CORPORATE IMAGE DETERMINANTS
AND THE ROLE OF ATTITUDES
IN DIRECT SELLING COMPANIES

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By

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Frauds and internet scams have tarnished the image of the direct selling company scams in recent years, and many around the world hold a negative attitude about the direct selling business. This negative corporate image has also been triggered by illegal pyramid schemes, lack of corporate social responsibility and confused brand architecture. Hence, the main objective of this study is to examine the antecedents of corporate image in direct selling companies in Thailand through determining the direct and indirect factors affecting corporate image of these companies. A total of 900 questionnaires was distributed to direct selling customers, and 612 were collected back, representing a response rate of 68%. After deleting missing values and outliers, the final 532 usable questionnaires were analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM). This study found that four predictors were significant factors with respect to corporate image; these were internet marketing, corporate social responsibility, trust and attitude. The results also found that two predictors were salient underlying factors that predict customer attitude; these were perceived value and trust. Finally, a mediating effect of attitude between all linkages and corporate image was found to be a full mediator for linkages between perceived value and corporate image. However, attitude was a partial mediator when tested for linkage between trust and corporate image. The study is based upon the attitude toward corporate image as an essential element to the success of direct selling companies and several factors as antecedents, contributing to the enhancement of corporate image among the direct selling companies.

Keywords: corporate image, direct selling, attitude, Thailand

Kata kunci; imej korporat, jualan langsung, sikap, Thailand
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter one introduces the main aim of this study in the background of the study, followed by the discussion on the research issues, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, significance and contribution, research justification and scope of the study. This chapter ends with the definitions of the key terms and thesis organization.

1.2 Background of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the determinants of corporate image and the role of customer attitudes in the direct selling companies operating in Thailand. Despite the profitable revenue reported by direct selling industry, the corporate image of these companies has been negative and deteriorating (Baker, 1999; Saha, 2009; Villarreal, 2009). This negative corporate image has been triggered by illegal pyramid schemes, negative attitude, lack of trust, negative perceived value, internet fraud, lack of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and confused brand architecture conducted by direct selling companies.
The contents of the thesis is for internal user only
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