

From internal brand management to organizational citizenship behaviours: Evidence from frontline employees in the hotel industry[☆]



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Internal brand communications and training enhance employees' organizational identification.
- Transformational leadership has a stronger impact on organizational identification than on work engagement.
- Organizational identification only predicts citizenship behaviors towards an organization.
- Work engagement positively affects all organizational citizenship dimensions.

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the links between internal brand management, organizational identification, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behaviours in the hospitality industry. A model is proposed and tested using a sample of 323 frontline employees from the main hotel chains operating in Spain. This model includes different dimensions of internal brand management and different manifestations of citizenship behaviours. Data are analysed through the use of partial least squares. The findings confirm that transformational leadership leverages organizational identification and work engagement. However, brand training and brand communications do not directly raise positive emotions in the workplace. The results also suggest that work engagement is a better predictor of citizenship behaviours than organizational identification. Identification influences citizenship behaviours towards the organization. However, this variable does not explain extra-role supportive behaviours towards customers and other employees. These results extend previous research by empirically analysing the effects of internal brand management from the employees' perspective.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, brands have become particularly relevant in the hospitality industry. In such a competitive sector, which is characterized by similar service offerings and imitation, brands serve as referential elements for customers. Brands reduce customers' perceptions of the uncertainty and search costs inherent in the purchase process, while guaranteeing them the expected level of

service quality. In addition, effective brand management presents potential benefits for hotel managers in terms of the ability to charge price premiums, gain market share, enhance customer loyalty, or increase brand awareness and image (Kayaman & Arasli, 2007; Sangster, Wolton, & McKenney, 2001). Consequently, hotel organizations have become particularly interested in effectively communicating and delivering the brand promise to their customers (Xiong & King, 2015).

The success of a brand strategy largely depends on the role of employees as brand champions (Löhdorf & Diamantopoulos, 2014), especially in the hospitality industry. In this sector, employees' behaviour has a major influence on how external audiences perceive and experience the brand and, by extension, on the development of competitive advantages (Burmam, Zeplin, & Riley, 2009; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Service staff play a central role in

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these organizations, since employees should adopt behaviours that support a common set of brand values (Xiong, King, & Piehler, 2013). In this sense, hotel employees' degree of internalization of brand values, and the way they live and experience their jobs, play a key role in delivering the brand promise.

Within this context, some researchers have become particularly interested in exploring internal branding activities as triggers of employees' favourable attitudes and behaviours (e.g., Bansal, Mendelson, & Sharma, 2001; Burmann et al., 2009; Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). However, despite some recent developments, current academic research on internal branding still lacks empirical evidence, since existing studies are principally theoretical or based on case studies (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Gapp & Merrilees, 2006). Research on this topic has also often adopted a managerial-based approach, ignoring how employees perceive internal branding activities (Arendt & Brettel, 2010; Davies, 2008). In addition, previous empirical studies have investigated the effects of only a limited number of variables. Indeed, while previous research has debated the effects of internal branding on employees' responses in terms of loyalty, commitment, or brand performance (Du Preez & Bendixen, 2015; Harris & De Chernatony, 2001; King & Grace, 2008; Punjaisri, Evanschitzky, & Wilson, 2009), few papers have focused on critical variables such as organizational identification, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behaviours.

Specifically, organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) involve all employee behaviours that are critical for the achievement of organizational goals, but are not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system (Organ, 1988). These citizenship behaviours enhance organizational effectiveness because they 'lubricate the social machinery of the organization' (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983: 654) and 'contribute to the creation of the structural, relational, and cognitive aspects of social capital' (Bolino, Turnley, & Bloodgood, 2002: 517). In the hospitality industry, delivering the brand promise depends on how employees internalize and live the brand. Therefore, it is critical to understand how internal branding could leverage hotel employees' favourable attitudes and how these sentiments influence OCB.

In particular, this paper explores the role of two antecedents of OCB: work engagement, conceived as an individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural state directed towards the desired organizational outcomes (Shuck & Wollard, 2010); and organizational identification, an employee's knowledge of his or her membership of a social group together with the emotional significance attached to that membership (Ricketta, 2005). Exploring the relationships between internal branding, organizational identification, work engagement, and citizenship behaviours is especially relevant in the hospitality industry, because individuals are more likely to go beyond their formal job requirements when they are committed to their organization or feel that the organization is part of their self (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000).

Consequently, the aim of this research is to gain a better understanding of the internal brand management process from the employees' perspective and to explore how the different dimensions of internal brand management (IBM) influence frontline employees' attitudinal and behavioural responses in the hospitality industry. Specifically, the study examines the effect of IBM dimensions, such as brand training, communications activities, and transformational leadership, on employees' identification with their hotel and work engagement. In turn, it investigates the influence of organizational identification and work engagement on different expressions of OCB towards the organization, customers, and other employees.

This research contributes to the literature in various ways. First,

it fills a gap in the current academic literature on internal branding. Specifically, it extends previous research by empirically analysing how different IBM dimensions influence employees' attitudes and behavioural responses. Furthermore, this study has practical implications for practitioners in the tourism industry. It offers useful guidelines on how to manage branding elements in order to construct desirable working conditions that foster service employees' citizenship behaviours. The lack of knowledge about the internal conditions that leverage employees' favourable responses may negatively affect customers' perceptions of service quality or damage relationships among employees.

This paper is structured as follows. It opens with a general discussion of internal brand management. The conceptual model and hypotheses are presented. This section is followed by the methodology and the analysis of empirical findings. Finally, the paper outlines the conclusions, implications, limitations, and directions for further research.

2. Internal brand management

Internal brand management is an effective tool for creating and maintaining strong brands (Burmann et al., 2009). This important source of sustainable competitive advantage includes 'the activities undertaken by an organization to ensure that the brand promise reflecting the espoused brand values that set customers' expectations is enacted and delivered by employees' (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011: 1523). Employees are, therefore, the key audience of the internal brand management process, which seeks to promote the brand inside the organization (Xiong & King, 2015). Based on a brand identity approach, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) propose a holistic model for internal brand management that includes three main factors: brand-centred human resource activities, brand communication, and brand leadership.

Brand-centred training implies that human resource management practices are aligned with the organization's brand values (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001). These practices include initiatives related to recruitment policies, training and development of employees, evaluation of brand performance, and orientation programmes, among others (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). For instance, a brand-centred style of human resource management should ensure that applicants who are recruited and selected share the values and identity of the brand (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). Involving human resources in the internal brand management process is therefore necessary if a company wants employees to incorporate the brand message in their work activities (Aurand, Gorchels, & Bishop, 2005).

Internal brand communications refer to actions that seek to enhance employees' knowledge about the personality, values, and promise of the brand (Whisman, 2009). Traditionally, external stakeholders have been the focus of brand messages. However, to ensure that these brand messages are communicated successfully, effective internal brand communication to all employees is first required. Internal brand communications include all verbal and non-verbal messages related to the brand and the organization (Lynch & de Chernatony, 2004). As such, companies need to define what to communicate and also the different communication channels that will be used to disseminate brand messages internally (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). Well-managed internal brand communication may help to align employees' behaviour with the corporate values (de Chernatony & Segal-Horn, 2003) and develop a workforce that is committed, loyal, and identified with organizational values and goals (Sharma & Kamalanabhan, 2012).

Finally, leadership also facilitates internal brand building, encouraging behavioural changes consistent with the desired brand identity (Terglav, Konecnik, & Kase, 2016; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2006). According to Burmann and Zeplin (2005), two

levels of leadership can be distinguished: macro and micro. On the macro level, the CEO and the executive board are the visible head of the organization. They must be convinced of the brand's relevance, influencing the brand perceptions of both internal and external stakeholders. On the micro level, managers should also act as role models for subordinates. As such, individuals on both levels should elicit brand-building behaviours from frontline employees through an appropriate leadership style. Among the different approaches to employee supervision, transformational leadership has been advocated as one of the more effective factors in encouraging employees to live the brand (Bass & Riggio, 2008; Morhart, Herzog, & Tomczak, 2009). Brand-specific transformational leadership is defined as 'a leader's approach to motivating his or her followers to act on behalf of the corporate brand by appealing to their values and personal convictions' (Morhart et al., 2009: 123). Therefore, this leadership style allows for the creation of internal and solid values that encourage employees to transcend their own self-interest and act in favour of the brand and the organization (Northouse, 2012).

3. Conceptual framework and hypothesis development

Fig. 1 shows the conceptual framework underlying this research. In this model, the different dimensions of IBM positively influence organizational identification and work engagement. Furthermore, identification fosters work engagement. Finally, the model proposes that organizational identification and engagement leverage employees' citizenship behaviours towards customers, other employees, and the organization.

3.1. The influence of IBM on organizational identification

Organizational identification is defined as 'the individual's perception of oneness with, or belongingness to the organization' (Ashfort & Mael, 1989: 22). This construct has its origins in social identity theory (Mael & Ashforth, 1992; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identity refers to the portion of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership of a relevant social group. Thus, according to this theory, an individual's self-concept may be composed of different identities evolving from social groups, such as the workplace.

Different dimensions of organizational identification have been noted in the literature. Traditionally, researchers have focused on the cognitive dimension of identification (e.g., Ashforth & Mael, 1989). According to this approach, identification is considered a cognitive state that results from employees' comparison of their

own specific and defining characteristics with those attributes that define the organization. Therefore, the cognitive dimension involves the set of attributes that are shared between the organization and the employee (Mael & Ashforth, 1992) and the perception of belonging to the organization (Smidts, Pruyn, & Van Riel, 2001). In addition to the cognitive dimension, a more comprehensive view of organizational identification also considers an affective component (Edwards, 2005). This affective dimension reflects the feelings of pride or acknowledgement that are instrumental in achieving a positive social identity (Smidts et al., 2001).

Previous research suggests that organizational identification stimulates employees to behave in coherence with organizational objectives and to perform extra-role behaviours (Bell & Menguc, 2002). As explained earlier, these behaviours are particularly important in the hospitality industry, since quality perceptions and customer satisfaction depend on employees' effectiveness in service delivery (Pan, 2015). Therefore, it is essential to explore the facilitating conditions for achieving highly identified insiders who will manifest favourable behaviours towards the organization.

Internal brand management is a key driver of employees' degree of identification with the employer by reflecting their perceptions of oneness (Punjaisri et al., 2009). Internal brand management involves actions aimed at communicating internally the values that are unique to a specific company, making it different from other organizations (Bergstrom, Blumenthal, & Crothers, 2002). In this context, human resource practices are the mechanism to create and transmit the brand values to organizational members (Martin, Beaumont, Doig, & Pate, 2005). If staff have clear knowledge of the brand values, they will be more likely to be intellectually and emotionally engaged with the brand (Thomson, De Chernatony, Arganbright, & Khan, 1999). Therefore, internal brand management can foster value creation by establishing the conditions in which employees become highly identified with the organization and involved in branding activities (Chang, Chiang, & Han, 2012). In particular, different brand communications and training activities, such as educational sessions, social activities, or group meetings, can contribute to assimilation of the brand values and, consequently, to leveraging employees' sense of attachment to the organization. In this sense, Chang et al. (2012) find that in the hotel industry, brand-centred human resource practices positively affect brand psychological ownership. Punjaisri et al. (2009) also find that internal branding has a substantial effect on the brand identification of customer-interface hotel employees.

In addition to internal brand communications and brand-centred training, leadership processes can influence followers' psychological attachment to a group (Tse & Chiu, 2014; Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003; Van Knippenberg, Van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). Specifically, transformational leadership has been identified as a relevant predictor of organizational identification. Transformational leaders pay attention to employees' higher-order needs and try to motivate them by stimulating learning, achievement of needs, and individual development (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005). As suggested by Shamir, House, and Arthur (1993), charismatic leaders influence the self-concept of their followers and build social identification by connecting individuals with the organization's mission and objectives. Thus, these prototypical leaders influence followers by stimulating an identity-based construct in their self-concept at work (Walumbwa, Avolio, & Zhu, 2008). Transformational leadership also affects employees' sense of contribution to organizational goals. Through empowerment, trust building, inspiration, or recognition, transformational leaders modify how employees perceive the organization. These positive perceptions of the organization enhance identity attractiveness and increase the sense of self-worth among followers towards organizational success (Bass, 1998; Walumbwa

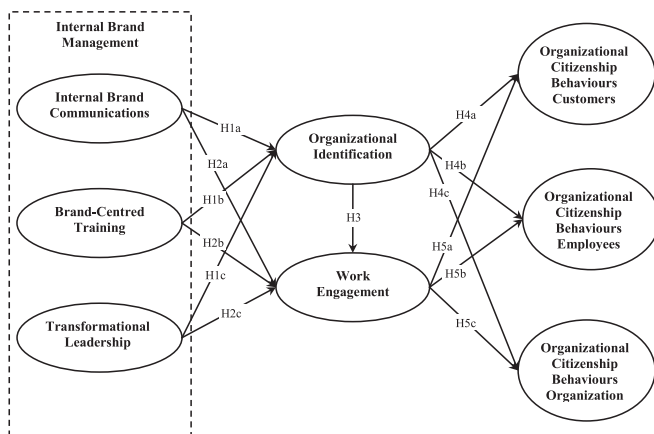


Fig. 1. Theoretical model.

et al., 2008). Recent findings also show that charismatic leadership leverages individuals' identification with the group (Shamir et al., 1993; Shamir, Zakay, Brainin, & Popper, 2000; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Based on past research on internal brand management, organizational identification, and leadership, this paper proposes that brand communications, brand-centred training activities, and transformational leadership positively influence organizational identification. Hence, it is hypothesized that in the hotel industry:

H1a). Internal brand communications positively influence organizational identification.

H1b). Brand-centred training positively influences organizational identification.

H1c). Transformational leadership positively influences organizational identification.

3.2. The influence of IBM and organizational identification on work engagement

Work engagement has recently been recognized by academics and practitioners as a critical element in determining organizational competitiveness and innovativeness (Lee & Ok, 2015; Welch, 2011). Work engagement is commonly associated with favourable employee outcomes. Specifically, in the hotel industry work engagement has been found to positively influence variables such as affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job performance (e.g., Jung & Yoon, 2016; Karatepe, Beirami, Bouzari, & Safavi, 2014; Paek, Schuckert, Kim, & Lee, 2015). Despite increasing attention in both the academic and industry literature, previous research reveals the existence of different approaches to conceptualizing this construct (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

Recently, Welch (2011) has summarized the evolution of work engagement in different waves to obtain a better understanding of the concept. From the initial views that considered work engagement as the harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles (Kahn, 1990), the concept has suffered a notable evolution. For example, Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) conceptualize work engagement in terms of energy, involvement, and efficacy. These components are considered the direct opposites of employees' feelings of burnout towards the job (exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy). Recent research points out, however, that engagement involves different aspects of the negative emotions associated with burnout. One of the most accepted views of work engagement is that proposed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), who define this concept as 'a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption' (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004: 295). Within this context, vigour is characterized by employees experiencing high levels of energy and mental resilience while working. Dedication involves enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge at work. Finally, absorption is related to feelings of concentration, happiness, and deep involvement in the workplace.

Internal branding activities contribute to employees' internalization of brand values (Lings & Greenley, 2005). Employees need meaningful information about brand values to exhibit the desired behaviours towards the organization. The dissemination of such brand knowledge will result in greater clarification of employees' roles within the work environment (King, 2010). According to Combs, Liu, Hall, and Ketchen (2006), advanced human resource practices also leverage employees' knowledge, abilities, and skills, and stimulate employees to perform better. Thus, a lack of effective brand communications and training programmes can lead hotels to

have unqualified employees who do not possess the required skills or are not willing to respond to organizational and customer problems. The relationship between internal brand communications and work engagement has also been described in terms of social exchanges within the organization. Karatepe (2013) posits that internal marketing activities and work engagement are related, because employees 'reward' the organization via work engagement. This author argues that when hotel employees feel that their employers really invest in their welfare and perceive that their efforts are appreciated, they are more likely to experience more positive work-related states of mind. Likewise, Thomson et al. (1999) show that effective internal brand communication enhances employees' understanding of the brand and their emotional engagement with the organization. In the hotel industry, Lee, Kim, and Kim (2014) also find that internal branding is critical for employees to be engaged with their jobs.

Focusing on transformational leadership, theoretical approaches suggest a positive relationship between the leader's behaviour and followers' engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Transformational leadership is manifested in different ways, such as intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, or individualized consideration (Bass, 1991). These behaviours create the conditions for enhancing employees' psychological safety, work meaningfulness, adaptability, and proactivity (Xu & Thomas, 2011). Hotel employees will be more willing to invest efforts towards task goal attainment when there is a sense of commitment to the leader's goals. Thus, if transformational leaders are capable of creating job conditions that foster passion for work, capacity to think independently, or creativity, employees will tend to experience psychological engagement with work (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Bono and Judge (2003) also use the self-concordance model to explain the relationship between leadership and engagement. According to these authors, followers of charismatic leaders may express more self-concept engagement in their jobs. These emotionally involved workers are more willing to perceive their job tasks and goals as a reflection of their authentic interests and values.

Therefore, based on the previous reasoning, it is proposed that in the hotel industry:

H2a). Internal brand communications positively influence work engagement.

H2b). Brand-centred training positively influences work engagement.

H2c). Transformational leadership positively influences work engagement.

Few papers have specifically explored the link between organizational identification and work engagement. However, previous research suggests that when there is congruence between the organization's and the person's values, employees tend to be psychologically more involved and attached to their employers and to feel more satisfied with their jobs (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013; Buonocore, 2010; Cable & Judge, 1996). This sense of affiliation implies that employees develop a sense of commonality of purpose within the organization that contributes to leveraging favourable attitudes towards the job (Van Vuuren, Veldkamp, de Jong, & Seydel, 2007). For example, a highly identified employee will tend to consider the successes and failures of the hotel as their own, and this internalization will affect the intensity of their focus on their work assignments. Similarly, when employees see the organization as part of themselves, they develop a sense of in-group belonging that may leverage their sense of psychological safety (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994). Consequently, high identifiers

will be more inclined to spend their time and energy on efficiently performing their tasks at work.

Recent studies support this relationship. For instance, Riketta (2005) shows that organizational identification increases employees' intrinsic motivation within their jobs. In the context of public services, the study by Rich, Lepine, and Crawford (2010) also reveals that when individuals believe that their personal values are congruent with those of the organization, they find more meaningfulness in their work and exhibit higher levels of engagement. Finally, Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013) find that person–organization fit enhances attitudinal outcomes and increases involvement and employees' sense of engagement with their jobs. Therefore, in line with previous research, we expect that the cognitive and affective bond of identification may affect frontline hotel employees' emotional attitude towards the job, which in turn will result in higher levels of energy and resilience while working. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H3). Organizational identification positively influences work engagement.

3.3. *The influence of organizational identification and work engagement on organizational citizenship behaviour*

Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is defined as all those employee actions that are discretionary, not directly recognized by the formal reward system, and eventually contribute to the correct functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988). It therefore encompasses behaviours that are not part of the formal job description, but are critical for the achievement of organizational goals. OCB has been linked to several employee behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions towards the company, such as job satisfaction, trust, loyalty, identity internalization, and engagement (e.g., Bateman & Organ, 1983; Karatepe, 2013; Morhart et al., 2009; Saks, 2006).

Previous researchers have adopted different conceptualizations of OCB. Smith et al. (1983) initially described OCB in terms of employees' altruism (i.e., voluntary behaviours that assist in other people's problems) and compliance (i.e., global actions that go beyond the prescribed in-role requirements). Later, Organ (1988) included courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue as OCB dimensions. Courtesy refers to behaviours aimed at preventing future problems for the organization, whereas sportsmanship is considered as employees' willingness to tolerate personal inconveniences and annoyances in the job setting. Finally, civic virtue is related to an employee's participation in the organization's political governance. Similarly, other authors explicitly distinguish extra-role behaviours that are aimed at providing help to specific individuals (e.g., dedicating time to assist with other employees' problems) from those behaviours that are directed to contributing to the organization's objectives (e.g., employee advocacy of the company) (Saks, 2006; Williams & Anderson, 1991). In sectors like the hospitality industry, other studies have also explored citizenship behaviours that are willing to serve other individuals' specific needs, such as those of customers (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997; Karatepe, 2013).

Since this paper focuses on frontline employees in the hospitality industry, in line with previous research it proposes the existence of three manifestations of service contact employees' OCB. First, we distinguish between those actions aimed at serving customers (OCBC) and those actions aimed at providing help to other employees (OCBE). The specific characteristics of hospitality organizations make it necessary to establish such a differentiation. OCB research has mostly focused on employees' altruistic inclination to assist other insiders with their duties or problems. However,

frontline employees also go out of their way to help customers voluntarily. According to Karatepe (2013) and Jong and De Ruyter (2004), examining these facets of OCB is important, because frontline employees should serve customers in challenging service encounters and show proactive behaviours to be able to adapt to specific situations. Additionally, this paper explores the organizational citizenship dimension aimed at the organization (OCBO). The specific distinction between actions aimed at individuals (employees or customers) and at the organization is necessary, not only because of the differential nature of the constructs, but because their antecedents can also differ. As Williams and Anderson (1991) suggest, while individual-focused OCB usually occurs without any external rewards, OCBO can be explained because of the possible existence of an expected reward or to avoid punishment. Consequently, it is important to examine the relationships of work engagement and organizational identification with the different dimensions of OCB. This analysis will enable us to understand whether engaged and identified employees tend to prioritize specific manifestations of OCB or pay equal attention to their extra-role tasks.

Previous research suggests that organization-based identification motivates efforts on behalf of the collective (Riketta, 2005; Tse & Chiu, 2014; Van Dick, van Knippenberg, Kerschreiter, Hertel, & Wieseke, 2008). Pratt (1998) proposes that organizational identification serves the individual's needs for belonging and self-enhancement. If individuals feel that the organization is part of their self, they will behave in accordance with the organization because this performance will contribute to fulfilling their needs. This sense of belonging explains the connection between organizational identification and OCB. Organizational identification stimulates the sense of oneness with the organization in such a way that employees internalize the organizational goals as their own (Van Knippenberg, 2000). In this sense, in-role behaviours are usually beyond the employee's control and discretion. Consequently, identified insiders will be more prone to exteriorize their commitment to the organization by developing voluntary supportive behaviours towards the organization and individuals (Van Dick, Grojean, Christ, & Wieseke, 2006).

Additionally, because organizations are socially complex groups where employees need to interact continually, other members affect the individual's construction of self. Hence, extra-role actions to help colleagues with their tasks contribute to the individual definition of the self. Bell and Menguc (2002) suggest that this relationship is especially relevant when staff's behaviours directly determine service quality and organizational performance. Employees who identify with the organization, and perceive that quality-driven values are important to the firm, will be more likely to subscribe personally to organizational goals and engage in OCB. In a meta-analysis focused on the consequences of organizational identification, Riketta (2005) also notes that different measures of organizational identification are positively related to 'extra-role behaviours'. However, few papers have specifically explored this relationship in the hotel industry, where frontline employees' interactions with customers and colleagues may determine the success of service delivery. Consequently, it is proposed that:

H4a). Organizational identification positively influences organizational citizenship behaviours towards customers.

H4b). Organizational identification positively influences organizational citizenship behaviours towards other employees.

H4c). Organizational identification positively influences organizational citizenship behaviours towards the organization.

Work engagement can also be considered as an important antecedent of citizenship behaviours (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). Engaged employees are more willing to go beyond their job's formal requirements and to exert extra effort to consider other individuals' needs (Karatepe, 2013; Moliner, Martinez-Tur, Ramos, Peiró, & Cropanzano, 2008). Following Bakker and Demerouti (2008), there are four reasons to explain the influence of engagement on employees' performance. First, engaged employees are usually more optimistic, confident, and sensitive to opportunities and, consequently, more willing to manifest OCB. Second, engagement is positively related to good health. Hence, engaged employees will be more active and better able to perform extra effort. Third, engaged employees are more capable of creating and managing their own resources. Thus, engaged employees will be more effective in applying psychological resources, such as self-efficacy or optimism, to OCB. And fourth, engagement can be transferred to other employees. This emotional contagion leads to the creation of a positive team culture that stimulates proactive behaviours among staff.

Other authors have also explained the relationship between engagement and OCB, arguing that engaged employees have more trusting and high-quality relationships with their organization and, consequently, manifest more proactive behaviours (Saks, 2006). In explaining the meaning of engagement, Macey and Schneider (2008) consider that 'state engagement', characterized by feelings of absorption, energy, or empowerment, influences behavioural engagement such as OCB, pro-social behaviours, or employees' proactive initiatives. These authors suggest that those employees who are psychologically more present invest greater effort in their job setting by transcending typical boundaries in relation to others' needs. Similarly, Engelbrecht (2006) suggests that a highly engaged employee is service minded and client oriented at work, which can be noticed in quick, calm, and patient reactions to clients. Some recent empirical developments also suggest the connection between these constructs. In this sense, Bakker, Demerouti, and Verbeke (2004) find that engaged employees receive higher ratings from their colleagues on extra-role performance evaluations. Likewise, Babcock-Roberson and Strickland (2010) find that employed students are more willing to perform OCB when they manifest a feeling of engagement towards their employer. More recently, Lyu, Zhu, Zhong, and Hu's (2016) work demonstrates that work engagement influences hospitality employees' customer-oriented OCB. Overall, these findings suggest that engaged employees perform well and are willing to go the extra mile. Consequently, it is expected that, in the hospitality context, highly engaged employees will be more willing to carry out OCB than those employees who are less engaged. Following this, it is hypothesized that:

H5a). Work engagement positively influences organizational citizenship behaviours towards customers.

H5b). Work engagement positively influences organizational citizenship behaviours towards other employees.

H5c). Work engagement positively influences organizational citizenship behaviours towards the organization.

Table 1 summarizes the research hypotheses, providing support from the literature for each.

4. Methodology

4.1. Data collection

To test the hypotheses, we gathered data from a sample of

frontline employees of various recognized chain hotels operating in Spain. Specifically, the target population covered 881 hotels with a minimum rating of three stars that were affiliated to one of the top 12 hotel chains in Spain. The choice of these chains was made according to their size, measured by the number of establishments in the country (Hosteltur, 2013). These top 12 hotel chains' revenues exceeded 7,000,000,000 euros in 2013 and they are well-recognized brands in this sector.

Data collection was carried out through a telephonic questionnaire aimed at the hotels' frontline employees working at reception. We selected this type of employees because receptionists serve as the face of their employers and deal directly with customers in service encounters (Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2011). One employee from each hotel was interviewed. Quota sampling was employed in order to obtain a representative sample. These quotas were established according to the size of the chains and the presence of each chain in the different regional communities in Spain. Data collection was conducted during April and May 2014.

With regard to the questionnaire protocol, the researchers prepared a master list consisting of the contact information of every hotel in the population. This information was extracted from an official guide published by the Ministry of Tourism in Spain. The telephone interviewers were provided with this list and contacted front-desk employees from these hotels. In the first contact, the purpose of the study was explained and their cooperation was requested. Respondents were guaranteed confidentiality over the information provided and anonymity. If an employee showed any reluctance to participate, the contact information of the researchers and the research group website address were offered. Front-desk employees who agreed to be interviewed were asked to respond to the questionnaire. When employees argued that they did not have time at that precise moment, the interviewer made a follow-up call by agreeing a date and time with the respondents. Once the employees agreed to participate, the interviewers coded the name of the hotel chain, the name of the hotel, and its location. Then, the interviewers explained that frontline employees would be asked their level of agreement ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree) with a series of statements. Afterwards, the main body of the survey was carried out. The first two questions were related to brand-centred training activities and internal brand communications. The following questions measured organizational citizenship behaviours aimed at the organization, employees, and customers. Employees were then asked about their organizational identification. The measures for transformational leadership and work engagement were included next. Finally, the questionnaire closed with classifying information about employees' gender, age, and tenure.

We initially collected 327 questionnaires. However, after discarding incoherent and incomplete questionnaires, 323 were finally considered valid, which represents 36.6% coverage of the target population. Table 2 shows the characteristics of the sample.

4.2. Variables measurement

To measure the different variables included in the study, 11-point multi-item Likert scales (0 = strongly disagree; 10 = strongly agree) were adapted from previous studies (see Appendix 1). Since the questionnaire was conducted by telephone, a scale from 0 to 10 in which the respondent could easily categorize his or her perceptions was used (0 = minimum, 5 = median value, 10 = maximum). 11-point Likert scales provide similar reliability values in comparison to lower-range scales (Preston & Colman, 2000) and have been widely employed by previous studies (e.g., DeSarbo, Di Benedetto, Song, & Sinha, 2005; Franke & Krems, 2013; Verhoef & Langerak, 2001; Westbrook & Oliver, 1981). Song and

Table 1
Summary of hypotheses and supporting literature.

Hypotheses	Literature support
H1a) Internal brand communications → organizational identification	Chang et al. (2012); Punjaisri et al. (2009); Shamir et al. (2000); Tse and Chiu (2014); Van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003); Van Knippenberg et al. (2004); Walumbwa et al. (2008)
H1b) Brand-centred training → organizational identification	
H1c) Transformational leadership → organizational identification	
H2a) Internal brand communications → work engagement	Bono and Judge (2003); Karatepe (2013); Lee et al. (2014); Macey and Schneider (2008); Thomson et al. (1999)
H2b) Brand-centred training → work engagement	
H2c) Transformational leadership → work engagement	
H3) Organizational identification → work engagement	Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013); Rich et al. (2010); Riketta (2005)
H4a) Organizational identification → OCB towards customers	Bell and Menguc (2002); Riketta (2005); Tse and Chiu (2014); Van Dick et al. (2006, 2008)
H4b) Organizational identification → OCB towards other employees	
H4c) Organizational identification → OCB towards the organization	
H5a) Work engagement → OCB towards customers	Babcock-Roberson and Strickland (2010); Bakker et al. (2004); Karatepe (2013); Lyu, Zhu, Zhong, and Hu (2016); Moliner et al. (2008); Saks (2006)
H5b) Work engagement → OCB towards other employees	
H5c) Work engagement → OCB towards the organization	

Parry (1997) also suggest that this format is better understood across countries like Spain than other traditional scales because of its structural similarities to the metric system. Before the survey was finally conducted, it was reviewed by three researchers with experience in this field.

Internal brand communication (IBC) was measured with three items adapted from various studies, such as Judson, Gorchels, and Aurand (2006), O'Callaghan (2009), or Santos-Vijande, Río-Lanza, Suárez-Álvarez, and Díaz-Martín (2013). A sample item was: 'The hotel communicates the corporate brand values to employees'. Brand-centred training (BCT) was measured through a three-item scale adapted from Aurand et al. (2005), Punjaisri and Wilson (2007), and Chang et al. (2012), with items including 'The hotel provides training activities which are related to brand values'. To measure transformational leadership (TL), we employed Carless, Wearing, and Mann's (2000) measurement instrument. This version includes seven items where employees have to evaluate different facets of their supervisor, such as communication skills, employee motivation and recognition, and values. Participants responded to statements such as 'My supervisor fosters trust, involvement, and cooperation among team members'.

The organizational identification (OID) scale was formed by four items from Smidts et al. (2001). This scale includes both cognitive and affective elements of OID, such as 'I feel strong ties with this hotel' and 'I feel proud to work for this hotel'. Work engagement

(WEN) was measured through the different dimensions of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) proposed by Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006). Three items were included to measure each of the WEN dimensions. Examples of these items were 'At my job I feel strong and vigorous' (vigour dimension), 'I am enthusiastic about my job' (dedication dimension), and 'I am immersed in my work' (absorption dimension).

Finally, to measure organizational citizenship behaviour aimed at employees (OCBE), we used three items from Williams and Anderson (1991), Lee and Allen (2002), and Saks (2006). A sample item was: 'Concerning my colleagues, I give up time to help others who have work problems'. Similarly, organizational citizenship behaviour aimed at the customer (OCBC) and at the organization (OCBO) were both measured with three items from Lee and Allen (2002), Saks (2006), and Karatepe (2013), including statements such as 'Concerning our clients, I voluntarily assist them even if it means going beyond job requirements' (OCBC) and 'Concerning my job at this hotel, I take action to protect the organization from potential problems' (OCBO).

4.3. Common method bias assessment

Common method bias was assessed through procedural and statistical methods (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). As regards procedural methods, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity reduced the possibility that employees responded artificially or dishonestly (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Additionally, the variables were haphazardly introduced in the telephonic survey, trying to avoid employees being able to infer cause–effect relationships among the constructs. As regards statistical procedures, exploratory factor analysis was carried out in order to establish the data factorial structure. This analysis revealed the existence of eight different factors. The highest proportion of variance accumulated by one single factor was 17.3%. Consequently, the items did not load on a large factor that accumulated the majority of the explained variance. A Harman test by means of confirmatory factor analysis with EQS 6.1 also confirmed this finding. This test showed that the

Table 2
Sample and respondent characteristics.

Hotel rating	Respondent's gender
3 stars	Male 37.2%
4 stars	Female 62.8%
5 stars	
Average age of respondent: 33.45 years old (s.d. = 6.58)	
Average tenure of respondent: 7.44 years (s.d. = 7.84)	
Hotel size (average number of rooms): 178.65 (s.d. = 133.09)	

Note: s.d. = standard deviation.

goodness of fit for a measurement model where all the variables loaded on a single factor was substantially lower than the goodness of fit for a model where every item loaded on its corresponding latent variable. Therefore, common method bias does not seem to be a severe problem in this research.

5. Analysis and results

To test the hypotheses, we employed partial least squares (PLS) regressions with the SMART-PLS 2.0 software. In comparison to traditional covariance-based structural equation modelling, this methodology is appropriate when the interest of the study focuses on prediction and theory development rather than on strong theory confirmation (Reinartz, Haenlein, & Henseler, 2009). Accordingly, given the scope of this research, which focuses on predicting different dependent variables (different manifestations of organizational citizenship behaviour) and combines different theoretical frameworks, such as social identity theory, internal branding theories, and social exchange theory, PLS seems to be particularly adequate. In addition, the use of PLS is preferable when the model, as in our case, is complex and includes a large number of indicators and latent variables (Chin, 2010; Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). Although PLS estimates both measurement and structural models simultaneously, the results of these two models are analysed and interpreted separately in the next sections.

5.1. Analysis of the measurement model

The first step of the PLS analysis consists in estimating the measurement model. Following Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), work engagement (WEN) was defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption. Coherently with previous conceptualizations, WEN was conceived as a second-order construct composed of the vigour, absorption, and dedication first-order latent variables. Given that PLS does not directly estimate models including second-order constructs, we proceeded to create them through the two-step approximation method suggested by Wetzels, Odekerken-Schroder, and Van Oppen (2009). Thus, in an initial estimation, WEN dimensions were included in the model as first-order constructs. This procedure allowed us to obtain the latent variable scores for the variables vigour, absorption, and dedication to be used in the estimation of the second-order factor model.

The reliability and convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs were also assessed in the initial estimation. This analysis revealed that all items' outer loadings on their respective latent variables were above the critical threshold of 0.7 (Carmines & Zeller, 1979), with the exception of OCBO1. Consequently, since this item did not present individual reliability, we decided to remove it and to estimate the first-order model again. The results of this estimation are shown in Table 3 and reveal that this final first-order measurement model presents individual item reliability, since all the factor loadings exceed 0.7. Moreover, all the constructs are internally consistent, since the composite reliability indexes (CRI) are above the suggested benchmark of 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The constructs also meet the convergent validity criteria. The average variance extracted (AVE) values are above 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Finally, the existence of discriminant validity was verified by comparing the constructs' AVE values with the squared correlation between any pair of constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As shown in Table 4, discriminant validity is supported, since the AVE values are higher than the squared estimated correlations for all pairs of constructs.

Estimation of the initial first-order model allowed us to obtain the latent variable scores to be employed in estimating WEN,

conceptualized as a second-order reflective construct. The results of this estimation are shown in Table 5. Again, the indicators present individual reliability, since all the factor loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.7, including the WEN construct. The factorial loadings of the WEN first-order constructs are above 0.7 and present adequate average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) values. This result supports the idea that the dimensions are collectively reflective of the overall construct. Discriminant validity was again assessed by comparing the AVE values with the squared correlations between variables. The findings suggest the existence of discriminant validity among the constructs (Table 6).

5.2. Analysis of the structural model

To assess the significance of the path coefficients, a bootstrapping procedure with 5000 subsamples was employed (Hair et al., 2011). This bootstrapping procedure is a nonparametric technique of resampling commonly used in PLS, which provides standard errors and t-statistics of the parameters (Efron & Tibshirani, 1994). Prior to testing the hypotheses, multicollinearity was assessed. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was computed for each variable. The results indicate that the highest VIF occurs for the BCT variable (VIF = 1.797). This value does not exceed the cut-off value of 10.00 suggested by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006). Therefore, there is no evidence suggesting multicollinearity problems.

The results of the structural estimation reveal that all the factorial loadings are significant at 1% (Appendix 2). The model explains 44.2% of the organizational identification variance, 50.8% of work engagement, 16.2% of OCBC, 15.8% of OCBE, and 29.1% of the OCBO variance. The predictive relevance of the model was also assessed through the Stone-Geisser test. The results show that the Q^2 value of this test for the five dependent variables is positive (Q^2 -OID = 0.362; Q^2 -WEN = 0.371; Q^2 -OCBC = 0.144; Q^2 -OCBE = 0.104; Q^2 -OCBO = 0.185). Consequently, it can be assumed that the dependent variables can be predicted by the independent variables. Table 7 presents the results of the structural model.

According to the results of the structural model, internal brand communications ($\beta = 0.140$; $t = 1.991$), brand-centred training ($\beta = 0.239$; $t = 3.465$), and transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.407$; $t = 5.942$) positively influence organizational identification, supporting hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c. These results suggest that internal brand management determines employees' sense of identification with the hotel. Conversely, only transformational leadership exerts a significant influence on work engagement ($\beta = 0.142$; $t = 2.006$), which supports hypothesis 2c. The influence of brand communications ($\beta = 0.100$; $t = 1.242$) and training actions ($\beta = 0.065$; $t = 0.981$), although positive, is not statistically significant, leading to the rejection of hypotheses 2a and 2b. As expected, organizational identification predicts work engagement ($\beta = 0.515$; $t = 8.520$). Consequently, hypothesis 3 is supported.

Focusing on the influence of hotel employees' attitudes on organizational citizenship behaviours, on the one hand the findings suggest that organizational identification significantly affects extra-role behaviours towards the organization ($\beta = 0.307$; $t = 3.603$), thus supporting hypothesis 4c. However, higher levels of attachment to the organization do not necessarily favour desirable behaviours towards customers ($\beta = 0.044$; $t = 0.658$) or towards other employees ($\beta = 0.048$; $t = 0.684$). These findings fail to support hypotheses 4a and 4b. On the other hand, the results indicate that work engagement is an antecedent of organizational citizenship behaviours towards customers ($\beta = 0.366$; $t = 4.201$), other employees ($\beta = 0.357$; $t = 4.969$), and the organization ($\beta = 0.267$; $t = 3.289$). These results support hypotheses 5a, 5b, and 5c.

Table 3
First-order measurement model.

First-order construct	Indicator	Standardized loading	Composite reliability Index (CRI)	Average Variance extracted (AVE)
Internal Brand Communications (IBC)	IBC1	0.905	0.885	0.720
	IBC2	0.825		
	IBC3	0.813		
Brand-Centred Training (BCT)	BCT1	0.919	0.937	0.832
	BCT2	0.896		
	BCT3	0.926		
Transformational Leadership (TL)	TL1	0.895	0.969	0.816
	TL2	0.907		
	TL3	0.898		
	TL4	0.934		
	TL5	0.871		
	TL6	0.904		
	TL7	0.914		
Organizational Identification (OID)	OID1	0.843	0.949	0.825
	OID2	0.897		
	OID3	0.942		
	OID4	0.948		
Vigour (VIG)	VIG1	0.884	0.951	0.868
	VIG2	0.930		
	VIG3	0.929		
Dedication (DED)	DED1	0.955	0.943	0.848
	DED2	0.959		
	DED3	0.843		
Absorption (ABS)	ABS1	0.726	0.895	0.742
	ABS2	0.922		
	ABS3	0.920		
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Customers (OCBC)	OCBC1	0.947	0.971	0.919
	OCBC2	0.954		
	OCBC3	0.975		
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Employees (OCBE)	OCBE1	0.891	0.902	0.755
	OCBE2	0.903		
	OCBE3	0.810		
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Organization (OCBO)	OCBO2	0.730	0.795	0.662
	OCBO3	0.889		

Table 4
Discriminant validity of the first-order model.

Construct	IBC	BCT	TL	OID	VIG	DED	ABS	OCBC	OCBE	OCBO
IBC	0.720									
BCT	0.532	0.832								
TL	0.195	0.205	0.816							
OID	0.248	0.278	0.319	0.825						
VIG	0.237	0.201	0.250	0.348	0.868					
DED	0.164	0.208	0.175	0.423	0.581	0.848				
ABS	0.115	0.121	0.179	0.309	0.317	0.396	0.742			
OCBC	0.011	0.031	0.061	0.081	0.110	0.149	0.097	0.919		
OCBE	0.066	0.044	0.019	0.077	0.104	0.135	0.097	0.251	0.755	
OCBO	0.095	0.095	0.106	0.248	0.184	0.184	0.179	0.129	0.167	0.662

Note 1: Figures in the diagonal present the AVE values. Off-diagonal figures represent the constructs' squared correlations.

Note 2: See Table 3.

The results regarding the control variables show that none of the estimated paths is statistically significant (see Table 7). Consequently, in this particular study, neither age, employee tenure, nor hotel size affects employees' identification with the organization, work engagement, or organizational citizenship behaviours.

5.3. Post hoc analysis of the indirect effects

The structural model results suggest that internal brand-focused activities do not directly determine work engagement. Similarly, organizational identification does not directly explain the development of desirable employee inclinations towards customers or other organizational members. Consequently, this section aims to explore the potential existence of indirect paths of influence among these variables. For example, the influence of brand

communications and training on engagement can be indirect through higher organizational identification. In the same way, organizational identification can contribute to obtaining extra-role behaviours from employees by leveraging work engagement. To assess the existence of these indirect effects, we carried out a systematic analysis employing the method of confidence intervals suggested by Chin (2010) and Williams and MacKinnon (2008).¹ Through a bootstrap analysis of 5000 subsamples, this method calculates a confidence interval for estimating the indirect effect. If this confidence interval (CI) does not include the value zero, this means that the indirect effect is significantly different from such a value, thus confirming the statistical significance of the indirect

¹ See Williams and MacKinnon (2008) for an exhaustive description of this method.

Table 5
Results of the final measurement model.

Construct	Indicator	Standardized loading	Composite reliability Index (CRI)	Average Variance extracted (AVE)
Internal Brand Communications (IBC)	IBC1	0.905	0.885	0.720
	IBC2	0.823		
	IBC3	0.814		
Brand-Centred Training (BCT)	BCT1	0.913	0.937	0.832
	BCT2	0.895		
	BCT3	0.927		
Transformational Leadership (TL)	TL1	0.895	0.969	0.816
	TL2	0.908		
	TL3	0.898		
	TL4	0.934		
	TL5	0.870		
	TL6	0.904		
	TL7	0.914		
Organizational Identification (OID)	OID1	0.846	0.949	0.825
	OID2	0.898		
	OID3	0.940		
	OID4	0.946		
Work Engagement (WEN)	ABS	0.823	0.908	0.769
	DED	0.916		
	VIG	0.888		
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Customers (OCBC)	OCBC1	0.948	0.972	0.919
	OCBC2	0.953		
	OCBC3	0.975		
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Employees (OCBE)	OCBE1	0.887	0.902	0.755
	OCBE2	0.903		
	OCBE3	0.813		
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Organization (OCBO)	OCBO2	0.745	0.797	0.664
	OCBO3	0.879		

path. The results of this estimation are shown in Table 8.

As previously suggested, brand communications (IC: 0.002; 0.152) and training development (IC: 0.050; 0.202) influence work engagement via organizational identification. Since the direct effects are non-significant, organizational identification fully mediates these relationships. It should be noted that the total effect of brand communications on engagement is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.172$; $t = 1.908$), whereas the indirect effect is significant. While some researchers (e.g., Baron & Kenny, 1986) argue that a significant total effect is a prerequisite for testing the mediating effect, others (e.g., MacKinnon, 2000) suggest that this is not necessary for mediation to occur. This paradox arises when the indirect specific effect is slightly different from zero (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). In addition to the direct effect, transformational leadership also indirectly influences engagement through identification (IC: 0.134; 0.291). Therefore, the influence of leadership on engagement is partially mediated by organizational identification.

Considering the consequences of organizational identification, these analyses show that engagement mediates the influence of

organizational identification on organizational citizenship behaviours towards customers (IC: 0.095; 0.295) and other employees (IC: 0.106; 0.269). In the original model, identification did not directly influence these variables. Therefore, work engagement fully mediates these relationships. Similarly, in addition to the direct effect, organizational identification also indirectly influences employee behaviours that favour the organization through work engagement (IC: 0.060; 0.242). Therefore, organizational identification partially mediates this relationship.

Table 7
Results of the structural model.

Hypothesis	β	t-value	R ²	Q ²
H1a: IBC → OID	0.140	1.991**	R ² (OID) = 0.442	Q ² (OID) = 0.362
H1b: BCT → OID	0.239	3.465*	R ² (WEN) = 0.508	Q ² (WEN) = 0.371
H1c: TL → OID	0.407	5.942*	R ² (OCBC) = 0.162	Q ² (OCBC) = 0.144
H2a: IBC → WEN	0.100	1.242	R ² (OCBE) = 0.158	Q ² (OCBE) = 0.104
H2b: BCT → WEN	0.065	0.981	R ² (OCBO) = 0.291	Q ² (OCBO) = 0.185
H2c: TL → WEN	0.142	2.006**	Control variables	
H3: OID → WEN	0.515	8.520*	<i>Control relationships</i>	β t-value
H4a: OID → OCBC	0.044	0.658	Age → OID	0.090 1.438
H4b: OID → OCBE	0.048	0.684	Age → WEN	0.032 0.682
			Age → OCBC	-0.061 0.730
			Age → OCBE	-0.029 0.496
			Age → OCBO	0.048 0.909
H4c: OID → OCBO	0.307	3.603*	Tenure → OID	0.065 1.116
H5a: WEN → OCBC	0.366	4.201*	Tenure → WEN	-0.028 0.599
			Tenure → OCBC	-0.035 0.462
			Tenure → OCBE	-0.089 1.298
			Tenure → OCBO	0.003 0.051
H5b: WEN → OCBE	0.357	4.969**	Size → OID	-0.010 0.268
H5c: WEN → OCBO	0.267	3.289*	Size → WEN	0.045 1.187
			Size → OCBC	0.027 0.551
			Size → OCBE	-0.059 0.107
			Size → OCBO	0.035 0.804

Note 1: *p < 0.01; **p < 0.05.
Note 2: See Table 5.

Table 6
Discriminant validity of the final measurement model.

Construct	IBC	BCT	TL	OID	WEN	OCBC	OCBE	OCBO
IBC	0.720							
BCT	0.532	0.832						
TL	0.195	0.205	0.816					
OID	0.248	0.278	0.319	0.825				
WEN	0.220	0.229	0.259	0.466	0.769			
OCBC	0.011	0.031	0.062	0.081	0.153	0.919		
OCBE	0.066	0.044	0.020	0.077	0.145	0.251	0.755	
OCBO	0.097	0.096	0.104	0.248	0.235	0.128	0.163	0.664

Note 1: Figures in the diagonal present the AVE values. Off-diagonal figures represent the constructs' squared correlations.
Note 2: See Table 5.

Table 8
Results of the indirect effects estimation.

Relationship	Estimated total effect β (t-value)	Direct effect β (t-value)	Indirect effect path	Indirect effect confidence interval
IBC → WEN	0.172 (1.908)	0.100 (1.242)	IBC → OID → WEN	(0.002; 0.152)
BCT → WEN	0.185** (2.394)	0.065 (0.981)	BCT → OID → WEN	(0.050; 0.202)
TL → WEN	0.351* (4.631)	0.142** (2.006)	TL → OID → WEN	(0.134; 0.291)
OID → OCBC	0.232* (3.547)	0.044 (0.658)	OID → WEN → OCBC	(0.095; 0.295)
OID → OCBE	0.232* (3.985)	0.048 (0.648)	OID → WEN → OCBE	(0.106; 0.269)
OID → OCBO	0.442* (7.970)	0.307* (3.603)	OID → WEN → OCBO	(0.060; 0.242)

Note 1: * $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$.

Note 2: See Table 5.

6. Conclusions, limitations, and further research

This study explores the relationships between internal brand management, employees' organizational identification, work engagement, and organizational citizenship behaviours in the hospitality industry. The findings offer several implications for scholars and practitioners in order to understand the consequences of internal branding activities.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to filling several gaps in the literature by providing empirical support for relationships that have not been empirically tested in the hospitality industry. The findings suggest that internal branding activities have asymmetrical effects on employees' work-related states of mind and sense of identification. According to our results, brand training actions and internal brand communications positively influence hotel employees' identification with the organization. This finding suggests that incorporating the brand into human resource practices may contribute to aligning corporate values with insiders' values (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2006). Hence, hotels promoting brand values within their training and communication activities will be more likely to achieve a positive social identity. This situation may happen because internal branding reduces the gap between employees' defining characteristics and those attributes that define the organization, and leverages the sense of pride in belonging to the organization (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007).

Contrary to our expectations, brand training and communications do not directly affect work engagement. In this sense, these activities do not necessarily shape hotel employees' perceptions of their job conditions. Thus, engaged employees do not recognize and assess job resources concerning brand values more positively than employees with a lower degree of engagement. It is plausible that employees do not see these branding actions as a real organizational effort to increase their welfare. Consequently, in terms of social exchange theory, employees will not reward the organization via work engagement, because these activities do not directly create more positive work-related states of mind. Nevertheless, post hoc analysis reveals that brand training and communications indirectly influence engagement via organizational identification. Hence, these branding activities contribute to creating a sense of pride and affiliation towards the organization, which in turn contributes to leveraging favourable attitudes towards the job (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Indeed, the results confirm a strong and significant relationship between organizational identification and work engagement. Following previous research (Rich et al., 2010), it could be argued that, in the hotel industry, when frontline employees perceive that their values match those of the organization, they will tend to be more emotionally engaged and manifest higher levels of dedication, absorption, and vigour. These fit perceptions depend on organizational efforts to include the brand in human resource practices.

Transformational leadership has been identified as a direct antecedent of organizational identification and job engagement in the hotel industry. Supervisory behaviour is therefore a key driving force in creating a sense of belonging to the organization and in

leveraging employees' psychological engagement related to the work environment. Transformational leaders possess inspirational qualities that facilitate them in disseminating the brand vision and values to their followers. According to Morhart et al. (2009), charismatic leaders contribute to compelling and differentiating the brand vision and to enhancing employees' personal involvement and pride in the corporate brand. Our findings reveal that, in the hotel industry, charismatic leaders contribute to enhancing a positive organizational identity, since followers will feel more connected to the organization when their supervisors act as role models who live out and represent the brand values. Our results also support a weaker but significant relationship between transformational leadership and work engagement. Within this context, hotel frontline employees will show increased levels of work engagement if they are committed to their supervisors (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Charismatic leaders may transfer their sense of passion for work to their followers, which will facilitate the emergence of positive employee abilities such as the capacity to think independently or creativity (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002; Wang, Tsai, & Tsai, 2014). The findings also suggest that this influence is mediated by organizational identification. Thus, leaders contribute to aligning the firm's values to employees' self-concepts, and that this fit leverages feelings in terms of dedication, absorption, and vigour.

Focusing on the antecedents of OCB, the results also suggest that organizational identification and work engagement have heterogeneous effects on hotel employees' extra-role behaviours. These findings partially contradict Saks's (2006) results, which suggest that organization-related attitudes were stronger predictors than job engagement of both individual and organizational citizenship behaviours. Specifically, our results indicate that organizational identification significantly influences OCBO, but does not directly determine extra-role behaviours concerning other employees' and customers' needs. By contrast, more engaged employees manifest higher levels of citizenship behaviours, not only towards their own organization, but also towards customers and their colleagues. Therefore, the alignment between corporate values and staff values is not necessarily translated into employees' favourable behaviours in their daily relationships with other employees and their customers. In other words, identified hotel employees will be prone to go beyond their stipulated job duties, with the aim of contributing to their firm's goals (Farh, Podsakoff, & Organ, 1990), for instance spreading positive word-of-mouth about the company, but not necessarily to assist other individuals in their job tasks. According to our results, a positive and fulfilling work-related state of mind explains why hotel frontline employees tend to go beyond the formal requirements of their job to help other individuals. In this sense, employees experiencing a positive state of emotional and motivational fulfilment at work may take initiatives that go beyond the formal requirements (Hakanen, Perhoniemi, & Toppinen-Tanner, 2008). In addition, the results indicate that identification indirectly influences OCBC and OCBE. Thus, the influence of identification on extra-role behaviour is indeed explained by

employees' more positive attitudes towards their job, which are a consequence of their sense of affiliation and pride towards the organization.

The findings of this study also have implications for hotel managers. Although organizations typically concede more relevance to external brand management, this research demonstrates that internal branding leverages favourable responses from hotel employees. Management of the internal aspects of the brand involves focusing on three elements: brand communications, human resource management, and leadership. First, brand and human resource managers in the hospitality industry should be aware of the benefits of incorporating brand values in internal communications and training and development activities. According to our results, the presence of the brand within these aspects can contribute to increasing the fit between the hotel's and the employees' identities. Thus, hotels should not only actively convey brand values to their staff via internal communications, but also organize training courses and workshops where the organization and its employees can share brand intelligence. Second, transformational leadership is a relevant antecedent of employees' sense of affiliation towards the hotel and of work engagement. In service organizations, supervisors represent the main bridge between the employee and the organization's brand values. Thus, transformational supervisors may contribute to creating a positive internal climate that will leverage positive attitudes and behaviours among staff members. Consequently, hotels should also pay special attention to managers' recruitment and training. The hotel industry could foster trust, involvement, and cooperation among team members by encouraging them to adopt a transformational leadership style. Third, managers in this sector should realize that in contexts where the primary task is serving the customer, engaged employees fit the service setting better than those who experience lower levels of engagement. More engaged employees are probably more predisposed to enjoy the work of serving customers and assisting other colleagues with their duties. Similarly, higher identifiers are also more willing to carry out specific actions to defend their organization. Finally, hospitality practitioners should be aware of the potential of internal brand management in shaping the customer's experience with the brand. Employees who continuously interact with customers represent a key element in creating a strong and differentiated brand in customers' eyes. Previous research suggests that collective engagement helps to foster an excellent service climate that increases customers' appraisal of employee performance and customer loyalty (Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005). Consequently, hotel managers must pay attention to employees' work-related and organizational attitudes in order to guarantee service quality and organizational profitability (Tsaur & Lin, 2004).

This study presents various limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the study is restricted to analysing

organizational identification. In this sense, it would be desirable to differentiate work-group identification from organizational-level identification. Work-group identification has been predicted to have different effects on organizational attitudes and behaviours (Van Knippenberg & van Schie, 2000). Since organizational identification is not significantly related to OCBC and OCBE in this study, it is necessary to explore whether work-group identification explains these extra-role behaviours in the hospitality industry. Second, this paper has explored the role of leadership at a micro level. That is, it has analysed the role of direct supervisors as catalysts of the brand values from the organization to employees. Thus, following Burmann and Zeplin (2005), it would be interesting to explore the macro-level facet of transformational leadership. This analysis would involve analysing whether the CEO and other executives influence insiders' evaluations of their jobs and, by extension, their willingness to adopt citizenship behaviours. Third, the study does not consider the nature of managerial levels in the relationships it examines. Future research could explore from a dyadic perspective how leadership at the micro (supervisory) and macro (managerial) levels affects the variables under study. Similarly, the relationship between tenure and brand management should also be explored, since loyalty or commitment could have an effect on the relationships proposed in the model. Fourth, future research could also explore the potential alternative effects of work engagement and identification. For example, Hakanen et al. (2008) suggest an exploration of how engagement contributes to enhancing employees' creativity and work-unit innovativeness. Fifth, given the high correlation between BCT and IBC, the influence of these constructs on employees' engagement and identification should be further explored. Despite the analysis suggesting that multicollinearity is not a concern, further research should pay attention to the relationships between these constructs in order to propose a comprehensive conceptualization of internal brand management. For example, the high correlation between the constructs may be indicating that brand communication and training are dimensions of a superordinate construct. Finally, future studies should employ longitudinal data to test the relationships. This approach would provide more insight into probable causation.

Despite these limitations, the findings reported in this study contribute to understanding the influence of the internal brand management process on frontline employees' attitudinal and behavioural responses in the hospitality industry. It is hoped that the results offer some new insights into how hotel managers can implement an internal branding strategy to foster organizational citizenship behaviours.

Appendix I. Measurement scales and descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Internal brand communications		
IBC1. The hotel communicates the corporate brand values to employees	8.461	1.864
IBC2. The hotel communicates brand values to my colleagues and me through internal mass communications, for example, newsletters, memos and brochures	8.118	2.261
IBC3. The hotel communicates brand values to me via informal channels (e.g., meetings, briefings, presentations, etc.)	7.300	2.641
Brand centred training		
BCT1. The hotel delivers brand values through training activities	7.892	2.105
BCT2. The firm's employees attend workshops to learn about the objectives and characteristics of the brand	7.015	2.799
BCT3. The hotel provides training activities which are related to brand values	7.759	2.386
Transformational leadership		
My supervisor ...		
TL1....communicates a clear and positive vision of the future	8.173	1.882

(continued on next page)

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
TL2treats staff as individuals, supports and encourages their development	8.102	2.074
TL3gives encouragement and recognition to staff	8.034	2.019
TL4fosters trust, involvement and cooperation among team members	8.133	2.027
TL5encourages thinking about problems in new ways and questions assumptions	8.086	1.868
TL6 is clear about his/her values and practices what he/she preaches	8.155	2.006
TL7instills pride and respect in others and inspires me by being highly competent	8.164	1.915
Organizational identification		
OID1 . I Feel strong ties with this hotel	9.025	1.360
OID2 . I Experience a strong sense of belonging to this hotel	8.737	1.635
OID3 . I Feel proud to work for this hotel	8.827	1.443
OID4 . I Am glad to be a member of this hotel	8.926	1.368
Work engagement		
Vigour		
VIG1 . At my work, I feel bursting with energy	8.483	1.439
VIG2 . When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	8.037	1.828
VIG3 . At my job I feel strong and vigorous	8.746	1.318
Dedication		
DED1 . I Am proud of the work that I do	8.935	1.256
DED2 . I Am enthusiastic about my job	8.985	1.284
DED3 . My job inspires me	8.341	1.700
Absorption		
ABS1 . I Get carried away when I am working	8.077	1.995
ABS2 . I Feel happy when I am working intensely	8.594	1.376
ABS3 . I Am immersed in my work	8.932	1.126
Organizational citizenship behaviours towards the customers		
Focusing on our customers, I ...		
OCBC1voluntarily assist customers even if it means going beyond job requirements	9.495	2.841
OCBC2willingly go out of the way to make a customer satisfied	9.947	1.913
OCBC3help customers with problems beyond what is expected or required	9.003	1.291
Organizational citizenship behaviours towards employees		
As regards to my job colleagues, I ...		
OCBE1 am willing to give my time to help others who have work-related problems	9.542	0.769
OCBE2 give up time to help others who have work problems	9.418	0.937
OCBE3 assist others with their duties	9.266	1.032
Organizational citizenship behaviours towards the organization		
Concerning my work at this hotel, I ...		
OCBO1attend functions that are not required but that help the organizational image	9.282	1.045
OCBO2offer ideas to improve the functioning of the organization	9.362	0.992
OCBO3take action to protect the organization from potential problems	9.232	1.114

Appendix II. Significance of the factorial loadings

Variable	Indicator	t-value
Internal Brand Communications	<i>IBC1</i>	71.12*
	<i>IBC2</i>	23.89*
	<i>IBC3</i>	26.33*
Brand Centred Training	<i>BCT1</i>	80.32*
	<i>BCT2</i>	57.13*
	<i>BCT3</i>	80.74*
Transformational Leadership	<i>TL1</i>	59.03*
	<i>TL2</i>	51.23*
	<i>TL3</i>	42.93*
	<i>TL4</i>	80.59*
	<i>TL5</i>	40.65*
	<i>TL6</i>	67.95*
	<i>TL7</i>	72.84*
Organizational Identification	<i>OID1</i>	34.28*
	<i>OID2</i>	41.67*
	<i>OID3</i>	104.99*
	<i>OID4</i>	122.23*
Work Engagement	<i>ABS</i>	28.72*
	<i>DED</i>	84.39*
	<i>VIG</i>	49.28*
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Customers	<i>OCBC1</i>	61.86*
	<i>OCBC2</i>	94.68*
	<i>OCBC3</i>	140.47*
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Employees	<i>OCBE1</i>	35.37*
	<i>OCBE2</i>	36.75*
	<i>OCBE3</i>	10.20*
Organizational Citizenship Behaviour to Organization	<i>OCBO2</i>	12.49*
	<i>OCBO3</i>	29.16*

Note: * = significant at p < 0.001.

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