

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

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IN DIRECT SELLING COMPANIES**

**By**

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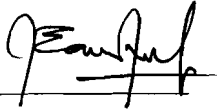
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## ABSTRACT

Frauds and internet scams have tarnished the image of the direct selling company 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

## ABSTRAK

Sejak kebelakangan ini, fraud dan penipuan internet telah mencalarakan imej perniagaan jualan langsung, dan kebanyakan negara di seluruh dunia mula bersikap negatif terhadap perniagaan jenis ini. Imej negative ini juga dicetuskan oleh skim piramid haram, kekurangan tanggungjawab sosial korporat dan kekeliruan senibina jenama. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menyelidik anteseden imej korporat dalam syarikat-syarikat jualan langsung di Thailand melalui faktor-faktor penentu langsung dan tidak langsung yang memberi kesan kepada imej korporat syarikat-syarikat tersebut. Sebanyak 900 soal selidik telah diedarkan dan 612 telah dikutip, mewakili kadar maklum balas keseluruhan sebanyak 68%. Selepas pemotongan nilai hilang dan data terpicil, hanya 532 jumlah akhir soal selidik yang digunakan dan telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan model persamaan struktur (SEM). Hasil kajian ini mendapati terdapat empat faktor ramalan yang signifikan bagi imej korporat iaitu pemasaran internet, tanggungjawab sosial korporat, kepercayaan dan sikap. Selain itu, keputusan juga mendapati terdapat dua faktor ramalan dasar yang penting bagi meramal sikap pelanggan iaitu tanggapan dan kepercayaan. Akhirnya, kesan pengantara antara semua hubungan dan imej korporat dengan sikap didapati menjadi pengantara penuh bagi hubungan antara nilai tanggapan dan imej korporat. Walau bagaimanapun, sikap menjadi pengantara separa apabila diuji untuk melihat hubungan antara kepercayaan dan imej korporat. Kajian ini adalah berdasarkan sikap terhadap imej korporat sebagai elemen penting kepada kejayaan syarikat-syarikat jualan langsung dan beberapa faktor sebagai anteseden yang menyumbang kepada peningkatan imej korporat dalam kalangan syarikat-syarikat jualan langsung.

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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