0.820 (0.327)									
ECBE5PQ	0.723 (0.478)									
ECBE2BA		0.776 (0.397)								
ECBE3BA		0.777 (0.397)								
ECBE4BA		0.623 (0.611)								
ECBE1BE			0.808 (0.348)							
ECBE2BE			0.827 (0.316)							
ECBE4BE			0.675 (0.544)							
MVD1				0.654 (0.573)						
MVD4				0.801 (0.358)						
MVD5				0.805 (0.352)						
MVD6				0.855 (0.268)						
CII1					0.801 (0.359)					
CII2					0.868 (0.247)					
CII3					0.681 (0.536)					

Table 5.9 Standardised Lambda-X and Theta Delta for measurement model

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
VII1						0.645 (0.584)				
VII3						0.823 (0.322)				
VII4						0.706 (0.502)				
CBI1							0.779 (0.394)			
CBI2							0.887 (0.213)			
CBI3							0.815 (0.336)			
OCA1								0.799 (0.362)		
OCA2								0.749 (0.439)		
OCA3								0.761 (0.421)		
OCA4								0.813 (0.339)		
OCA7								0.845 (0.287)		
RBC1									0.957 (0.085)	
RBC3									0.843 (0.289)	
PART1										0.945 (0.107)
PART2										0.858 (0.263)

1. FLE-construed corporate brand quality

2. FLE-construed corporate brand awareness and associations

3. FLE overall construed corporate brand equity

4. Mission and vision dissemination

5. Consistent image implementation

6. Visual identity implementation

7. FLE corporate brand identification construct

8. Affective organisational commitment

9. FLE relatedness to brand community

10. FLE corporate brand participation

Table 5.10 Latent construct correlations measurement model

	ECBEPQ	ECBEBA	ECBEBE	MVD	CII	VII	OCA	RBC	PART	CBI
ECBEPQ	1.000	0.299	0.149	0.282	0.286	0.171	0.146	0.130	0.010	0.096
ECBEBA	0.547	1.000	0.219	0.271	0.295	0.232	0.116	0.104	0.025	0.120
ECBEBE	0.386	0.468	1.000	0.174	0.113	0.100	0.174	0.079	0.066	0.164
MVD	0.531	0.521	0.417	1.000	0.382	0.466	0.222	0.079	0.066	0.164
CII	0.535	0.543	0.336	0.618	1.000	0.370	0.293	0.202	0.116	0.233
VII	0.414	0.482	0.317	0.683	0.608	1.000	0.188	0.193	0.066	0.174
OCA	0.382	0.340	0.417	0.471	0.541	0.434	1.000	0.348	0.334	0.704
RBC	0.360	0.322	0.281	0.281	0.449	0.439	0.590	1.000	0.071	0.240
PART	0.099	0.159	0.256	0.256	0.340	0.256	0.578	0.266	1.000	0.282
CBI	0.310	0.347	0.405	0.405	0.483	0.417	0.839	0.490	0.531	1.000

Below diagonal: Correlations between constructs

Above diagonal: Squared correlations between constructs

5.6 Structural model estimation

This section of the data analysis uses SEM to estimate the study's structural model. First the structural model results are reported, then the goodness of fit assessed and finally the hypotheses contained in the study's theoretical model are assessed for structural model support.

5.6.1 Structural model hypothesised relationships

The structural model operationalizes the traditional branding and services marketing and organisational behaviour constructs of FLE corporate identity as presented in the study's theoretical model. In doing so the model tests the hypotheses developed and presented in the study's literature review. It tests the constructs contained in the organisational member association and the FLE-construed corporate brand equity construct groups as antecedents of FLE corporate brand identification and the consequential influence of FLE corporate brand identification upon the FLE in-role brand building behaviour constructs and FLE organisational commitment.

During the process of measuring purification and the testing of each construct for scale reliability, construct reliability and discriminant validity, three constructs contained in the study's theoretical model performed poorly. Respectively, these three constructs, FLE-construed brand loyalty, FLE word of mouth and organisational identification, were disregarded from the CFA estimation of the measurement model because of their potential negative influence upon measurement model goodness-of-fit performance. As a result the hypotheses contained in the studies theoretical model concerning these constructs are not tested in the studies structural model. Therefore the following hypotheses are not tested:

Hypothesise 1b

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 9

The theoretical implications of not testing these three hypotheses are considered to be limited and are addressed in the discussion chapter of this dissertation (section 6.2.2).

5.6.2. Structural model goodness-of-fit

Although there are no commonly agreed thresholds for individual goodness-of-fit indices in the literature, all the reported indicators show a very good fit between the model and the data (Hair et al 2010). The structural model reported a significant chi-square of 969.048 ($p=0.000$) with 415 degrees of freedom, resulting in a chi-square/degrees of freedom value of 2.33 indicating a good fit. An RMSEA of 0.047 reports under the 0.07 threshold, the SRMR of 0.059 reports under the 0.08 threshold, with a CFI of 0.983 reporting over the 0.97 threshold and an RFI of 0.967 reporting above the 0.95 threshold. Therefore taken in combination it is concluded that the goodness of fit indices contained in table 4.12 suggest that there is a very good fit between the study's structural model and its data.

Table 5.12 Goodness-of-fit indices for structural model

X ² /df	2.33
RMSEA	0.047
SRMR	0.059
CFI	0.983
RFI	0.967

5.6.3 Structural model path and hypothesis assessment

This section assesses the strength and significance of the paths specified between constructs in the study's structural model and their support of the hypotheses proposed in the study's theoretical model (excluding hypothesis 1b, 6 and 9). The completely standardised path estimate (Gamma or Beta) and the associated t-value is reported for each path. A summary of the path results for the structural model is to be found in table 5.13, and a structural model path diagram with completely standardised path estimates and levels of significance is presented in table 5.14.

The path between FLE-construed brand quality and overall FLE construed brand equity is positive and significant (0.190, $t= 3.254$) to $p<.001$, as that is between FLE construed brand awareness and associations and overall FLE construed brand equity (0.376, $t=5.923$). Both H 1a and H1c are supported. H2 is also supported as the path between overall FLE construed brand equity and FLE corporate brand identification is positive and significant (0.254, $t=5.759$) to $p<.001$. Therefore an FLE's construed brand equity positively influences an FLE's social identity concerning their membership of a corporate brand community, FLE corporate brand identification.

The structural model also supports H4 and H5 as the paths between consistent image implementation and FLE corporate brand identification (0.341, $t=5.590$) and corporate visual identity implementation and FLE corporate brand identification (0.136, $t=2.018$) are both positive and significant, at $p<.001$ and $p<.05$ respectively. H3 is not supported as the relationship between mission and vision dissemination and FLE corporate brand identification is positive but not significant (0.058, $t=0.900$). Therefore two separate constructs that are internal to the organisation positively influence an FLE's social identity concerning their membership of a corporate brand community, FLE corporate brand identification.

The path between FLE corporate brand identification and FLE corporate brand participation is positive and significant (0.576, $t=12.799$) to $p<.001$, as is the path between FLE corporate brand identification and FLE relatedness to brand community (0.546, 13.012). As a result H7 and H8 are supported. Therefore, an FLE's social identity concerning their membership of a corporate brand community, FLE corporate brand identification, influences two separate extra-role corporate brand building constructs.

Hypothesis H10 is also supported with a positive and significant path between FLE corporate brand identification and affective organisational commitment (0.889, $t=18.002$) to $p<.001$. Therefore, an FLE's social identity concerning their membership of a corporate brand community, FLE corporate brand identification, influences the individual organisational behaviour construct of affective organisational commitment.

A summary of the completely standardised path estimates with their associated t -values for the studies structural model can be found in table 5.13 below.

A diagram representation of the full structural model with goodness-of-fit indices and completely standardised path estimates is depicted below in table 5.14.

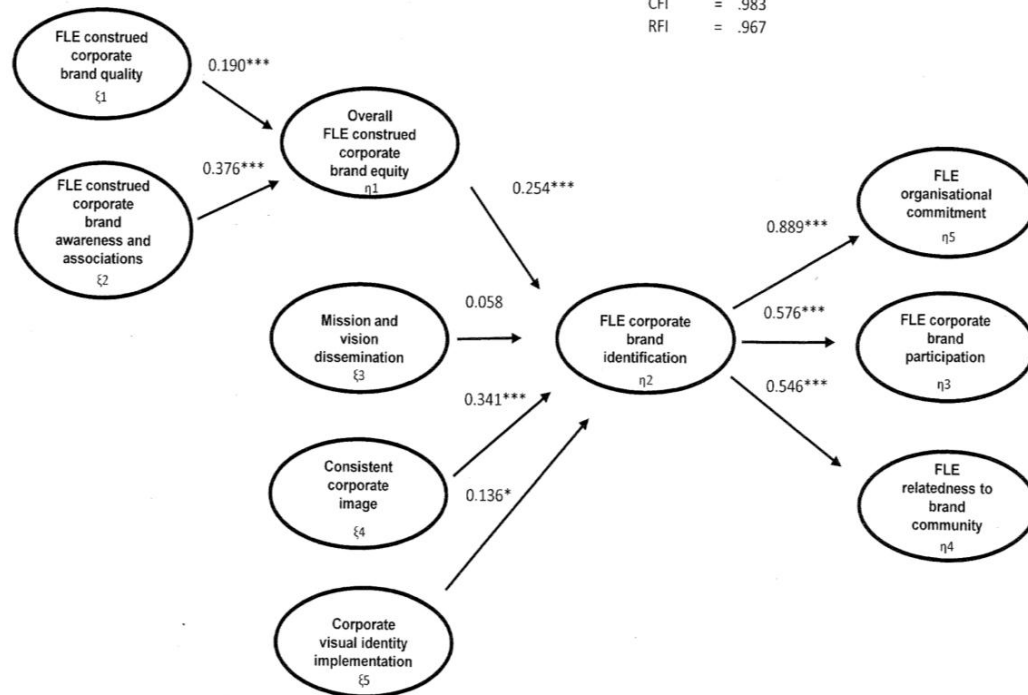
Table 5.13 Completely standardised path estimates for the structural model

Structural model path	Hypothesis	Structural model	
		Standardised estimate	t-value
FLE construed corporate brand quality → Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity	H1a supported	0.190	3.254
FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations → Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity	H1c supported	0.376	5.923
FLE construed corporate brand equity → FLE corporate brand identification	H2 supported	0.254	5.759
Mission and vision dissemination → FLE corporate brand identification	H3 not supported	0.058	0.900
Consistent image implementation → FLE corporate brand identification	H4 supported	0.341	5.590
Corporate visual identity implementation → FLE corporate brand identification	H5 supported	0.136	2.018
FLE corporate brand identification → FLE corporate brand participation	H7 supported	0.576	12.799
FLE corporate brand identification → FLE relatedness to brand community	H8 supported	0.546	13.012
FLE corporate brand identification → affective organisational commitment	H10 supported	0.889	18.002

Table 5.14 Structural model results

Table 5.14 structural model results

X2	= 941.108	*** p< 0.001
Df	= 415	** p<0.01
RMSEA	= .047	*p<0.05
SRMR	= .059	
CFI	= .983	
RFI	= .967	



5.7 Data analysis summary and conclusions

This chapter of the study reported 601 usable cases out of a total collected sample of 1258, from seven retail stores, a division of a national UK retailer. Missing data accounted for 0.002% of the usable samples total items and was replaced with values generated from data imputation using the Expectation-Maximisation (EM) algorithm method (Dempster, Laird and Rubin, 1977). The data, when tested, did not contain common method bias, or non-response bias and calculated an appropriate ICC for each construct, permitting the data from each of the seven stores to be pooled into one data set.

Confirmatory factor analyses were estimated for four construct groupings. The construct groupings were FLE construed corporate brand equity, FLE organisational associations, FLE in-role corporate brand building behaviours and FLE organisational behaviour constructs. The FLE corporate brand identification construct was included with the FLE organisational behaviour construct grouping CFA, as this is theoretically where the construct is most aligned.

After testing each construct's measures for scale and construct reliability, measurement items were disregarded from the FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations (ECBEBA) and corporate image implementation (CII) constructs so that each met and exceeded the threshold set for scale reliability. After measurement purification each of the CFAs reported acceptable goodness-of-fit indices, having reviewed the standardised residuals and modification indices for each. Three constructs performed poorly when tested for discriminant validity. As a result the FLE-construed corporate brand loyalty (ECBELO), FLE positive word of mouth (WOM) and affective organisational commitment (OCA) constructs were not included in the estimation of the measurement model.

The results of estimating the measurement model indicated an excellent fit between the model and the data. The structural model when estimated, demonstrated excellent fit with the data, estimating as significant at $p \leq .05$ eight out of nine hypothesised completely standardised paths between constructs. The results are shown diagrammatically in table 5.14.

The next chapter turns to a discussion of the results of the research study.

CHAPTER SIX - DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

So far this dissertation has developed and presented a definition for FLE corporate identity that, in reviewing the existent literature in corporate identity, services marketing, branding and organisational behaviour, is further developed into a theoretical model for the construct. Here, the FLE corporate identity construct is embedded in a wider nomological net of related constructs. Both the definition, and its associated theoretical model, is the first to address FLE corporate identity in applying corporate identity theory at an individual stakeholder rather than at an organisational level.

The proposed research design, that empirically tests the FLE corporate identity theoretical model, deploys a quantitative research study in seven stores of a major UK national retailer, utilising structural equation modelling to analyse the research results of the study.

The study, the first of its kind to empirically research FLE corporate identity, tests the hypothesised relationships between the theoretical models constructs, and in doing so deploys a series of new measurement scales that measure a number of newly developed constructs. The new measurement scale of FLE corporate brand identification is the central construct of the theoretical model. Its antecedents, the FLE construed corporate brand equity and FLE organisational associations construct sets, are also new measurement scales. The hypothesised antecedent relationships between these new constructs and FLE corporate brand identification empirically contribute to the literature, as does the hypothesised influence of FLE corporate brand identification upon the existing construct set of FLE extra-role brand building behaviour and FLE affective organisational commitment.

This chapter therefore discusses three aspects of the research findings of the study. First, the new measurement scales deployed in the research study are discussed (6.2.1), followed by a discussion concerning the hypotheses that could not be tested in the structural equation model due to insufficient discriminant validity (6.2.2). Each of the eight hypotheses estimated in the study's structural model are then individually addressed, and it is discussed how the findings of each relate to the existent literature (6.3).

6.2 New measurement scales and untested hypothesis

During the process of operationalizing the study's theoretical model, two new sets of measurement scales were deployed (FLE construed brand equity set of constructs and the FLE organisational associations set of constructs) and one new measurement scale (FLE corporate brand identification). These are discussed in section 6.2.1 below.

Also, it was not possible to estimate hypotheses H1b, H6 and H9 in the structural equation model due to insufficient discriminant validity of the FLE construed corporate brand loyalty, FLE word of mouth and FLE organisational identification constructs. Each hypothesis is discussed in section 6.2.2 below.

6.2.1 New measurement scales

During the process of operationalizing the theoretical model of the study, two new sets of measurement scales (FLE construed brand equity set of constructs and the FLE organisational associations set of constructs) and one new measurement scale (FLE corporate brand identification) were deployed. These new measurement scales were developed through the adaption of existing measurement scales, or in the application of existing measurement scales at an employee not a management

level. This section of the discussion chapter discusses the effectiveness of these new measurement scales when deployed as part of this research study.

6.2.1.1 The FLE construed corporate brand equity set of measurement scales

The research study estimated acceptable discriminant validity, construct reliability and scale reliability for the FLE construed corporate brand quality, FLE construed corporate brand awareness and overall FLE construed corporate brand equity constructs. Adapted from the measurement scales deployed by Yoo and Dhontu (2001), to measure consumer based brand equity, they are newly applied in an FLE context as new scales that effectively measure a form of FLE construed associations.

6.2.1.2 The FLE organisational associations set of measurement scales

The acceptable construct discriminant validity, construct reliability and scale reliability assessment of the mission and vision dissemination, consistent image implementation and visual identity implementation constructs, indicates that the scales developed by Simoes, Dibb and Fisk (2005), and originally applied at a management level, effectively translate to an FLE level to measure FLE organisational associations.

6.2.1.3 The FLE corporate brand identification measurement scale

The acceptable construct discriminant validity, construct reliability and scale reliability assessment of the FLE corporate brand identification construct indicates that the scale developed by Ashforth and Mael (1989), to measure organisation identification, a form of social identity at the organisational level, successfully is modified to form a new scale that measures the social identity of FLEs concerning their membership of a corporate brand community.

6.2.1.4 Summary

During the process of operationalizing the theoretical model of the study, two new sets of measurement scales (FLE construed brand equity set of constructs and the FLE organisational associations set of constructs) and one new measurement scale (FLE corporate brand identification) were deployed. In total each of these new scales, with the exception of FLE construed corporate brand loyalty, demonstrated acceptable construct discriminant validity, construct reliability and scale reliability.

6.2.2 Hypotheses not estimated

It was not possible to estimate hypotheses H1b, H6 and H9 in the study's structural equation model due to insufficient discriminant validity of the FLE construed corporate brand loyalty, FLE word of mouth and FLE organisational identification constructs. This section, presented in order of hypothesis number, discusses each untested hypothesis.

6.2.2.1 FLE construed corporate brand loyalty and overall FLE corporate brand equity (H1b)

In the estimation of the research study's structural model it was not possible to estimate H1b, the relationship between FLE construed corporate brand loyalty and overall FLE construed corporate brand quality. The data analysis phase of the project determined that the FLE construed corporate brand loyalty construct was explained by nearly as much of its own variance than it was by the FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations construct. Even though in the reverse this did not apply. The decision was therefore made not to include FLE construed brand loyalty in the estimation of the study's measurement and structural models (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Theory presented below supports this decision. It is therefore not possible, in this study, to empirically establish the degree to which FLEs construe the corporate brand loyalty of their customers.

The customer brand equity domain of the branding literature explains the discriminant validity issue between the two constructs. Aaker (1991) considers brand loyalty a dimension of the brand equity construct, whereas Keller (1993) considers customer loyalty as an outcome of strong and favourable associations. It can therefore be seen as theoretically contradictory as to whether brand loyalty is a separate construct from brand associations or whether favourable associations are an antecedent of brand loyalty. It is thus theoretically valid to extract FLE construed corporate brand loyalty from the study's estimation of its measurement and structural models.

The relationship between FLE construed corporate brand loyalty and overall FLE construed corporate brand equity has not been previously empirically tested. Theoretically the relationship between the two constructs, in an FLE construed associations context, would therefore benefit from further future qualitative research in order to explore the FLE construed corporate brand loyalty.

6.2.2.2 FLE corporate brand identification and FLE word of mouth (H6)

The influence of FLE corporate brand identification upon FLE word of mouth (H6) was not estimated in the study's structural model due to the discriminant validity of the FLE word of mouth construct. The data analysis of the study established that the square of the two constructs' inter-correlation of 0.67 was marginally greater than the average variance extracted for corporate brand identification construct of 0.65. This indicated that the FLE word of mouth construct was moderately contributing to and explaining the variance in the corporate brand identification construct. This is likely caused by the context of the sample, given that both scales have not been applied in an organisational context previously with a sample of FLEs.

In a consumer context, previous research studies indicate that when consumers have a strong identification with a brand this has favourable consequences for consumer loyalty and word-of-mouth (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Bagozzi and

Bergami , 2000). Such identification with the brand strongly influences consumers to promote a company's product, services and brands (Bettencourt and Brown, 2003), recommend the company's products more often (Ahearne, Bhattacharya and Gruen, 2005), and when identifying with a brands' community, make positive recommendations about the brand (Algesheimer, Dholakia and Herrmann, 2005). Therefore, on the basis of the consumer branding literature, it is theoretically likely that the FLE word of mouth construct is a consequence of FLE corporate brand identification. Therefore the FLE corporate brand identification construct is included in the estimation of the study's measurement and structural model in favour of the FLE model word of mouth construct. However, the relationship between these two constructs would benefit from further future qualitative research.

6.2.2.3 FLE corporate brand identification and FLE organisational identification (H9)

The influence of FLE corporate brand identification upon FLE organisational identification (H9) was not estimated in the study's structural model due to the discriminant validity of the FLE organisational identification construct. The square of the FLE organisational identity and FLE affective organisational commitment constructs inter-correlation was 0.74 and marginally greater than the average variance extracted of for FLE organisational identification construct of 0.65. This indicated that the FLE affective organisational commitment construct was moderately contributing to and explaining variance of the FLE organisational identification construct.

Theoretically there is debate as to whether the two constructs conceptually and operationally overlap or whether they are conceptually and operationally separate (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006). H10 of this study empirically evidences that affective organisational commitment is operationally distinct but related to a form of social identity, FLE corporate brand identification. This supports Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006 who theoretically distinguish the two constructs, as is evidenced by

the measurement scale used to measure affective organisational commitment (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). Therefore given that H10 and theory determine FLE affective organisational commitment as independent construct from social identity based constructs, FLE affective organisational commitment was estimated in the study's measurement and structural models in favour of FLE organisational identification. However, the relationship between the two constructs would benefit from a further future qualitative research study.

6.2.2.4 Summary

It was not possible to estimate hypotheses H1b, H6 and H9 in the study's structural equation model due to insufficient discriminant validity of the FLE construed corporate brand loyalty, FLE word of mouth and FLE organisational identification constructs. Each of these phenomena is explained by either existing theory or the context of the sample

6.3 Estimated hypothesised relationships

The structural model for the research study estimated paths for H1a, H1b, H2, H3, H4, H5, H7, H8 and H10. Each of these paths is discussed below, in hypothesis order.

6.3.1 The antecedents of overall FLE construed corporate brand equity

Table 6.1 The antecedents of overall FLE construed corporate brand equity

H	Antecedent	Outcome	Coefficient	t value	Sig
1a	FLE construed corporate brand quality	Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity	0.190	3.254	0.001
1c	FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations	Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity	0.376	5.923	0.001

FLE construed corporate brand quality and FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations were both found to be positively related to the overall FLE construed corporate brand equity construct (H1a and H1c). Both hypothesis support Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006, p101) who propose that FLEs ask the question *what do stakeholders actually think of the organisation?*, when considering the organisation's corporate identity. These constructs are termed member construed associations, and are defined as *the mental associations that organisational members believe others outside the organisation hold about the organisation* (Brown et al, 2006, p.102). The findings empirically support that customers are a stakeholder group for whom employees, in this case FLEs, hold construed associations (Brown and Dacin, 1997). The findings of both hypotheses support the fact that FLEs construe the brand equity held by their customers, just as FLEs construe a customer's hierarchy of needs as a result of service encounters (Homburg, Wieseke and Bornemann, 2009). Uniquely, the research study gives empirical evidence that FLEs construe the external performance of the corporate brand as judged by their customers.

6.3.1.1 FLE construed corporate brand quality and overall FLE construed corporate brand equity (H1a)

Therefore the relationship between FLE construed corporate brand quality and overall FLE construed corporate brand equity (H1a) is not surprising. Aaker (1991) cites the perceived quality of a brand as the consumer's judgement about a brand's overall excellence and superiority. Indeed, Aaker and Keller (1990), when researching the factors that influence the consumer evaluation of brand extensions, regard perceived quality of the brand to be the single most important element when a customer is evaluating brand strength. The significance and strength of the relationship determined in H1a, finds that this also holds for FLEs are construing the corporate brand equity of their customers. The FLE construed corporate brand

quality influences an FLE's construed associations regarding customer's selection of the corporate brand in favour of other competitor alternatives.

6.3.1.2 FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations and overall FLE construed corporate brand equity (H1c)

Also the relationship between FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations and overall FLE construed corporate brand equity (H1c) is also not surprising. Both brand awareness and brand associations feature in both Aaker (1991) and Keller's (1993) models of brand equity, which are applied at the consumer level. Aaker 1991 considers brand awareness to be the ability for a buyer to recognise or recall that a brand (Aaker, 1991 p.61) and brand associations is considered anything linked in memory to a brand (Aaker, 1991 p.109). Hypothesis 1c supports the use of both consumer corporate brand awareness and associations in an FLE construed associations context. The significance and strength of the relationship determined in H1c, finds that the corporate brand awareness and associations construct holds for FLEs when construing the corporate brand equity of their customers.

6.3.1.3 Summary

The important empirical finding that FLEs construe the corporate brand equity of their customers suggests that it is likely that FLEs, as with their customers, are also influenced by associative network memory theory (Henderson, Iacobucci and Calder, 2002). It is likely that an FLE construed association concerning customer corporate brand equity, are held and stored in their memory in the form of associative networks (Anderson and Bower, 1973; Ellis and Hunt, 1992). Individual FLEs hold knowledge of a particular domain, i.e. brands, that is represented in memory as links of associations among concept nodes (Sirsi, Ward and Reingen, 1996). Concept nodes are units of information held in memory, i.e. construed corporate brand quality, construed corporate brand awareness, and so on, that are linked together to form a network of ideas, or a knowledge structure (Knoke and

Kuklinski, 1982). Such links, the connections between nodes, are termed associations, , FLE construed associations.

6.3.2 The antecedents of FLE Corporate Brand Identification

Table 6.2 The antecedents of FLE corporate brand identification

H	Antecedent	Outcome	Coefficient	t value	Sig
2	Overall FLE construed corporate brand equity	FLE corporate brand identification	0.254	5.759	0.001
3	Mission and vision dissemination	FLE corporate brand identification	0.058	0.900	N.S.
4	Consistent image implementation	FLE corporate brand identification	0.341	5.590	0.001
5	Corporate visual identity implementation	FLE corporate brand identification	0.136	2.018	0.05

The overall FLE construed corporate brand equity, consistent image implementation and corporate visual identity implementation constructs, were found in the present study to positively relate to FLE corporate brand identification (H2,H4,H5); and the findings of H2, H4 and H5 support FLEs hold corporate associations. Corporate associations are The set of mental associations about a company held by individuals (Brown and Dacin, 1997) that concern the types of beliefs, moods, emotions and evaluations about an organisation that are held by individuals and that are mentally associated with the organisation (Dacin and Brown, 2002). Specifically, support for H2, H4 and H5 is found in Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, (2006, p.102) in their proposal that employees, including FLEs, hold organisational associations that answer the question *who are we as an organisation?*, and are defined as the *mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members*.

The empirical contribution is to establish that the construed associations and organisational associations held by FLEs, that concern an organisation's corporate brand, influence the social identity FLEs hold in relation to their membership of a corporate brand community.

6.3.2.1 Overall FLE construed brand equity and FLE corporate brand identification (H2)

The study found that overall FLE corporate brand equity positively relates to FLE corporate brand identification (H2). This finding supports the likelihood that FLE construed associations make the corporate brand identification social category salient, given their contribution to providing frequent cues about the organisation, communicating an organisation's context and conveying information that relates to the goals of the perceiver (Turner, 1985; 1994). In communicating differences between the members of a corporate brand community and those that are not, FLE construed associations contribute to social category fit, where at the extreme an individual holds a self-perception exclusively as a member of a corporate brand community that is defined by the shared characteristics of that group (Turner, 1982). This finding is important as it empirically shows the strong and significant influence of FLE construed overall corporate brand equity upon FLEs as members of a corporate brand community.

6.3.2.2 Mission and vision dissemination and FLE corporate brand identification (H3)

Contrary to expectations no significant relationship ($p \leq .05$) was found between the mission and vision dissemination construct and FLE corporate brand identification (H3). In terms of construct measurement both constructs demonstrate acceptable construct and scale reliability, along with discriminant validity. Neither is there an issue with sample size as the estimation of the measurement and structural models did not demonstrate any identification issues with both estimating more than acceptable goodness-of-fit indices. Given the successful contribution of the

construct to the estimation of the study's measurement model, the vision and mission construct is evidenced in the study as an FLE organisational association construct within the FLE organisational associations construct grouping. It is therefore likely that the non-significant relationship concerns the theoretical development surrounding the relationship between the two constructs.

Social identity theory indicates that members of an organisation hold multiple social identities (Brown, 2001). As is proposed in the theoretical model of this study, in addition to FLEs holding FLE corporate brand identification, it is likely that FLEs also hold an organisational identification, which is "*the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of the organisation and where identification with an organisation partly answers the question of who am I?*" (Ashforth and Mael, 1989, p.33). Organisational identification holds "*that the more an individual identifies with an organisation the more the organisation's values, norms and interests are incorporated into an individuals' concept of their self*" (Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006, p.27). Employees as part of their organisational identification hold value-based content that contributes to the value congruence between the organisation and the individual (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006). It is therefore likely that the vision and mission of an organisation, an element of corporate identity at the corporate level (Melewar, 2003; Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005), influences an FLE's organisational identification rather than the social identity FLEs hold concerning their membership of a corporate brand community.

The findings of H4 and H5 lend support to this reasoning as the FLE organisational associations that influence FLE corporate brand identification both concern the organisation's corporate brand, i.e. corporate image and corporate visual identity. In the branding literature, although the mission and vision of an organisation and its corporate brand have been considered by some organisations to be used interchangeably (Ind, 2001), the mission and vision is considered to be only an

influencer of an organisation's corporate brand (Savatjjs and de Chernatony, 2005). The corporate brand therefore only at best communicates the organisation's mission and vision to the corporate brand community (Harris and de Chernatony, 2001), whilst the corporate brand community is primarily concerned with co-creating brand value through the continuous social process of stakeholder interaction and stakeholder-based negotiation (Brodie et al, 2009). It is therefore more likely that the mission and vision of the organisation, as an FLE organisational association, influences the saliency of an FLE's organisational identification rather than their FLE corporate brand identification. However, the relationship between mission and vision dissemination and the two social identity constructs of FLE corporate brand identification and FLE organisational identification would benefit from further future qualitative research.

6.3.2.3 Consistent image implementation and FLE corporate brand identification (H4)

It is not surprising that consistent image implementation, an FLE organisational association, was found to positively relate to FLE corporate brand identification (H4). This finding empirically evidences that FLEs hold a corporate image of the organisation, and in particular that FLEs as stakeholders hold perceptions of the way an organisation presents itself, either deliberately or accidentally (Melewar, 2003, p.201). H3 evidences that such a corporate image held by FLEs represents an organisational association. Mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006).

The positive relationship between consistent image implementation and FLE corporate brand identification demonstrates that FLE organisational associations, through social categorisation, influence the social identity held by FLEs concerning their membership of a brand community. The corporate image held by FLEs likely influences the saliency of an FLE's corporate brand identification (Turner, 1985; 1994) and contributes to FLEs determining social category fit by it communicating

differences between members of a corporate brand community and those that are not (Turner, 1982). This finding is important as it empirically demonstrates the strong and significant influence of corporate image upon FLEs as members of a corporate brand community.

6.3.2.4 Corporate visual identity implementation and FLE corporate brand identification (H5)

The study also found that corporate visual identity implementation, also an FLE organisational association, positively relates to FLE corporate brand identification (H5). This demonstrates the influence of an organisation's corporate visual identity upon an FLE's social identity concerning their membership of a corporate brand community and supports the proposition that CVI is considered to be a key component of an organisation's corporate identity (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003; Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006), a component which is considered to be a dominant dimension of corporate identity (Suvatjits and de Chernatony, 2005). The findings also support the fact that that employee awareness of the corporate symbols that comprise corporate visual identity, and their associated meaning, is vital as these visual aspects communicate signals about the organisation to employees (Berry, 2000). To the point that H5 evidences that the corporate visual identity held by FLEs represents an organisational association, mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006). The corporate visual identity held by FLEs likely influences the saliency of an FLE's corporate brand identification (Turner, 1985; 1994) and contributes to how FLEs determine social category fit by the CVI communicating differences between the members of a corporate brand community and those that are not (Turner, 1982). This finding is important as it empirically shows the influence of an organisation's corporate visual identity upon FLEs as members of a corporate brand community.

6.3.2.5 Summary

To summarise, this study empirically establishes that FLEs hold both construed associations and organisational associations. The overall FLE construed corporate brand equity, corporate visual identity implementation, and consistent image implementation constructs all positively influence the social identity of FLEs concerning their membership of a corporate brand community. The study empirically establishes that a new form of social identity, FLE corporate brand identification, is positively influenced by corporate identity phenomena originally established at the corporate level, and related to an organisation's corporate brand. In doing so the study empirically establishes that FLE construed associations and organisational associations, concerning the organisation's corporate brand, influence at an individual level the saliency of an FLE's corporate brand identification (Turner, 1985; 1994). This contributes to FLEs determining social category fit by both sets of associations, communicating differences between the members of a corporate brand community and those that are not (Turner, 1982). The non-significant relationship between mission and vision dissemination and FLE corporate brand identification is likely explained by existent theory and would benefit from further future qualitative research.

6.3.3 The services and brand marketing consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

Table 6.3 The services and brand marketing consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

H	Antecedent	Outcome	Coefficient	t value	Sig
7	FLE corporate brand identification	FLE corporate brand participation	0.576	12.799	0.001
8	FLE corporate brand identification	FLE relatedness to brand community	0.546	13.012	0.001

The study found that the FLE corporate brand identification construct related to both FLE corporate brand participation (H7) and FLE relatedness to brand community (H8).

The empirical contribution establishes that the social identity held by FLEs, relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, influences certain FLE actions and perceptions that support the organisation's corporate brand.

6.3.3.1 FLE corporate brand identification and FLE corporate brand participation (H7)

The study established that the FLE corporate brand identification construct is positively related to FLE corporate brand participation (H7). This finding is unsurprising for two reasons. First, several models of corporate identity place FLEs between the organisation and its customers, indicating that FLEs feed back the views and concerns of customers and other external stakeholders to the organisation through its management structure (Dowling, 1986; Kennedy, 1977; Stuart, 1998). Second, this finding empirically supports the theory developed in the branding literature that employees participate in the brand's development (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006) and interact with each other and their managers on brand related matters (de Chernatony, Cottam and Segal-Horn, 2006; Wallace and de Chernatony, 2009). This empirical finding is important as it establishes that phenomena related to an FLE's membership of a corporate brand community influences the actions of FLEs that support the development of that community.

6.3.3.2 FLE corporate brand identification and FLE relatedness to brand community (H8)

The study has also established that FLE corporate brand identification construct positively related to FLE relatedness to the brand community (H8). This finding further develops the brand community research of Devasagayam, Buff, Aurand and

Judson (2010) who empirically verified that social interaction between employees results from employee membership of a brand community. Such interaction is strengthened by the perceived relatedness between individual members of a brand community (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009). This finding (H8) empirically develops brand community theory further by establishing that the social identity held by FLEs, in respect of their membership of a corporate brand community, positively influences their perceived relatedness between them and other members of a corporate brand community. This empirical finding is important as it establishes that phenomena related to an FLE's membership of a corporate brand community influence the perceptions of FLEs that support the development of that community, thus introducing a social psychology influence to the discourse concerning the perceptions and behaviours related to FLE corporate brand community membership.

6.3.3.3 Summary

H7 and H8 give empirical evidence that an FLE's membership of a corporate brand community influences certain actions and perceptions that support the organisation's corporate brand, in that the social identity an FLE holds, relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, positively influences an FLE's corporate brand participation and an FLE's relatedness to a corporate brand community.

6.3.4 The organisational psychology consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

Table 6.4 The organisational psychology consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

H	Antecedent	Outcome	Coefficient	t value	Sig
10	FLE corporate brand identification	FLE affective organisational commitment	0.889	18.002	0.001

The study found that the FLE corporate brand identification construct related to the FLE affective organisational commitment construct (H10). The empirical contribution of this aspect of the study is to empirically show the influence of FLE brand community membership, in the form of the social identity FLEs hold concerning this membership, upon the conventional organisational psychology construct of affective organisational commitment.

6.3.4.1 FLE corporate brand identification and FLE affective organisational commitment (H10)

FLE corporate brand identification was found to be positively related to FLE affective organisational commitment (H10). Meyer, Becker and van Dick (2006) propose that a social or organisational identity in itself does not necessarily bind an FLE to a particular cause, course of action or objective i.e. organisational goals, programs and change projects (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). It is proposed that affective organisational commitment, when an employee is attached to a target because they want to be (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006), is driven by value congruence between the organisation and the individual (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005; Verquer, Beehr and Wagner, 2003). Employees as part of their organisational identification hold such value-based content that in turn influences their affective organisational commitment (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006).

The finding of H10 empirically establish that an FLE's social identity, relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, positively influences FLE affective organisational commitment. Even though it is found that the values based mission and vision construct does not influence an FLE's corporate brand identification (H3), the study demonstrates that FLE corporate brand identification is positively influenced by the FLE organisational associations of consistent image implementation (H4) and visual identity implementation (H5). H10 therefore does not directly give evidence that values based content of FLE corporate brand identification influences FLE affective organisational commitment. However, H10 empirically does show that a form of social identity that concerns an FLE's membership of a corporate brand community and is comprised of corporate brand based FLE organisational associations, positively influences an FLE's affective organisational commitment. Therefore, empirically evidence has been found that membership of a corporate brand community influence an FLE's affective organisational commitment.

The importance of organisational commitment's influence upon FLEs is emphasised by Mukherjee and Malhotra (2003) who establish a positive and significant relationship between affective organisational commitment and the level of service quality delivered by FLEs to customers. In addition Meyer, Becker and van Dick (2006), in their integration and modelling of organisational identity and commitment, posit that in affective commitment positively influences employee motivation and their willingness to exert effort. This study empirically and uniquely extends the potential antecedents of FLE organisational commitment by empirically establishing the influence of corporate branding on the construct, in the form of FLE corporate brand identification and the respective influence of its corporate identity antecedents. This therefore introduces a new domain of discourse concerning the influence of corporate branding, corporate brand communities and FLE corporate identity phenomena upon FLE organisational commitment.

6.3.4.2 Summary

H10 empirically establishes that the social identity an FLE holds in relation to membership of a corporate brand community directly and positively influences an FLE's affective organisational commitment. This finding is important as a previous empirical study (Mukherjee and Malhotra, 2006) found that affective organisational commitment positively influences the level of service quality delivered by FLE's to customers.

6.4 Summary and conclusions

Chapter six, discussed the research findings of the study in the context of existent theory and research. Eight significant ($p \leq .05$) paths of the estimated structural model, and its associated hypotheses, support their theoretical foundations developed in chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation, thus making empirical research contributions in successfully developing new measurement scales and establishing new relationships between constructs. One path and hypothesis was found to be insignificant (H3) which is explained by social identity and branding theory. Three hypotheses (H1b, H6, H10), and their associated structural model paths, were unable to be tested due to the discriminant validity of one of the constructs contained in each hypothesis. Each is explained by either underlying theory or the research context of the study.

In the next chapter, the theoretical implications of the study for the corporate identity, branding, services marketing and organisational psychology literature are discussed, along with the managerial implications of the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN - RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research findings of the study in the context of existent theory and research. In the following it is established that the research study makes three important theoretical contributions in:

RP1 Defining corporate identity at an FLE level, termed FLE corporate identity.

RP2 Theoretically modelling the FLE corporate identity construct.

RP3 Operationalising the FLE corporate identity construct by testing the developed theoretical model through empirical research with FLEs.

This chapter, therefore, presents the theoretical (7.2) and managerial implications (7.3) of the research study. First, the chapter presents the research study's implications for and contribution to three sets of literature, the corporate identity literature (7.2.1), the branding and services management literature (7.2.2) and the organisational psychology literature (7.2.3). Second, the managerial implications are addressed for FLE corporate brand identification (7.3.1), FLE construed corporate brand equity (7.3.2), FLE organisational associations (7.3.3), FLE extra-role brand building behaviours (7.3.4) and FLE organisational commitment (7.3.5). Finally the chapter is summarised and concluded (7.4)

7.2 Contribution to and implications for the literature

7.2.1 Corporate identity literature

The primary contribution of this study, as addressed above, is the definition, theoretical modelling and empirical research of FLE corporate identity. As this principal contribution is comprised of a series of specific contributions to the corporate identity literature, the specific contributions of the research study to specific elements of the corporate identity literature are addressed in this section.

This research study empirically establishes the FLE corporate brand identification construct, a social identity held by FLEs concerning their membership of a corporate brand community. In doing so it extends the influence and application of social identity theory in the corporate identity literature. It advances the prevailing debate concerning the similarities, differences and relative influence of organisational identity and corporate identity, by applying social identity theory to an organisation's brand, a significant dimension of corporate identity at the organisational level. The contribution of the present study extends current corporate identity discourse, taking it from its present organisational level down to the level of an individual corporate identity stakeholder group, FLEs. In doing so this study demonstrates that social identity theory does not compete with corporate identity theory, but complements it. Applying social identity theory to measure the extent of an individuals' psychological relationship with a specific corporate identity community allows for the potential influence of corporate identity phenomena theoretically established at the corporate level to be measured at the individual level.

The establishment of the FLE corporate brand identification construct also extends the corporate identity literature by empirically establishing FLEs as a corporate identity stakeholder group, applying the corporate identity construct at an individual stakeholder and FLE level. The empirical findings uniquely evidence the influence of specific corporate identity phenomena upon FLE corporate brand identification,

indicating that FLEs form a corporate identity stakeholder group around the organisation's corporate brand, as members of a corporate brand community.

This study empirically establishes the construed associations construct in a new context, one where FLEs and customers frequently interact as two stakeholder groupings. Applying the construed associations construct to FLEs construing the brand equity of customers, uniquely empirically applies it to the organisation's corporate brand, a significant dimension of an organisation's corporate identity taxonomy (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002; Melewar, 2003). The significant direct effect between overall FLE construed corporate brand equity and the social identity FLEs hold as members of a corporate brand community, uniquely show that FLEs are influenced by construed corporate identity phenomena and that FLEs hold construed associations concerning an organisation's customers. In doing so the study extends the boundaries of the corporate associations element of the corporate identity literature.

The research study also for the first time empirically shows that FLEs, as members of an organisation, hold specific organisational associations concerning the internal influence of an organisation's corporate brand. Internal corporate identity phenomena that are previously theoretically developed at the organisational level are empirically shown as corporate identity phenomena at a stakeholder level. The influence of the consistent image implementation and visual identity implementation constructs upon FLE corporate brand identification gives new evidence that internal corporate identity phenomena, related to an organisation's corporate brand, influence FLEs as a corporate identity stakeholder grouping. This extends the boundaries of the corporate associations domain of the corporate identity literature.

The study also empirically confirms relationships hypothesised in corporate identity models, established at the organisational level, that have not had the benefit of empirical testing. In particular several models indicate FLEs are influenced by

external stakeholders, including customers, who as a result feedback information back into the organisation (Dowling, 1986; Kennedy, 1977; Stuart, 1998). The study's structural model empirically demonstrates this process as overall FLE construed corporate brand equity has an influence on an FLE's corporate brand identification, which in turn influences FLEs passing back brand related information to the organisation. This study therefore contributes to the existing corporate identity literature that models corporate identity at the corporate level.

Finally, the entry of the organisational psychology construct of organisational identification into the corporate identity literature has prompted discourse as to whether the organisational psychology construct of organisational identification is separate from or an integral component of corporate identity at the organisational level (Cornelissen, Haslam and Balmer, 2007; He and Balmer, 2007). This study further extends this discourse by introducing a new organisational psychology construct, affective organisational commitment. Some of the corporate identity models developed at the organisational level assume that a relationship between an employee and an organisation is enough in order for them to effectively represent the organisation and bind them to the organisation's objectives (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006). However this study gives empirical evidence that corporate identity phenomena, at an FLE level, influence an FLE's affective commitment that is associated with the binding of an FLE to a particular cause, course of action or objective (Meyer, Becker and van Dick, 2006) i.e. organisational goals, programs and change projects (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002). This study therefore further extends the corporate identity discourse concerning the relevance and influence of organisational psychology constructs in the corporate identity literature.

7.2.2 Branding and services marketing literature

The FLE corporate brand identification construct makes a significant theoretical contribution to the branding and services marketing literature, in a similar manner to the contribution the organisational identification construct has made in the field of human resource management. Therefore, this study empirically establishes the construct in a unique way and empirically establishes the fact that FLEs hold a social identity in respect of their membership of a corporate brand community that influences specific perceptions and actions that support the organisation's corporate brand. The influence on an FLE of corporate brand identification is seen in an FLE's corporate brand participation and their relatedness to their brand community.

Empirically establishing these relationships extends the discourse in the services literature concerning the potential influence of FLE brand community membership upon FLEs in their operating environment and during service encounters with customers. There is the potential to extend this discourse and theory development to include the potential influence of FLE corporate brand identification upon FLE in-role brand behaviour (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009), in-role and extra role service behaviours (MacKenzie, Podsakoff and Ahearne, 1998; Ackfeldt and Coote, 2003), service quality behaviours (Farrell, Souchon and Durden, 2001), degree of FLE brand advocacy (Miles and Mangold, 2004; 2007), and degree of FLE brand community engagement and interaction (Brodie et al, 2009; Merz, He and Vargo, 2009).

This research study also extends the scope of the brand equity construct, moving it from the established consumer context into an FLE context, thus extending the boundaries of the construct. The successful empirical measurement of the three elements of FLE construed corporate brand equity, as an FLE construed association, empirically shows that the brand equity of other stakeholders in a brand community is construed by individual stakeholder groups within the corporate brand

community. Its influence over the social identity held by FLEs, in relation to their membership of a corporate brand community, empirically demonstrates a continuous social process of stakeholder interaction between FLEs and customers that develops and co-creates brand meaning over time (Gregory, 2007; Brodie et al, 2009). The study also empirically shows that by FLEs construing the brand equity of customers, the corporate brand is dynamically constructed in the minds of its stakeholders (Ballantyne and Aitkin, 2007), in this case FLEs. The establishment of the new set of measurement scales for FLE construed corporate brand equity extends the debate in the branding literature onto measuring how, as a result of service encounter interaction, consumer based brand equity and FLE construed corporate brand equity change over time.

This research also extends the branding literature by empirically measuring and showing, quantitatively, that FLEs form associations concerning the internal dissemination and implementation of specific corporate branding phenomena. The study quantitatively builds on previous theoretical development (Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; De Chernatony and Cottam, 2006) and qualitative empirical testing with practicing managers (Savatjjs and de Chernatony, 2005) by giving empirical evidence for the existence of a relationship between an FLE's organisational associations, of consistent image implementation and visual identity implementation, with FLE corporate brand identification and in turn certain FLE extra-role brand building behaviours. It widens the discourse by establishing that the various social identities held by FLEs concerning their membership of a corporate brand community, organisation and potentially other groups within the organisation, likely stand between an FLE receiving and acting upon corporate branding phenomena. It establishes that influencing FLE behaviour is not as simple as exposing FLEs to branding communication and signals (Harris and de Chernatony, 2001; De Chernatony and Cottam, 2006), but that there are social and organisational psychology phenomena that fall between the two. Thus the

importance of brand communities in the branding literature is reinforced, and by demonstrating that corporate identity phenomena influence FLEs at an individual level, the brand community discourse moves closer towards the corporate identity literature.

7.2.3 Organisational psychology literature

In the organisational psychology literature there is disagreement concerning whether organisation identification and organisation commitment are separate but related constructs (Meyer, Becker and van Dick , 2006). Although this study does not directly test the relationship between these two constructs, it does give empirical evidence that a form of social identity, FLE corporate brand identification, positively and strongly influences FLE organisational commitment. The study therefore empirically demonstrates that in a specific environment, forms of social identity directly affect organisational commitment.

Finally, organisational identification, a form of social identity (Ashforth and Mael, 1989) strongly influences job motivation, in extra role performance, job satisfaction, absenteeism and turnover (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Riketta, 2005; Podsakoff et al, 2000) and other outcomes that require appropriate in-role and extra-role behaviours such as FLE sales performance and the performance of their business unit (Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam and van Dick, 2009). This study further develops this discourse by extending the scope of social identity at the organisational level into other organisation-wide groupings and their specific influence upon specific groups of employees, i.e. a corporate brand community and FLEs. This study further reinforces the importance of understanding the psychological implications for individuals of group memberships within an organisation, opening up a potential discourse surrounding how the classification and labelling of groups of employees at an organisational level may potentially influence their behaviour and performance.

7.3 Managerial implications

7.3.1 Managerial implications - FLE corporate brand identification

Corporate brand marketers often tend to consider the external audiences of corporate brands, those of customers, shareholders and regulatory authorities, for example, as being of greater importance than those audiences internal to the organisation. As customers significantly influence a firm's financial performance, via sales and gross margin and sales, and shareholders and other external investors influence the ability of a firm to invest and grow, there is a temptation to consider these external audiences as a greater priority and separate from those inside the firm. Corporate brand marketers therefore tend to separate how the corporate brand is managed and developed externally and internally. The establishment of the FLE corporate brand identification construct questions these assumptions.

If corporate brand marketers recognise that FLEs are psychologically influenced by membership of a corporate brand community and what the corporate brand the community represents, this challenges the priorities of corporate brand development marketers. If those employees who deliver the service to the customer are psychologically influenced by their membership of a corporate brand community, then those employees should be given as equal a priority as customers when developing the organisation's corporate brand. This is even more important as FLEs directly influence the generation of profits through their influence on service quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. As FLEs' service encounters with customers are a day-to-day connection between the internal aspects of the firm and the customer, it is likely artificial for corporate brand marketers to manage the development of the corporate brand differently internally and externally. Rather, given the day-to-day integration of the FLE and customer groupings, an integrated and holistic approach is likely called for in managing and developing an organisation's corporate brand.

7.3.2 Managerial implications - FLE construed corporate brand equity

Empirically demonstrating that FLEs construe the brand equity held by the organisation's customers again challenges the notion that in practice corporate brands are developed differently between internal and external audiences of the organisation. Establishing that FLEs consider the corporate brand from a customer's perspective, adds to the case for corporate brand marketers to develop corporate brands in an holistic manner, integrating their thinking, branding strategy and activity concerning internal and external audiences.

Taking a holistic approach to the management and development of corporate brands has implications for the measures corporate brand marketers use to assess the success of their activity. It is common practice for corporate brand marketers to measure the strength of an organisation's corporate brand with customers and external stakeholders, adapting subsequent activity on the basis of the results. However, this study suggests that a further aspect of the corporate brand requires on-going research, that corporate brand marketers in addition research the judgement that FLEs make in considering the success of the corporate brand from a customers' standpoint. It is potentially very unlikely that managers responsible for corporate branding directly and regularly engage with FLEs on corporate branding issues. It is more likely corporate brand marketers rely on the results of regular employee satisfaction surveys, particularly in large retailing organisations, to broadly measure job satisfaction, motivation and so on. Relying on these measures to broadly assess the potential for FLEs to effectively represent the organisation's brand and deliver a suitable level of service quality to its customers. The risk of ignoring the customer's influence upon branding judgements made by FLEs is that the assumptions made by corporate brand marketers on FLEs' support for the corporate brand may not be in line with the judgements made by those employees.

7.3.3 Managerial implications - FLE organisational associations

The holding of organisational associations by FLEs, that directly reflect the internal image and implementation of the corporate brand, reinforces the need for corporate brand marketers to consider FLEs as an important audience for the development of the brand. This is also reinforced by the previous managerial implications of the FLE construed corporate brand equity constructs and those for the FLE corporate brand identification construct.

Given the important influence of FLEs in delivering service quality to customers, as part of service encounters, it is important that corporate brand marketers are able to access, engage and influence FLEs. However, it is likely that corporate brand marketers reside in a central location, either within a corporate marketing department or a department dedicated to corporate affairs that includes PR, investor relations, corporate and social responsibility, etc. Either way, especially in a retail environment, marketers are likely very distant from the day-to-day activities of FLEs, do not hold functional line management responsibility for FLEs and have limited influence over their day-to-day performance. It is therefore essential that FLE corporate brand engagement is owned and developed by those who have responsibility for corporate branding and not delegated to the HR function, internal communications or operations and store management. This therefore means that potentially corporate brand marketers may need to change their focus to build their influence within the firm. This influence can be built by starting to develop an interactive program of corporate brand engagement that includes FLEs and those senior and middle managers who have direct responsibility for FLE performance.

7.3.4 Managerial implications - FLE extra-role brand building behaviours

It is likely to be normal practice for corporate brand marketers, within the marketing function of private sector organisations, to consider how they are able to influence the consumer behaviour of their existing and potential customer base. However, it is less likely, given their limited operational span of control, that the behaviour of those who deliver the services of the organisation, FLEs, are considered to be in a corporate brand marketers sphere of influence. However the results of this study suggest this should be otherwise.

FLEs are a rich source of information concerning the performance of the corporate brand at the operational level, in particular in its role and performance as part of service encounters with customers. The study suggests that the stronger the psychological ties between the FLE and the corporate brand community, the more likely it is that FLEs will feedback into the organisation information concerning the corporate brand that is gathered during service encounters with customers. FLEs are therefore a potential valuable source of information for corporate brand marketers that, in all likelihood, is not fully utilised given the likely predominant external focus of corporate brand marketers. Gathering such information is likely to provide a more balanced perspective for corporate brand marketers on the performance of an organisation's corporate brand. It is also likely that although corporate brand marketers do not have day-to-day management influence of FLEs, they do have influence over FLEs in their membership of a corporate brand community. Although this influence may not currently be recognised, it is for marketers to consider how to achieve the benefits of FLE extra-role brand building behaviour, especially given they are potentially in a position to maximise the corporate brand's influence on FLE organisational association and construed corporate brand equity, both of which considerably influence the strength of an FLE's ties to the corporate brand community.

7.3.5 Managerial implications - FLE organisational commitment

If, as empirically evidenced, membership of a corporate brand community influences an FLE's likelihood of binding themselves to the organisation's wider goals, programs or change projects, then management of the corporate brand, by corporate brand marketers, has wider operational implications. The corporate brand, through its corporate brand community, is likely to influence the day-to-day performance of FLEs. Therefore, operational managers who are immediately accountable and responsible for FLE performance should have a stake in, and make a contribution towards, the management and development of the corporate brand. This presents an opportunity for corporate brand marketers to engage with and open a dialogue with service operations managers, not only to integrate them in the development of the brand, but also as previously stated in the prior sections, to open up the opportunity to collect brand equity data from FLEs. This can be done by opening up an on-going reciprocal dialogue relating to corporate brand performance with FLEs and their managers, and integrating the internal and external aspects of corporate brand management to encourage the formation of a wider corporate brand community.

7.4 Summary and conclusions

This chapter as sets out the specific contribution of the research study to the corporate identity, branding and services marketing and organisational psychology literature. The implications of the present study for each domain of the literature has been highlighted; and in addition, the study presents a number of implications and practical challenges for practicing corporate brand marketers. These include having to consider integrating separate internal and external approaches to developing an organisation's corporate brand into a single corporate branding strategy, including

the active engagement of FLEs, and devising a means of researching and influencing FLE associations with a corporate brand when not having management responsibility for FLEs day-to-day performance.

The principal contribution of this study is the definition, theoretical modelling and empirical research of FLE corporate identity, which establishes the corporate identity construct at an individual stakeholder level, for front-line service employees. The study takes the first formative steps in establishing a new area of discourse in the corporate identity literature. The next chapter considers the study's main contribution, along with whether the stated purposes and research objectives have been met, along with presenting the limitations of the research study and potential future areas of further research.

CHAPTER EIGHT - CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Introduction

So far this dissertation has developed and presented a definition for FLE corporate identity (chapter 2) that, in reviewing the existent corporate identity, services marketing, branding and organisational behaviour literature (chapter two) is further developed into a theoretical model for the construct (chapter three). Both the definition and its associated theoretical model are the first to address FLE corporate identity in applying corporate identity theory at an individual stakeholder rather than organisational level.

The proposed research design, that empirically tests the FLE corporate identity theoretical model, deploys a quantitative research study in seven stores of a major UK national retailer (chapter four), utilising structural equation modelling to analyse the studies research results (chapter five).

The results of the study are discussed in relation to existent theory and research (chapter six), as are the study's implications for and contributions to the literature in corporate identity, branding and services marketing and organisational psychology (chapter seven).

This chapter first concludes the research study by establishing that the research study in the majority addresses its research questions (8.2.1), meets the stated purpose (8.2.2), and accurately defines the FLE corporate identity construct once partly modified to take account of the study's empirical findings (8.2.3). Next the limitations of the research study are presented (8.3), followed by suggestions for future research (8.4). Finally the research study is summarised (8.5).

Table 8.1 Summary of research study (as presented in table 1.1)

Research purpose	
RP1	Define corporate identity at an FLE level, termed FLE corporate identity.
RP2	Theoretically model the FLE corporate identity construct.
RP3	Operationalize the FLE corporate identity construct by testing the developed theoretical model through empirical research with FLEs.
Research question sets	Research objectives
RQ1 What dimensions comprise the FLE corporate identity construct?	RO1 To extend the corporate identity literature by empirically testing the dimensions of the FLE corporate identity construct, in the form of a theoretical model, by researching and testing the hypothesise relationships between its specific dimensions.
RQ2 Are FLEs a distinct corporate identity Stakeholder group? Do FLEs consider themselves members of a corporate brand community? RQ3 Are FLEs psychologically influenced by their membership of a corporate brand community?	RO2 To extend the corporate identity, branding and services marketing literature by developing a valid and reliable measure of the psychological strength of an FLE's social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, the corporate brand community representing the corporate identity stakeholder group for FLEs.
RQ4 Do FLEs construe associations as a result of service encounters with customers and to what do FLEs hold organisational associations? To what extent do both FLE construed associations and organisational associations influence the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community?	RO3 To extend the branding, services marketing and corporate identity literature in developing a valid and reliable set of scales to measure FLEs construing customers corporate associations during service encounters. Determining the influence of FLEs' construed associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community. RO4 To extend the branding and corporate identity literature by developing a valid and reliable set of scales in order to measure FLE organisational associations in an FLE operating environment. Determining the influence of FLE organisational associations upon their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.
RQ5 To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs' membership of a corporate brand community influence their brand building behaviour?	RO5 To extend the services marketing, branding organisational psychology and corporate identity literature by investigating the influence of an FLE's social identity, relating to their membership of corporate brand community, upon the established services marketing and branding constructs of FLE extra-role brand building behaviours.
RQ6 To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community influence the degree to which FLEs are psychologically bound to the organisation and its objectives?	RO6 To extend the services marketing, branding, organisational psychology and corporate identity literature by investigating the influence of an FLEs social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community upon the established organisational psychology constructs of organisational identification and organisational commitment.

8.2 The research questions, research purpose and definition of FLE corporate identity

First the study's sets of research questions RQ1 to RQ6 are addressed in section 8.2.1. It proposes that the significant majority of research questions posed for the study, introduction in chapter one, and as presented in table 8.1 above, are addressed by the research study. Table 8.1 indicates in bold text those sets of research questions addressed by the study.

Next section 8.2.2 establishes that the research study fully addresses the purpose of the research study in its definition, theoretical modelling and empirical research of FLE corporate identity. The principal contribution of the research study is presented.

Finally, in section 8.2.3, the initially proposed definition of FLE corporate identity is slightly modified and re-stated to take account of the research studies empirical results.

8.2.1 The research questions

8.2.1.1 Research question set RQ1

Research question set RQ1 asks: What dimensions comprise the FLE corporate identity construct?

The research study, in the form of its estimated structural equation model, successfully empirically tested a theoretical model for FLE corporate identity. In doing so it establishes a set of dimensions for the FLE corporate identity construct as set out in table 8.2, the structural equation model of the study. The dimensions of the FLE corporate identity construct are: FLE construed brand quality; FLE construed brand awareness and associations; overall FE construed brand equity; Mission and vision dissemination; Consistent image implementation; Corporate visual identity implementation; FLE corporate brand identification; FLE relatedness

to brand community FLE corporate brand participation; FLE affective organisational commitment.

8.2.1.2 Research question set RQ2

Research question set RQ2 asks: Are FLEs a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group? Do FLEs consider themselves members of a corporate brand community?

In holding a social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, the research study gives evidence that FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group, are members of a corporate brand community and consider themselves as members of a corporate brand community.

8.2.1.3 Research question set RQ3

Research question set RQ3 asks: Are FLEs psychologically influenced by their membership of a corporate brand community?

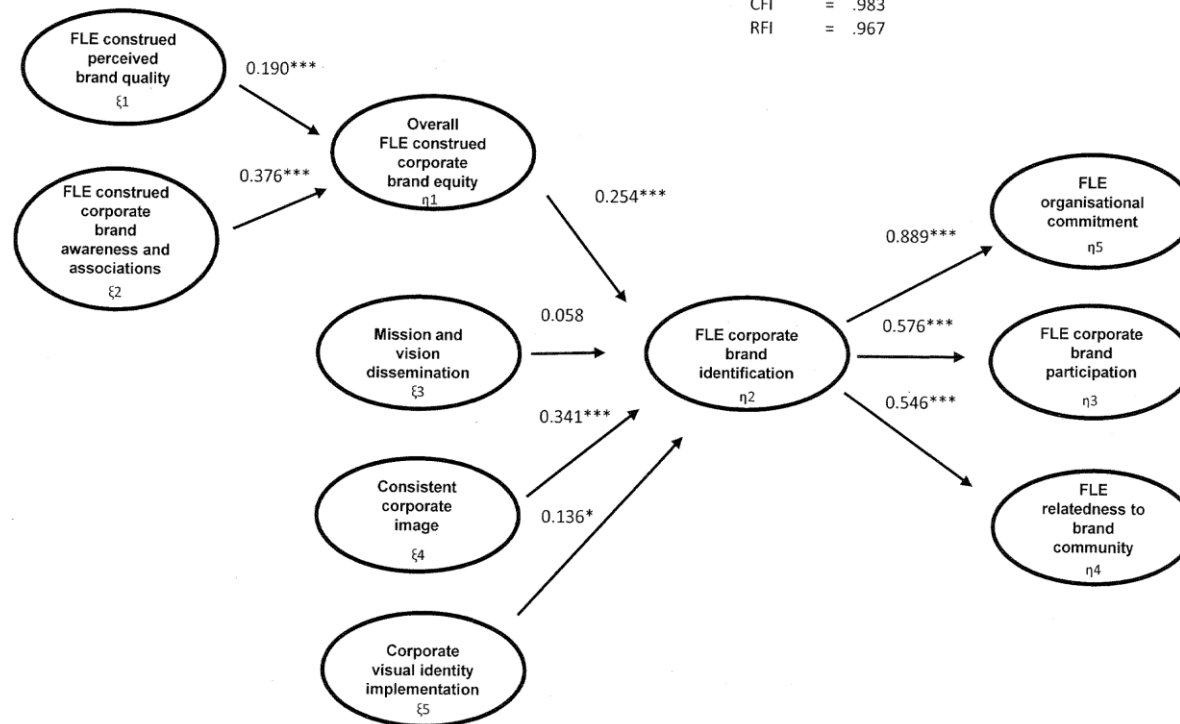
The study demonstrates that FLEs hold a social identity concerning their membership of a corporate brand community, termed FLE corporate brand identification. This shows that FLEs are psychologically influenced by their membership of a brand community, as FLE corporate brand identification represents the extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of a corporate brand community, where identification with the corporate brand community partly answers the question of who am I?.

Table 8.2 Structural model results

Table 8.2 structural model results

X2 = 941.108
 Df = 415
 RMSEA = .047
 SRMR = .059
 CFI = .983
 RFI = .967

*** p < 0.001
 ** p < 0.01
 * p < 0.05



8.2.1.4 Research question set RQ4

Research question set RQ4 asks: Do FLEs construe associations as a result of service encounters with customers and do FLEs hold organisational associations?

To what extent do both FLE construed associations and organisational associations influence the psychological influence of FLEs membership of a corporate brand community?

The study reveals, in employees' holding FLE construed corporate brand equity, that FLEs hold construed associations as a result of service encounters with customers.

The research study also shows that FLEs evaluate the consistency of their organisation's corporate image and the implementation of their organisation's corporate visual identity, establishing that FLEs hold organisational associations.

The strong (0.254), positive and significant ($p \leq .001$) influence of FLE overall construed corporate brand equity upon FLE corporate brand identification, gives evidence that FLE construed associations influence FLE social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community. The strong, positive and significant ($p \leq .001$) influence of consistent image implementation (0.341; $p \leq .001$) and the positive and significant influence of corporate visual identity implementation (0.136; $p \leq .05$) upon FLE corporate brand identification, demonstrates that FLE organisational associations influence their social identity relating to their membership of a corporate brand community.

8.2.1.5 Research question set RQ5

Research question set RQ5 asks: To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs' membership of a corporate brand community influence their brand building behaviour?

The research study shows that the psychological influence of FLEs' membership of a corporate brand community, FLE corporate brand identification, strongly (0.576),

positively and significantly ($p \leq .001$) influences how FLEs take action in support of the brand. FLEs' feedback brand relevant information into the organisation and develop positive perceptions in closely relating to other members of the corporate brand community. The study also shows that the psychological influence of FLEs' membership of a corporate brand community, FLE corporate brand identification, strongly (0.546), positively and significantly ($p \leq .001$) influences their relatedness to the corporate brand community.

8.2.1.6 Research question set RQ6

Research question set RQ6 asks: To what extent does the psychological influence of FLEs' membership of a corporate brand community influence the degree to which FLEs are psychologically bound to the organisation and its objectives?

The research study shows that the social identity FLEs hold relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, strongly (0.889), positively and significantly ($p \leq .001$) influences the degree to which FLEs are bound to their organisation's objectives, because they wish to be, i.e. an FLE's affective organisational commitment. It was not possible for the study to establish if FLE corporate brand identification influenced the degree to which FLEs are psychologically bound to the organisation, an FLE's organisational identification.

Research question set RQ6 is therefore only partly addressed by the research study.

8.2.2 The definition, theoretical modelling and empirical research of FLE corporate identity

The introduction chapter of this dissertation proposed the following purpose for the research study. To:

RP1 Define corporate identity at an FLE level, termed FLE corporate identity.

RP2 Theoretically model the FLE corporate identity construct.

RP3 Operationalize the FLE corporate identity construct by testing the developed theoretical model through empirical research with FLEs.

Section 8.2.1 shows that the study's structural equation model of FLE corporate identity models and satisfactorily empirically researches FLE corporate identity. In doing so the proposed definition of FLE corporate identity, developed in part A of the literature review is also tested.

This research study has therefore succeeded in defining, theoretically modelling and empirically researching FLE corporate identity. Thus the study achieves the principal contribution of the research of establishing the corporate identity construct at an individual stakeholder level, for front-line service employees, and takes the first formative steps to establish a new area of discourse in the corporate identity literature.

However, in order for the study to fully reflect its empirical results, the proposed definition of FLE corporate identity requires slight modification.

8.2.3 Definition of FLE corporate identity

Part A of the literature review, contained in chapter two of this thesis, proposed a definition of FLE corporate identity founded upon existing definitions and models of corporate identity at the organisational level. The findings of the empirical research require that the initially proposed definition for FLE corporate identity be slightly modified in three areas.

First, the research demonstrates that a community of FLEs forms around the corporate brand, not the organisation's corporate visual identity. Therefore in the definition of FLE corporate identity the term *corporate brand* replaces the term *corporate visual identity*.

Second, as the influence of membership of a corporate brand community upon FLEs is psychological, in the form of the social identity they hold relating to this membership, then the definition requires be changed from ... *Where membership firstly encourages...* to ... *Where the psychological influence of membership firstly encourages*

Third, because of poor discriminant validity, the study did not test the influence of an FLE's corporate brand identification upon their organisational identification.

Therefore only the affective organisational commitment construct is to be included in the definition, as an FLE's social identity, related to their membership of a corporate brand community, influences their attachment and binding to an organisation's objectives, because they wish to be. The definition of FLE corporate identity is therefore changed from reading *while also influencing closer ties between the FLE and the organisation...* to read *while also influencing an FLE's binding to an organisation's objectives.*

In modifying the definition of FLE corporate identity to reflect the research findings of the empirical study, the finalised definition of FLE corporate identity reads:

A set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known that are communicated to FLEs in the internal environment through the organisation's corporate brand and externally by FLEs construing the external performance of the corporate brand during service encounters with customers. These organisational associations and construed associations form the basis of an FLE's membership of a corporate identity stakeholder group formed around the organisation's corporate brand, where the psychological influence of membership firstly encourages FLE actions that support the corporate brand, while also influencing the binding of FLEs to an organisation's objectives.

8.3 Research limitations

This research study is, to the author's knowledge the first to define, theoretically model and empirically research FLE corporate identity. The research limitations of the study's survey are discussed in the following paragraphs. In the main, these limitations reflect the scope and duration of the research access agreed with the national retailer. The agreement for research access reached with the national retailer was for quantitative research to be undertaken in seven stores, over a three month duration, allowing twenty minutes research time per participant, with participation subject to the agreement of each participant.

First, the research access only permitted a cross-sectional study, not a longitudinal study. This allows data collection that represents a snapshot of relationships between variables at one point in time, that is open to the effect of specific conditions that relate to the point in time which data is collected (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010). As the study deployed was both exploratory and descriptive, rather than causal and experiment based, the causal relationships between the variables in the study are limited to the inferences derived from the theories that underlie the study's hypotheses, rather than from the study's data (Rudenstam and Newton, 1992). Therefore, the interpretation of the study's findings are founded upon the theory developed in chapters two and three of this thesis. This limitation is common for a research design that does not incorporate an experimental dimension (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2010).

Next, the scope of the research access did not allow for a qualitative study to inform the process of measure development. However, the series of new measures deployed are all adapted from existing scales, modified to either take account of their new deployment at an FLE rather than a management level (FLE organisational associations group of constructs) or in a new context of a corporate brand community or with FLEs instead of customers (FLE corporate brand

identification and FLE construed corporate brand equity group of constructs). As the above-mentioned constructs demonstrated acceptable discriminant validity and construct and scale reliability, the absence of a qualitative research phase for scale development is not likely to have disadvantaged the study.

The questionnaire design was tested on a small group of 15 FLEs and modified according to their feedback, prior to a full pre-test of the revised questionnaire on a sample 232 FLEs. The confirmatory factor analysis for which the thresholds set were met for each of the structural equation modelling measurement indicators. In the main study, with data gathered from seven stores, each of the latent variables, and their associated measurement items, included in the successful estimation of the measurement model and the structural equation model, demonstrated acceptable average variance extracted, composite reliability and discriminant validity. This reflects a sound research instrument and effective measurement scales. However, the generalisability and validity of the study and its measurement scales is likely to be increased if the research study is replicated in another retailer, along with other service based organisations in different industries.

Finally corporate identity at the corporate level contains several stakeholder groups, other than FLEs. The FLE corporate brand identification scale, that concerns the social identity of FLEs relating to their membership of a corporate brand community, is likely to be extendable to other stakeholder groups. The testing of the corporate brand identification scale with other stakeholder groups, i.e. investors and distributors, using the same items and item wording, is likely to increase the ability of the of the scale to be generalised.

Although some limitations apply to this study, it is the researcher's belief that these limitations can be overcome by conducting further research studies. In the next section, further research is proposed which could increase the validity and

generalisability of the study; empirically develop the FLE corporate identity construct; and further research the development of corporate brand communities.

8.4 Further research

This section proposes a number of further research studies that develop the definition, theoretical modelling and empirical research of FLE corporate identity. Specifically, the qualitative research of specific findings of the research study are proposed, along with research studies designed to increase the generalisation of the present studies' findings. The application and extension of the FLE corporate brand identification into other corporate identity stakeholder groups is also proposed, as is researching further antecedents and consequences of the FLE corporate brand identification construct.

8.4.1 Qualitative research of certain study research findings

The discussion chapter of this dissertation highlighted three research findings that would benefit from qualitative research. Although outside the original research scope and purpose of this study, it is likely to be beneficial for theory development purposes to gain further understanding of three specific FLE corporate identity relationships. First, it would be beneficial to establish the likely relationship between FLE construed corporate brand quality and FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations (see section 6.2.2.1). Second, it would advantageous to study the relationship and boundaries between FLE word of mouth and FLE corporate brand identification (see section 6.2.2), as well as, thirdly, studying the boundaries of FLE organisational commitment and FLE organisational identification (see section 6.2.2.3).

8.4.2 Replication studies

Despite this study effectively defining, theoretically modelling and empirically testing the FLE corporate identity construct, it is recognised that the research access restrictions of the study require a number of further replication studies to increase the generalisation of the present studies' findings. Therefore the ability to be generalised and the validity of the study's findings is likely increased if the study is further replicated in three contexts. First, a replication study should be conducted, in the same retailer, two years following the main study's point of data collection, to assess if the findings of the study change over time. Although it is recognised in the literature that FLEs within retail operations are representative of FLEs as a population (Morhart et al, 2009; Wieseke, Homburg and Bornemann, 2009; Hughes and Ahearne, 2010), second, a replication study in another UK national retailer and, third, further replication studies with FLEs in service organisations in other industry sectors, are also likely to increase the validity and ability of the study to be generalised.

8.4.3 Corporate brand identification and corporate brand communities

This study established that FLEs hold a social identity in relation to their membership of a corporate brand community. The FLE corporate brand identification construct measures the strength of this social identity, where social identity is a common phenomena that relates to the psychology of the consequences of being a member and being seen to be a member of a particular group (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). It is therefore possible that other corporate identity stakeholder groups, i.e. investors, distributors etc., also consider themselves to be part of a corporate brand community and hold a social identity concerning this membership.

The measurement scale deployed for FLE corporate brand identification is equally transferable to other stakeholder groups, just as it is applied to FLEs in this study. It

is therefore possible, in testing which corporate identity phenomena influence a stakeholder group's corporate brand identification and what consequent influence this identification has on the group's related actions and behaviours, to model the corporate identity of other corporate identity stakeholder groups. Thus on the one hand, the applicability of the corporate brand identification construct across a number of corporate identity stakeholder groups is tested, whilst on the other further modelling and testing corporate identity for different stakeholders at the individual stakeholder level takes place.

The brand community literature proposes that a brand community is made up of a number of stakeholder groups, through which a continuous social process co-creates brand value by stakeholder interaction and stakeholder-based negotiation (Brodie et al, 2009). Such negotiation is based upon a firm working with its internal and external stakeholders and responding to their input. This process of negotiation and dialogue leads to the development of brand meaning and value over time (Gregory, 2007). The corporate brand is dynamically constructed through this social interaction, its value located in the minds of its stakeholders including employees and customers (Ballantyne and Aitkin, 2007). Given the development of the FLE corporate brand identification scale, and its possible application to other corporate identity stakeholder groups, it is possible over time to research the extent to which stakeholder interaction, influences the corporate brand identification of the respective stakeholder groupings. Therefore, it can be empirically tested if greater stakeholder interaction, and different forms of this interaction, strengthens the psychological relationship stakeholders have with the corporate brand community.

8.4.5 Extending the antecedents of FLE corporate brand identification

The present study empirically tests a few of the corporate identity phenomena that potentially influence an FLE's social identity related to their membership of a corporate brand community. Melewar's (2003) corporate identity taxonomy contains

many dimensions for the construct, at the organisation level, including controlled and uncontrolled corporate communications, corporate culture and the behaviour of other employees, all of which potentially influence FLE corporate brand identification. Further researching FLE corporate identity in this manner potentially extends both the scope of the definition and the dimensions of its theoretical model.

8.4.6 Extending the consequences of FLE corporate brand identification

The present study establishes that FLE corporate brand identification influences specific forms of FLE extra-role brand building behaviours and an FLE's affective organisational commitment.

In relation to FLEs interacting with customers as part of service encounters it is possible to further extend the FLE corporate identity construct by empirically testing the influence of FLE corporate brand identification upon a number of service encounter related constructs. These include FLE in-role brand building behaviours, FLE in-role behaviours and extra role behaviours and service quality implementation behaviours. Such a study further extends the scope of the definition and theoretical modelling of FLE corporate identity.

The organisational psychology literature finds that organisation identification, the sense of perceived oneness with the organisation (Mael and Ashforth, 1992) that reflects the psychological merging of the self and the organisation (Haslam et al, 2001; Tyler and Blader 2001; van Knippenberg 2000), drive a number of outcomes related to an individual's job outcomes (van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006).

These outcomes include job motivation, in and extra role performance, job satisfaction, absenteeism and turnover (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Riketta, 2005; Podsakoff et al, 2000). FLE corporate brand identification is a form of social identity that relates to membership of a brand community that contains members not just from inside the organisation but also outside the organisation, e.g customers. It is therefore also likely that FLE corporate brand identification may also influence FLE

job motivation, in in-role and extra-role performance, job satisfaction, absenteeism and turnover. Such a study again potentially adds further dimensions to the FLE corporate identity theoretical model and extends the scope of its influence.

Finally, if further studies find that FLE corporate brand identification influences different forms of FLE behaviour during service encounters, and psychological factors that influence their performance in their role, it is likely that it potentially has an influence upon FLEs in the service-profit-chain (Heskett et al, 1994). Therefore the model is potentially extended from one where internal factors alone drive an FLE's service encounter performance, to one where FLEs construe information from customers during service encounters that influences their service encounter performance, influencing customer satisfaction and loyalty. This represents a further area of future research.

8.5 Summary and conclusions

This research study significantly contributes to the corporate identity literature by extending it into a new area of discourse and research, that of FLE corporate identity.

First the study's findings indicate that FLEs consider themselves to be members of a corporate brand community and hold a social identity in relation to their membership. Corporate identity phenomena related to the organisation's corporate brand, termed FLE organisational associations and FLE construed corporate brand equity, influence this social identity. FLE corporate brand identification in turn influences certain FLE extra-role brand building behaviours and the extent to which FLEs bind, because they want to, with the organisation's objectives, activities and change programs.

The theoretical implications of the study were discussed, drawing upon the relevant aspects of the literature in services marketing, branding and organisational psychology, with the study making theoretical contributions to each of these areas. In applying the findings of the research to a practitioner environment, there are a series of managerial implications for corporate brand marketers that concern the importance of considering FLEs as an important audience of the organisation's corporate brand, the need for FLEs to contribute to the development of the corporate brand and be an audience for corporate branding research, along with managing the development of an organisation's corporate brand centred around a corporate brand community of internal and external stakeholders.

In conclusion, although several limitations of the research study have been presented, this research establishes a start-point and a platform to develop an understanding of FLE corporate identity. The researcher considers that the findings of the study provide significant theoretical and management implications for FLE corporate identity and hopes that this thesis will encourage researchers, in the future, to build upon the findings of the study.

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Appendices

Appendix 1A - Construct definitions

Affective organisational commitment: an employees attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation because they wish to be. (Allen and Meyer, 1990)

Brand community: A specialised, non-geographically bound community, based on a structured set of social relationships among admirers of the brand. (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001)

Consistent image implementation: FLEs' organisational associations regarding the consistent implementation of corporate symbols, staff understanding of corporate symbols, specific marketing image development and tangible aspects of identity (adapted from Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005)

Construed associations: Mental associations that organisational members believe others outside the organisation hold about the organisation. (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006)

Consumer based brand equity - brand awareness and associations: the ability of a customer to recognise, recall, and associate with a brand. (Yoo and Donthu, 2001)

Consumer based brand equity - brand loyalty: the attachment that a customer has to a brand. (Yoo and Donthu , 2001)

Consumer based brand equity - perceived quality: The consumers judgement about a products overall excScholder Ellence and superior quality. (Yoo and Donthu, 2001)

Corporate associations: All the information about a company that a person holds. (Brown and Dacin (1997)

Corporate brand: The firm that will deliver and stand behind the offering that the customer will buy or use. (Aaker, 2004)

Corporate identity (practitioner): The presentation of an organisation to every stakeholder. It is what makes an organisation unique and it incorporates the organisation's communication, design, culture, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy. It is thus intrinsically related to both the corporate personality and image. (Melewar and Karaosmanoglu, 2006)

Corporate identity (theoretical): The set of meanings by which a company allows itself to be known, and through which it allows people to describe, remember and relate to it. (Melewar, 2003)

Corporate image: The totality of stakeholders' perceptions of the way an organisation presents itself, either deliberately or accidentally. It is the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge and impressions that each stakeholder has about an organisation. (Melewar, 2003)

Corporate visual identity: The intangible symbolic elements that a company uses to reflect its values. It consists of logo, name, slogan, colour and typography. (Melewar and Saunders,1999)

Corporate visual identity implementation: FLEs' organisational associations regarding the activities or operations that are undertaken to enhance visual identity. (adapted from Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005)

Corporate personality: The soul, the persona, the spirit of the organisation manifested in some comprehensible way. (Olins, 1995)

Extra role brand building behaviour: Employee actions that go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand and are discretionary. (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009)

FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations: FLEs' construed associations regarding the ability of a customer to recognise, recall and associate with the corporate brand. (adapted from Yoo and Donthu, 2001)

FLE construed corporate brand loyalty: FLEs' construed associations regarding the strength of attachment a customer has to the corporate brand. (adapted from Yoo and Donthu, 2001)

FLE construed corporate brand quality: FLEs' construed associations regarding a customers judgement about a corporate brands overall excellence and superiority. (adapted from Yoo and Donthu, 2001)

FLE overall construed corporate brand equity: FLEs' construed associations regarding customers' selection of the corporate brand in favour of other competitor alternatives. (adapted from Yoo and Donthu, 2001)

FLE corporate brand identification: The extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of a corporate brand community, where identification with the corporate brand community partly answers the question of who am I? (adapted from Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

FLE corporate brand participation: FLEs internally passing on corporate branding relevant customer feedback from service encounters with customers. (adapted Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009).

FLE positive word-of-mouth: FLEs' personal advocacy of the organisation's corporate brand outside the job context. (adapted Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009)

FLE relatedness to corporate brand community: The strength of FLEs' perceived relatedness to other individual members of a corporate brand community. (adapted Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009)

Mission and vision dissemination: FLEs' organisational associations regarding the companies' internal sense of purpose and how it is communicated in the organisation. (adapted from Simoes, Dibb and Fisk, 2005)

In-role brand building behaviour: FLEs' meeting the standards prescribed by their organisational roles as brand representatives (Morhart, Herzog and Tomczak, 2009)

Organisational associations: Mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members. (Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten, 2006)

Organisational identification: The extent to which individuals define the self in terms of membership of the organisation and where identification with an organisation partly answers the question of who am I ?. (Ashforth and Mael, 1989).

Social identity: The psychology of the causes and consequences of individuals seeing themselves, and being seen by others, as part of a social group. (Tajfel and Turner, 1979)

Appendix 2A - Kennedy (1977)

Kennedy (1977)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Objective company criteria through company policy drives company personnel's perception of the company.</p> <p>External groups perception of the company is influenced by direct experience of the company.</p> <p>Objective company criteria is influenced by feedback on company policy and reactions to external groups.</p>	<p>Formal statement of company objectives, pay structures, measurable product attributes.</p>	<p>Modelled as intermediary between receivers of company policy and external groups perception of the company. Company personnel hold a perception of the company. FLEs not singled out as a stakeholder, but by default are given their position in the model.</p>	<p>Company policy</p>	<p>External groups identified as a stakeholder group</p> <p>A reciprocal relationship is indicated in the model with a feedback loop from external stakeholders to employees and vice versa. External groups hold a perception of the company providing feedback on policy to the organisation.</p>	<p>Company personnel hold a perception of the company based upon its objectives, pay structures.</p>	<p>No mention of visual identity or brand but employee perceptions directly influence their presentation of the corporate identity to external groups.</p>

Appendix 2B - Dowling (1986)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Formal company policies that are transmitted through internal communication to employees, together with the organisational culture influence employees image of the company.</p> <p>Employees image of the company is transmitted through interpersonal communications influencing external groups image of the company.</p> <p>External groups image of the company is in turn influenced by marketing media communications, external interpersonal communications and previous product experience.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Employees hold an image of the company and are identified as a specific stakeholder group. Modelled as intermediaries between receivers of internal communication, informing their image of the company and transmitting their image of the company to external groups.</p> <p>As external groups image of the company is influenced by previous product experiences, it is assumed that a sub-grouping are customers who interact with FLEs.</p>	<p>Formal policies, organisational culture transmitted through interpersonal communications that influence an employee's image of the company.</p>	<p>External groups hold an image of the company related to a number of factors including previous product experience. Implying customers are an external stakeholder group.</p> <p>A reciprocal relationship is indicated in the model with a feedback loop from external stakeholders to employees and vice versa. External groups image of the company informs the Employees image of the company by though the feedback provided.</p>	<p>Company personnel hold an image of the company, which is influenced by formal company policies and the organisation's culture. A relationship is shown as employees feedback to the organisation.</p>	<p>No mention of visual identity or brand but employee image of the company directly influences FLEs' presentation of the corporate identity to external groups.</p>

Appendix 2C - Abratt (1989)

Abratt (1989)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Corporate personality</p> <p>Drives corporate identity</p> <p>Drives corporate Image</p>	<p>Corporate philosophy, Core values, Corporate culture, Strategic management, Corporate mission, Business objectives, Strategy formulation, Strategy implementation.</p> <p>Organisation's communication objectives and game plan, functional communication objectives, development of structures and systems.</p> <p>Image interface with the organisation's publics (See stakeholders)</p>	<p>Only functional communication objectives are referred to, not employees or FLEs.</p>	<p>Functional communication objectives are influenced by Corporate philosophy, Core values, Corporate culture, Strategic management, Corporate mission, Business objectives, Strategy formulation, Strategy implementation</p>	<p>Customers are identified as a part of an organisation's publics who hold a corporate image of the organisation.</p> <p>Customers provide feedback to the organisation based upon their corporate image. No specific destination for the feedback is stipulated.</p>	<p>No reference to employees or FLEs in the model.</p>	<p>No reference to employees or FLEs in the model. However an image interface between the organisation's public and the organisation is identified, which is informed by functional communication objectives.</p>

Appendix 2D - Stuart (1998)

Stuart (1998)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Corporate personality</p> <p>Drives corporate identity</p> <p>Drives both marketing strategy and employees view of corporate identity</p> <p>Drives organisational publics corporate image</p>	<p>Corporate philosophy, Core values, Corporate mission</p> <p>Corporate culture and corporate symbols</p> <p>Image interface with the stakeholders leads to corporate image and reputation.</p>	<p>Employees bridge the gap between the organisation's corporate identity and its stakeholders. Employees hold a view of the organisation's corporate identity and communicate with the organisation's publics, along with receiving feedback from them..</p> <p>As employees receive organisational communication and interpersonally communicate with the organisation's publics it is assumed a group of employees are FLEs.</p>	<p>Employees are directly influenced by corporate symbols and corporate culture.</p>	<p>Employees personally communicated the corporate identity to the organisation's publics through the image interface. Employees receive feedback from the organisation's publics that influences their view of the corporate identity which in turn influences them to deliver feedback to the organisation.</p>	<p>Employees are considered a component part of communicating and feeding back on the corporate identity. Employees holding a view of the corporate identity implies a relationship with the organisation</p>	<p>Corporate symbols directly inform the employees interpersonal communication of the corporate identity to the organisation's publics..</p>

Appendix 2E - Stuart (1999)

Stuart (1999)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Corporate personality through management communication</p> <p>Influences corporate strategy</p> <p>Which in turn influences Corporate Identity through management and organisational communication</p> <p>Stakeholders develop a corporate image through interpersonal, marketing and management communication.</p> <p>Which in turn influences corporate reputation</p>	<p>Corporate philosophy, core values and corporate mission.</p> <p>Top management vision, product / service, organisational structure and corporate identity structure</p> <p>Behaviour / management employees, symbolism and communication</p> <p>Organisational performance and company culture</p>	<p>Employees are specified as a component of corporate identity, interpersonally communicating with external stakeholders through the identity image interface.</p> <p>As employees receive management and organisational communication on products / services it is assumed a group of employees are FLEs.</p>	<p>Employees are influenced by management and organisational communication of the corporate strategy that is informed by the corporate personality</p> <p>Employees are influenced by symbolism and communication and corporate strategy.</p>	<p>Employees personally communicated the corporate identity to external stakeholders through the identity image gap and receive feedback on the corporate image and reputation from external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Employees are considered a component part of the corporate identity, via their behaviour. This implies a relationship with the organisation if it is to influence behaviour through the organisation's corporate strategy.</p>	<p>Corporate symbols directly inform the employee's interpersonal communication of the corporate identity to external stakeholders.</p>

Appendix 2F - Alessandri (2001)

Alessandri (2001)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Corporate mission through visual presentation (logo, tagline, colour palette and architecture) and corporate behaviour (reception, service etc) influences corporate identity (constituting how the firm presents itself).</p> <p>Corporate image is influenced by corporate identity, which in turn influences corporate reputation (constituting how the public perceives the firm)</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Corporate service behaviour is identified, implying a group of employees who deliver the services of the organisation - FLEs</p> <p>This behaviour forms a component part of how the firm presents itself in the form of corporate identity.</p>	<p>Corporate service behaviour is influenced by the corporate mission.</p>	<p>The public of the organisation perceives the firm through its corporate image and corporate reputation. However no feedback is provided back to the organisation from the public.</p>	<p>Employees are considered a component part of the corporate identity, via their behaviour rather than a vehicle that holds an image of the corporate identity and which is onwardly communicated. This implies a relationship with the organisation if it is to influence behaviour through its corporate mission.</p>	<p>Visual symbols directly inform the corporate identity of the organisation of which the corporate service behaviour is a component part.</p>

Appendix 2G - Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt (2003)

Bick, Jacobsen and Abratt (2003)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Strategy</p> <p>Corporate Identity</p> <p>Corporate Image</p> <p>Corporate Reputation</p> <p>Differentiation / competitive advantage corporate brand</p> <p>All of which combine to constitute corporate culture and personality that interactively communicates with the firm's environment</p>	<p>CEO mission and vision, marketing/pr, human resources and production.</p> <p>What the organisation is as expressed by all internal departments.</p> <p>Momentary views of the organisation from a departmental perspective including internal and external surveys</p> <p>Long-term views of the organisation a departmental perspective including internal and external surveys</p> <p>Monitoring of stakeholder perceptions to ensure business survival</p> <p>An amalgamation of all the sub-cultures in an organisation.</p> <p>Lobby groups, stakeholders, government and competitors.</p>	<p>Employees are presented as a set of internal departments. A distinction is made between managers and employees. All functions of a firm are comprehensively addressed, including customer-facing functions. Although services and service employees are not directly stated, customer-facing departments are referred to. Implying a group of employees that serve customers, i.e. FLEs.</p> <p>Through an integrated communication process employees absorb and accept the desired norms and values of senior management. Services and service employees are not directly referred to, only departments the most customer facing of which are marketing and production.</p>	<p>Every employee, comprised of each function within a firm influences and is influenced by the firm's strategy, corporate identity, corporate image, corporate reputation</p>	<p>Not referred to</p>	<p>Through an integrated communication process employees absorb and accept the desired norms and values of the organisation.</p>	<p>The corporate brand is a stated component of the model, which is considered outwardly facing and related to monitoring stakeholder perceptions.</p>

Appendix 2H - Melewar (2003)

Melewar (2003)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
Corporate communication	Controlled corporate, uncontrolled and indirect communication	Addressed through employee behaviour as part of the behaviour dimension of corporate identity. The characteristics of the organisation are routed in employee behaviour, playing an important role in corporate identity formation. Employee behaviour is the process by which employees relate to an organisation	All elements of corporate identity taxonomy In particular corporate visual identity by which an audience can recognise the company and distinguish it from others, encapsulating the organisation's cultural values and underpinning the organisation's communications efforts. Also controlled communication where internal and external communication is harmonised to create a favourable relationship with an organisation's stakeholders. Including management communication of mission and vision.	Only stakeholders are referred to as a component of the external environment, not customers. Feedback is given the destination of which is to the organisation as a whole. All employee groups, expressed as functions within the organisation, comprise the corporate culture and personality that in total communicates to the firm's environment.	The characteristics of the organisation are routed in employee behaviour, playing an important role in corporate identity formation. Employee behaviour is the process by which employees relate to an organisation Within behaviour, that is referred to as a particular way of acting, organisational identity is shaped by the closeness of fit between the organisation and its employees (the way members identify with the organisation) informed by the corporate identity (task of senior management in bringing forward and ensuring communication of the corporate vision and strategy).	Corporate visual identity communicates encapsulates the organisation's values, underpins the organisation's communications efforts and projects the organisation's quality, style and prestige to stakeholders.
Corporate design	Corporate visual identity system and its application.					
Corporate culture	Corporate: philosophy, values, mission, principles, guidelines, history. Country of origin, subculture.					
Behaviour	Corporate behaviour, employee behaviour, management behaviour.					
Corporate structure	Brand structure, organisational structure.					
Corporate strategy	Differentiation and positioning strategy.					
Industry identity						
All combine into corporate identity	An amalgamation of all the sub-cultures in an organisation. Lobby groups, stakeholders, government and competitors.					

Appendix 2I - Suvatjis and de Chernatony (2005)

Suvatjits and de Chernatony (2005)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>1. Head station</p> <p>2. Strategy station</p> <p>3. Creativity station</p> <p>4. Communication station</p> <p>5. Human power station</p> <p>6. The critical triplet station</p> <p>Each station interacts with each other through internal, management and external communications. The most developed form of corporate identity occurs at station 6 the least at station 1 where at station 6 there is the greatest form of contact between the organisation and its stakeholders.</p>	<p>Mission/vision/values leadership, top management.</p> <p>Brands / products / services, marketing, corporate strategy.</p> <p>Corporate visual identity systems, visual identity and advertising.</p> <p>Digital communication, external communication and internal communication.</p> <p>Stakeholders, company staff, company's group dynamism.</p> <p>Reputation, corporate personality and corporate image.</p>	<p>Employees and senior managers comprise internal stakeholders, whilst customers represent one of a number of external stakeholders.</p> <p>Employees are part of the human power station that through their attitudes, values, ethics and actions transmit messages about the corporate identity to the outer world through close contact and communication with customers. Employees who interact with customers are identified as one of a number of employee groupings, recognising that this is a distinct group, although they are not directly labelled as FLEs.</p>	<p>The creativity station symbolising, through the organisation's visual identity, the visual essence of the company and its products enabling FLEs to visualise its objectives, vision, mission and values. Internal communications, in combination with the visual identity element of the creativity station, inform internal stakeholders of corporate messaging that informs internal stakeholders concerning their roles, attitudes, values, ethics and actions. With the objective of establishing a corporate personality along with a reputation and image that are judged favourably by external stakeholders</p>	<p>It is proposed that junior employees discuss the organisation with customers.</p>	<p>The organisation through its visual identity system and components of the communication station transmit messages to employees in the human power station that influence their attitude, values, ethics and actions in transmitting messages about corporate identity to the outside world. This implies a relationship between the organisation and the employee.</p>	<p>The organisation through its visual identity system and components of the communication station transmit messages to employees in the human power station that influence their attitude, values, ethics and actions in transmitting messages about corporate identity to the outside world</p>

Appendix 2J - Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006)

Melewar and Karaosmanoglu (2006)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>Corporate strategy, Corporate culture and Corporate behaviour Influence corporate communications Where corporate culture influences both corporate strategy and behaviour In turn corporate strategy influences corporate structure that in turn influences corporate design That in turn influences corporate communication. Corporate communication influences corporate identity along with industry identity.</p>	<p>Positioning and differentiation strategy. Mission, vision and values. Company, management and employee behaviour. Marketing, management and organisational communication. Brand and organisational structure Visual identity slogan, architecture, location et</p>	<p>Employee behaviour when interacting with customers was considered an important factor in representing and communicating the corporate identity. Given the specific nature of this customer interaction it is considered that this reference infers employees as FLEs.</p>	<p>All elements of corporate identity taxonomy In particular corporate visual identity by which an audience can recognise the company and distinguish it from others, encapsulating the organisation's cultural values and underpinning the organisation's communications efforts. Also controlled communication where internal and external communication is harmonised to create a favourable relationship with an organisation's stakeholders, including management communication of mission and vision.</p>	<p>Both employees and customers are considered as related audiences of the organisation's corporate brand that interact in both controlled and uncontrolled communications environments.</p>	<p>The characteristics of employees actions are perceived to be a reflection of the organisation's corporate identity by other stakeholders. It is recognised that employees represent organisation's values to external stakeholders. Implying that employees cognitively process cues and symbols in order to represent an organisation's corporate identity along with its values.</p>	<p>Corporate design is considered as very important in guiding employees as to what is expected of them, influencing their role in controlled and non-controlled corporate communications.</p>

Appendix 2K - Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006)

Brown, Dacin, Pratt and Whetten (2006)

First order factors	Second order factors	FLEs are a distinct corporate identity stakeholder group.	An organisation's corporate identity internally influences FLEs	FLEs construe customers attitudes toward the organisation's corporate identity during service encounters.	The organisation's corporate identity influences an FLE's psychological identification with the organisation.	The organisation's corporate identity influences FLE brand building behaviours that support the corporate identity.
<p>1.The organisation</p> <p>2.Organisation to stakeholder</p> <p>3.Organisation to stakeholder to organisation.</p> <p>4.Stakeholders to organisation</p>	<p>Who we are as an organisation?</p> <p>Mental associations about the organisation held by organisational members.</p> <p>What does the organisation want other to think about the organisation?</p> <p>Mental associations about the organisation that organisational leaders want important audiences to hold.</p> <p>What does the organisation believe other think of the organisation?</p> <p>Mental associations that organisational members believe others outside the organisation hold about the organisation.</p> <p>What do stakeholders actually think of the organisation?</p> <p>Mental associations about the organisation actually held by others outside of the organisation.</p>	<p>Model is presented at the individual level, specifically from the individual perspective of organisational members. FLEs are not stated as an individual group, however it is recognised that organisational members occupy a special position from which they view the organisation that is different to that of external stakeholders.</p>	<p>Termed as Members' organisational associations that answer the question what does the organisation believe other think of the organisation?</p> <p>316</p>	<p>Termed as construed associations that answers the question what does the organisation believe others think of the organisation? Customers are directly referred to.</p>	<p>Stated that members of the organisation hold organisational associations and construed organisational associations that once internalised are a basis for self-referential meaning that constitutes an organisationally relevant, but individually held identity for the organisational member. This is contended as different from organisational identity, which is held at group or organisational level that is the psychology of the causes and consequences of individuals seeing themselves and being seen by others as part of a social group. Where group membership is internalised so that it contributes to the individuals sense of self and where identification with the organisation partly answers the question from an individual of who am I. However both sets of associations potentially feed all three forms of identity.</p>	<p>Not included</p>

Appendix 3 - Quantitative instrument

Appendix 4 - Construct measurement items

FLE construed corporate brand quality

Customers consider the Corporate Brand X is of high quality. ECBEPQ1

Customers consider Corporate Brand X are reliable is very high. ECBEPQ4

Customers consider Corporate Brand X must be of good quality. ECBEPQ5

FLE construed corporate brand awareness and associations

Customers can recognise Corporate Brand X among other competing brands.

ECBEBA2

Customers are aware of the Corporate Brand X. ECBEBA3

With customers some characteristics of Corporate Brand X come to mind quickly.

ECBEBA4

FLE construed overall corporate brand equity

Customers consider it makes sense to buy from Corporate Brand X instead of any other brand / retailer, even if their services and products are the same ECBEBE1.

Customers consider even if another brands / retailers services and products have the same features as Corporate Brand X, they would prefer to buy from Corporate Brand X. ECBEBE2

Customers consider if another brand / retailer is not different from Corporate Brand X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase from Corporate Brand X. ECBEBE4

Mission and vision dissemination

There is total agreement of our mission across all levels and business areas. MVD1

The company's values and mission are regularly communicated to employees.

MVD4

Employees view themselves as partners in charting the direction of the company.

MVD5

We do have a well-defined mission. MVD6

Consistent image implementation

Our company name is part of our image. CII1

Our company symbols (Logo, slogan, colours/visual style, signage) are constituents of our image. CII2

Much of our marketing is geared to projecting a specific image. CII3

Visual identity implementation

A visual audit of our facilities is undertaken periodically. VII1

Our company transmits a consistent visual presentation through facilities, equipment, personnel and communications material. VII3

Our consumables (e.g. e-mails, letters) are designed to match the overall visual elements/image of our company. VII4

FLE corporate brand identification

When someone criticizes the Corporate Brand, it feels like a personal insult. CBI1

I am very interested in what others think of the Corporate Brand. CBI2

When I talk about the Corporate Brand I usually say we rather than they. CBI3

FLE corporate brand dissemination

I let my manager know of ways how we can strengthen our brand image. PART1

I make constructive suggestions on how to improve our customers' brand experience. PART2

FLE relatedness to corporate brand community

I really like the people from Corporate Brand. RBC1

I get along with people from Corporate Brand. RBC2

FLE affective organisational commitment

I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation. OCA1

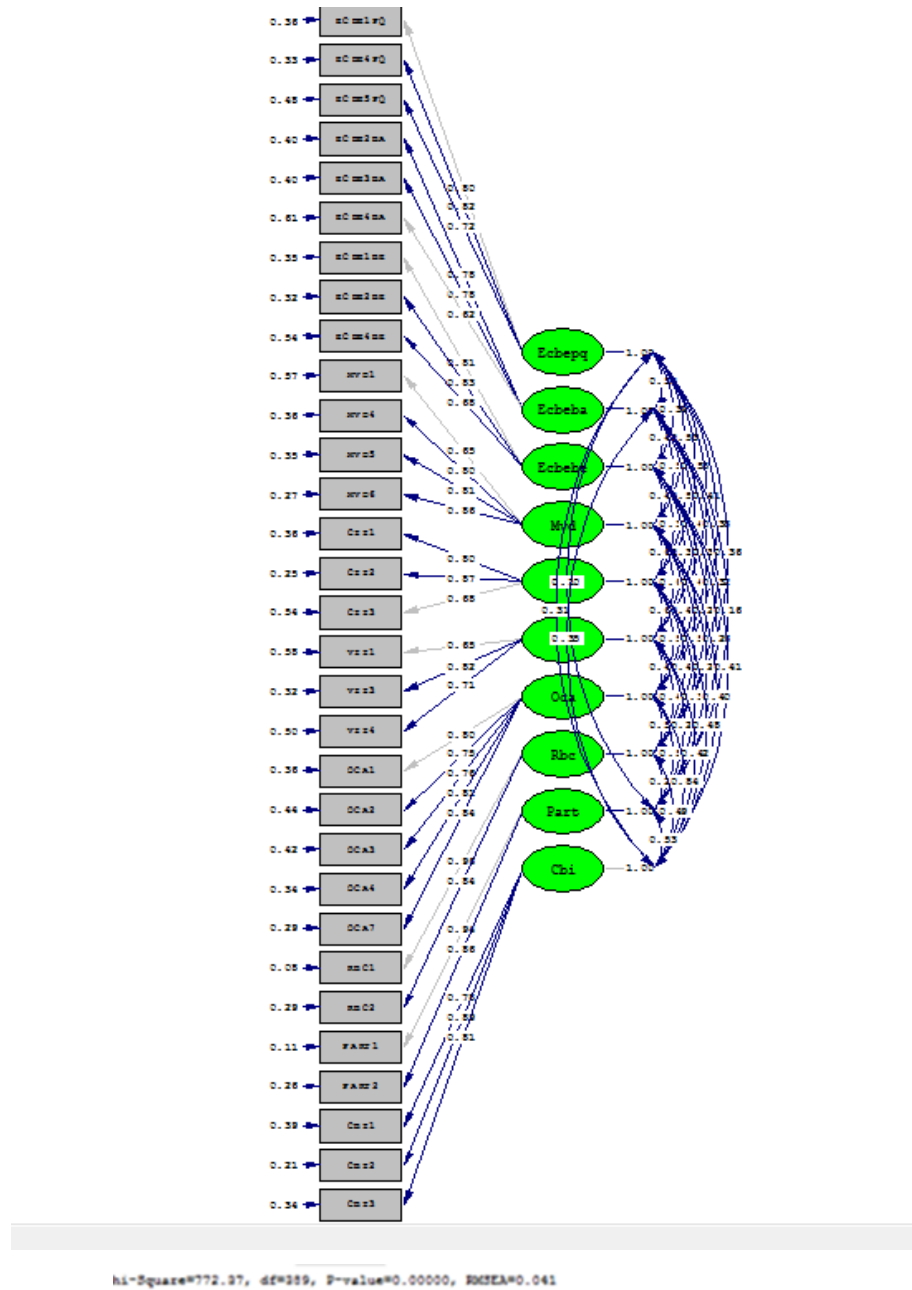
I enjoy discussing my work at this organisation with the people outside it. OCA2

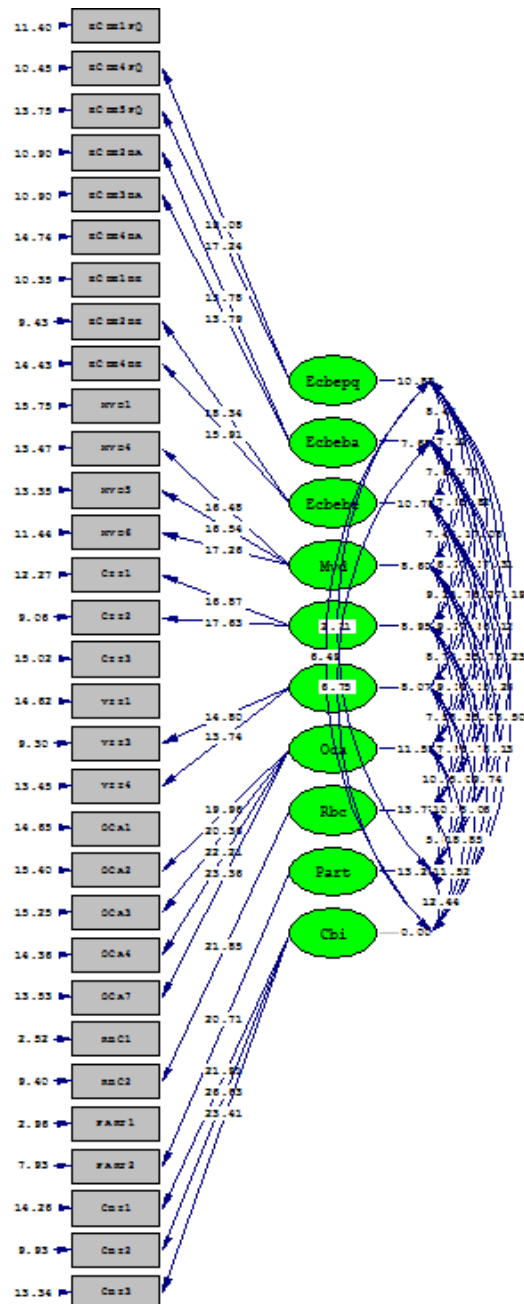
I really feel as if the organisation's problems are my own. OCA3

I don't think I could easily become attached to as attached to another organisation as I am to this one. OCA4

This organisation has a great deal of meaning for me. OCA7

Appendix 5 A - Study confirmatory factor analysis with goodness-of-fit indices





hi-Square=772.27, df=359, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.041

Goodness of Fit Statistics - Study CFA

Degrees of Freedom = 389
Minimum Fit Function Chi-Square = 762.488 (P = 0.0)
Normal Theory Weighted Least Squares Chi-Square = 772.368 (P = 0.0)
Estimated Non-centrality Parameter (NCP) = 383.368
90 Percent Confidence Interval for NCP = (308.146 ; 466.372)

Minimum Fit Function Value = 1.271
Population Discrepancy Function Value (F0) = 0.639
90 Percent Confidence Interval for F0 = (0.514 ; 0.777)
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.0405
90 Percent Confidence Interval for RMSEA = (0.0363 ; 0.0447)
P-Value for Test of Close Fit (RMSEA < 0.05) = 1.00

Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI) = 1.644
90 Percent Confidence Interval for ECVI = (1.519 ; 1.782)
ECVI for Saturated Model = 1.653
ECVI for Independence Model = 53.022

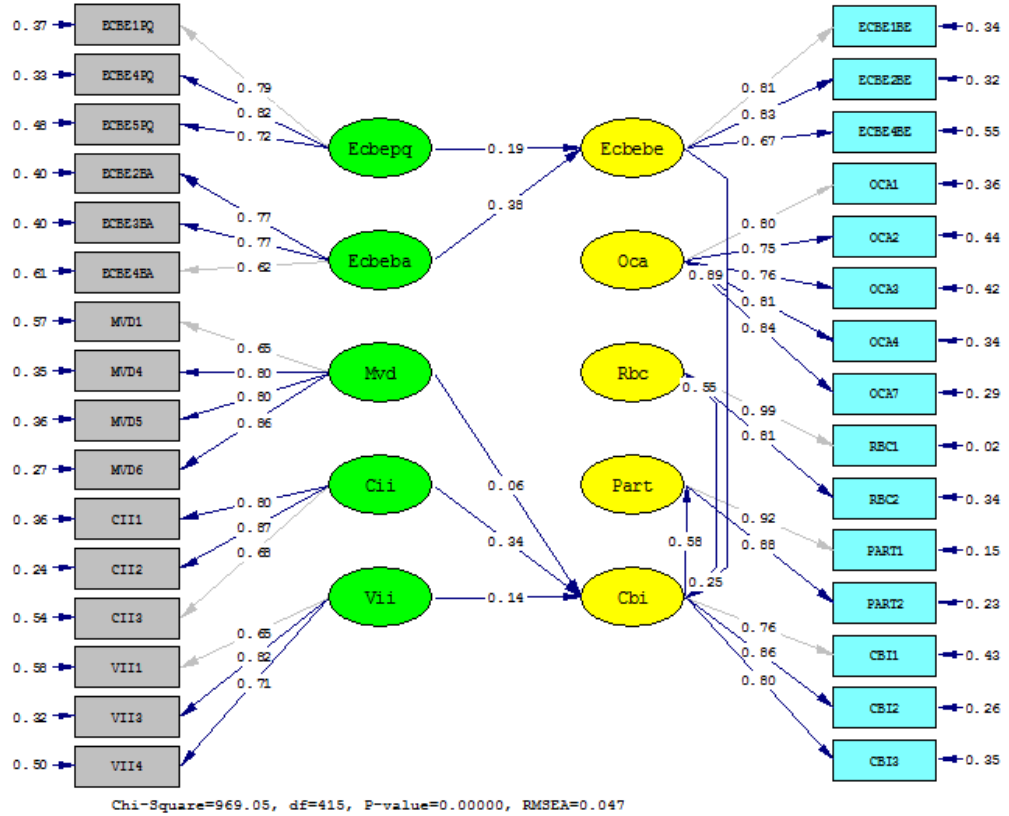
Chi-Square for Independence Model with 465 Degrees of Freedom = 31750.905
Independence AIC = 31812.905
Model AIC = 986.368
Saturated AIC = 992.000
Independence CAIC = 31980.261
Model CAIC = 1564.018
Saturated CAIC = 3669.703

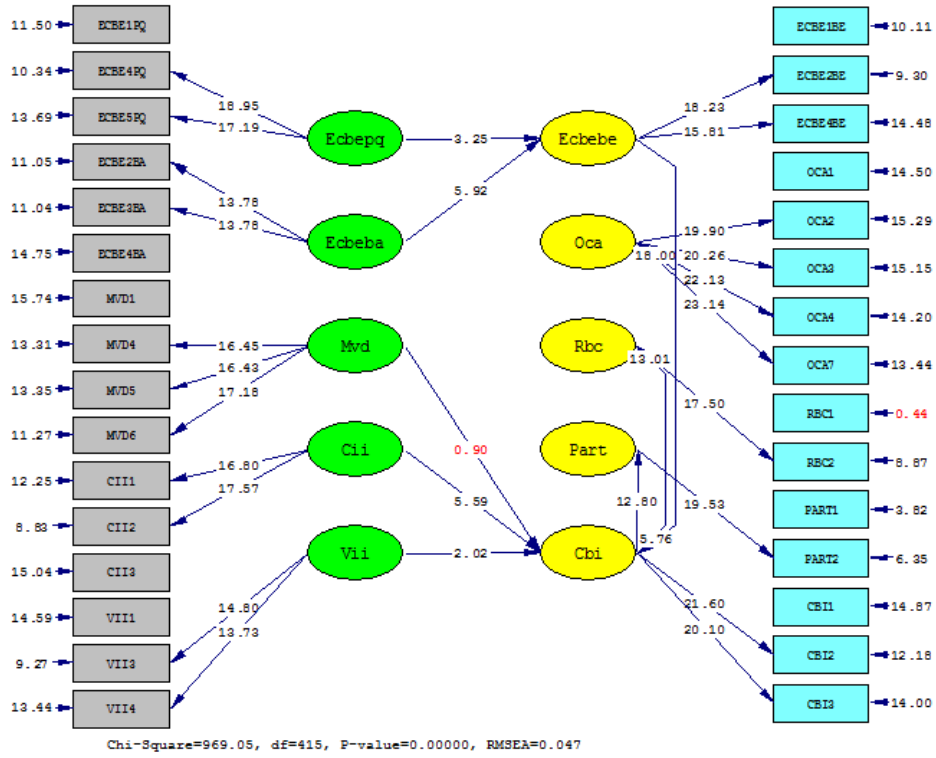
Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.976
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = 0.986
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) = 0.816
Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.988
Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = 0.988
Relative Fit Index (RFI) = 0.971

Critical N (CN) = 360.466

Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) = 0.122
Standardized RMR = 0.0374
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.923
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.902
Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI) = 0.724

Appendix 5 B - Study structural model with goodness-of-fit indices





Goodness of Fit Statistics - Study structural model

Degrees of Freedom = 415
Minimum Fit Function Chi-Square = 941.108 (P = 0.0)
Normal Theory Weighted Least Squares Chi-Square = 969.048 (P = 0.0)
Estimated Non-centrality Parameter (NCP) = 554.048
90 Percent Confidence Interval for NCP = (467.081 ; 648.715)

Minimum Fit Function Value = 1.569
Population Discrepancy Function Value (F0) = 0.923
90 Percent Confidence Interval for F0 = (0.778 ; 1.081)
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.0472
90 Percent Confidence Interval for RMSEA = (0.0433 ; 0.0510)
P-Value for Test of Close Fit (RMSEA < 0.05) = 0.884

Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI) = 1.885
90 Percent Confidence Interval for ECVI = (1.740 ; 2.043)
ECVI for Saturated Model = 1.653
ECVI for Independence Model = 53.022

Chi-Square for Independence Model with 465 Degrees of Freedom = 31750.905

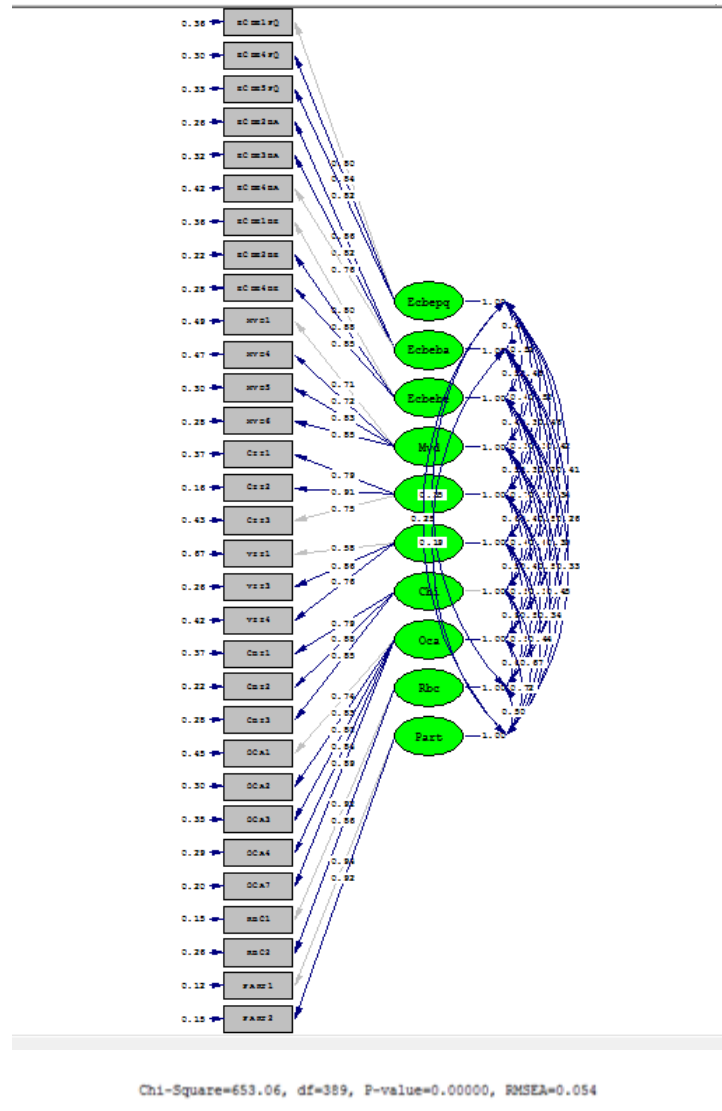
Independence AIC = 31812.905
Model AIC = 1131.048
Saturated AIC = 992.000
Independence CAIC = 31980.261
Model CAIC = 1568.334
Saturated CAIC = 3669.703

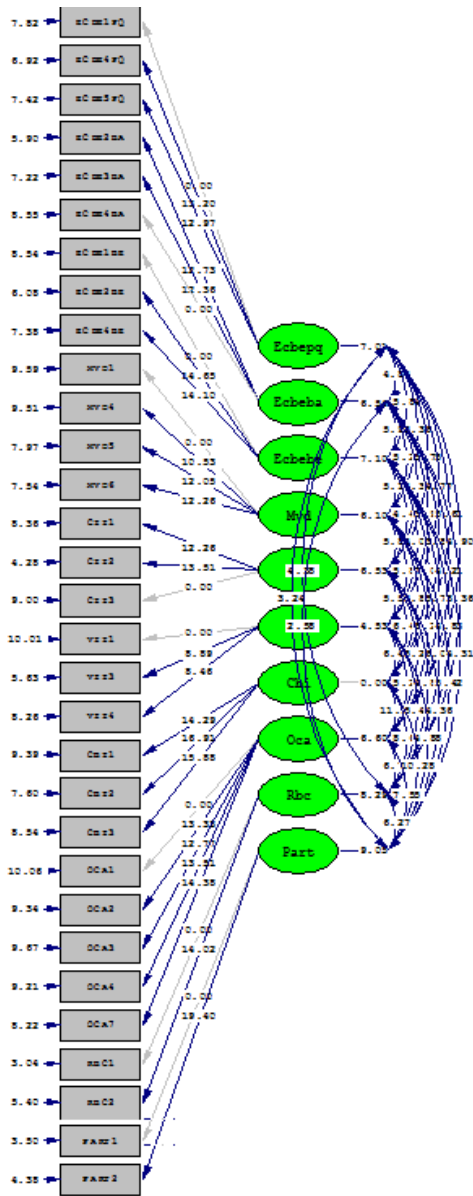
Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.970
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = 0.981
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) = 0.866
Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.983
Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = 0.983
Relative Fit Index (RFI) = 0.967

Critical N (CN) = 310.178

Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) = 0.166
Standardized RMR = 0.0590
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.906
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.887
Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI) = 0.758

Appendix 5 C - Pre-test confirmatory factor analysis with goodness-of-fit indices





Goodness of Fit Statistics - Pre-test CFA

Degrees of Freedom = 389
Minimum Fit Function Chi-Square = 710.182 (P = 0.0)
Normal Theory Weighted Least Squares Chi-Square = 653.060 (P = 0.00)
Estimated Non-centrality Parameter (NCP) = 264.060
90 Percent Confidence Interval for NCP = (197.523 ; 338.480)

Minimum Fit Function Value = 2.997
Population Discrepancy Function Value (F0) = 1.114
90 Percent Confidence Interval for F0 = (0.833 ; 1.428)
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.0535
90 Percent Confidence Interval for RMSEA = (0.0463 ; 0.0606)
P-Value for Test of Close Fit (RMSEA < 0.05) = 0.206

Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI) = 3.658
90 Percent Confidence Interval for ECVI = (3.378 ; 3.972)
ECVI for Saturated Model = 4.186
ECVI for Independence Model = 69.379

Chi-Square for Independence Model with 465 Degrees of Freedom = 16380.863
Independence AIC = 16442.863
Model AIC = 867.060
Saturated AIC = 992.000
Independence CAIC = 16581.504
Model CAIC = 1345.593
Saturated CAIC = 3210.246

Normed Fit Index (NFI) = 0.957
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = 0.976
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) = 0.800
Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.980
Incremental Fit Index (IFI) = 0.980
Relative Fit Index (RFI) = 0.948

Critical N (CN) = 153.447

Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) = 0.131
Standardized RMR = 0.0470
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.849
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.808
Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI) = 0.666

Appendix 6 - Results of Pre-testing of scales developed and questionnaire with 15 FLEs

As a result of pilot testing the quantitative research questionnaire with 15 FLE's, in one store, the following changes were made to the questionnaire:

- A. The personal information section is moved from section 1 to section 5
- B. The answer options and pre-coding options of personal information question are changed to match those used by the host organisation.
- C. The "What do customers think of the Waitrose Brand" section of the questionnaire is moved to section 1.
- D. The questions within each section were un-scrambled and presented in sequence for each measurement scale.