



The Dynamics of Employee Co-creation of Brand Value: A Structural Model of Stress, Motivation, and Performance in the Wedding Industry

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Abstract

The Vietnamese wedding industry is undergoing a rapid transition from traditional family rituals to a multibillion-dollar market characterized by increasing professionalization and luxury wedding tourism. Within this high-contact service environment, understanding how employees contribute to brand value co-creation is crucial for organizational competitiveness. This study delves into the intricate relationships among job stress, work motivation, task, and contextual performance within the southern Vietnam wedding industry, with a specific focus on their collective influence on brand value co-creation among employees. Positive associations manifest between contextual performance and work motivation, demonstrating a robust connection with co-creation, while job stress exhibits a notable and negative association. Through mediation analysis, the study reveals job stress's detrimental impact on co-creation, mediated sequentially, and work motivation's positive influence on co-creation, mediated through contextual performance. Practical recommendations emphasize the importance of mitigating job stress and fostering motivation and performance. Tailored strategies, crafted to address industry-specific challenges, furnish actionable insights for scholars and practitioners dedicated to optimizing brand value co-creation in this unique context.

Keywords: Brand Value Co-creation, Job Stress, Work Motivation, Task Performance, Contextual Performance

1. Introduction

Co-creation of brand value has become an increasingly important strategy for organizations seeking to build successful and sustainable brands, although the concept of value co-creation has been predominant in the marketing discipline, there remains surprisingly little research on value co-creation in branding (Pham et al., 2022). It can be defined as corporations' processes for co-creating goods, services, and experiences in close cooperation with experienced and creative consumers, tapping into their intellectual capital (Romero & Molina, 2011), also as a process of intentional interaction between or among two or more parties that influences a brand (Sarasvuo et al., 2022). However, the concept of co-creation of brand value is not limited to involving customers in the brand creation process. This approach is driven by the recognition that customers and employees have unique perspectives, experiences, and insights that can contribute to the development of innovative and effective brand strategies (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

There are several reasons why the co-creation of brand value among employees is important. First, it can help to align employees' values with those of the company. When employees feel that their values align with those of the company, they are more likely to exhibit a stronger dedication to the organizational mission (Sarkar & Banerjee, 2019). Second, when employees are engaged in the creation of brand value, this sense of ownership fosters a deeper commitment to corporate objectives, which can lead to increased productivity and profitability (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001). When employees are actively involved in the creation and development of a brand's value proposition, they are more likely to feel invested in the brand and to be motivated to deliver high-quality service to customers (Staniec & Kalińska-Kula, 2021).

In the context of the employee-organization relationship, the co-creation of brand value assumes a pivotal role. Engaged employees actively participating in co-creation establish a profound connection with their organization. This collaborative endeavor empowers employees, providing them with a meaningful role in shaping the brand's identity (Carmeli et al., 2011). Beyond routine tasks, brand co-creation represents a strategic partnership, aligning employees' values with the organizational mission (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Actively

contributing to this process enhances employees' sense of ownership (Zhao et al., 2022), fostering not only job satisfaction but also deepening loyalty (Klehe et al., 2011). This mutual involvement contributes to a positive and enduring relationship, underlining the significance of co-creation in cultivating a cohesive and value-driven organizational culture (Wong et al., 2016).

The market of Vietnam has been identified as an emerging market for marketing communications and brand development, which has attracted scholars to study brands' efforts and employee behavior (Nguyen et al., 2021). There has been an acceleration of transformation and upgrading in the wedding industry in the past few years, there has been a market reshuffle intensified, there has been an emergence of new trends and opportunities in the wedding industry (Peng, 2022). Wedding companies can involve employees in the development of new products or services, as well as in the creation of marketing strategies and customer experiences (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The wedding industry in Vietnam serves as a unique lens to observe the country's transition toward market-oriented consumption and the complex tension between cultural tradition and modern identity (Nguyen & Belk, 2007). This sector has evolved into a multibillion-dollar industry where wedding rituals act as both antecedents and reflections of rapid social change.

The internal marketing concept is suitable to help businesses also leaders improve the co-creation of brand value among employees, which is mentioned by Wu et al. (2013) that internal marketing is a powerful tool that companies can use to engage their employees and promote their products or services and it is all about creating an environment where everyone is on the same page, working together towards the company's vision and mission. The goal of internal marketing is to create a positive organizational culture that fosters employee engagement, motivation, and satisfaction.

Studies by Nadeem et al. (2021) illuminate these dynamics in the context of social commerce, while Bakker et al. (2005) establish a connection between job stress and a decrease in both work motivation and overall job performance, suggesting that elevated levels of stress in the workplace can adversely affect an employee's drive and their ability to perform tasks effectively. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2018) identify common stressors that employees

frequently encounter, while Borman and Motowidlo (1997) examine the correlation between high task performance and contextual performance. Together, these studies contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interrelationships between workplace stressors and various dimensions of job performance.

In exploring the landscape of employee-driven brand value co-creation, a conspicuous research gap comes to light when considering the distinctive dynamics of the wedding services industry in Vietnam. While study conducted by Puerari et al. (2018) contribute valuable insights into co-creation dynamics, their focus primarily centers on more generalized contexts, overlooking the unique intricacies inherent in the wedding services sector.

Despite the abundance of literature on brand value co-creation, there is a noticeable scarcity of research addressing its relationship with the variables examined in this study. Notably, Merrilees et al. (2020) underscores the strategic partnership of brand co-creation and employee empowerment, but these investigations lack a dedicated exploration of brand value co-creation by employees within the nuanced setting of the wedding services industry in Vietnam. This gap is especially evident in labor-intensive and emotionally demanding contexts such as the wedding industry, where employee behavior plays a critical role in shaping brand value.

To address these gaps, this study ventures into unexplored territories within the literature, particularly concerning the service industry in Vietnam, with a spotlight on the wedding sector. It delves into two key aspects: the significance of employees' brand co-creation behavior and the impact of job stress and motivation on workplace co-creation behaviors. Understanding and managing these relationships play a pivotal role in fostering a positive work environment and achieving desired outcomes within organizations. The study first evaluates the role of job stress as a negative antecedent for work motivation among service employees. Subsequently, it delves into the interaction between work motivation and employee performance, specifically activating employees' brand co-creation behavior.

Furthermore, beyond providing contextual insights and industry-specific background, this study introduces a research model showcasing the relationships within the Vietnamese context. Building on the notion proposed by Luu et al. (2018) that Vietnam offers fertile

ground for exploratory values among organizations and stakeholders, the findings from this study, grounded in Vietnam, promise a deeper insight into co-creation behavior within the service industry.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Employees' Co-creation of Brand Value (CBV)

Organizations that actively involve their employees in the co-creation of brand value can reap numerous benefits. By involving employees in the development of a brand's value proposition, organizations can foster a sense of ownership and investment among employees, which can lead to higher levels of motivation and commitment (Sarkar & Banerjee, 2019). As a result, employees are more likely to deliver high-quality service to customers, which can lead to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. For example, employee engagement initiatives, such as surveys, focus groups, and recognition programs, can also be effective ways to promote the co-creation of brand value among employees. By actively seeking feedback from employees and recognizing their contributions, they can feel more connected to the brand and more motivated to deliver high-quality service to customers (Harter et al., 2002).

The importance of involving employees in the co-creation of brand value has been highlighted by several researchers. According to Yeboah (2024), employees are essential to the success of value co-creation, as their involvement and contributions significantly impact its effectiveness, as their active engagement, skills, and collaborative efforts are essential for developing meaningful and effective contributions that drive organizational value. They argue that involving employees in the co-creation process can lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty, as employees who are invested in the brand are more likely to go above and beyond to deliver exceptional customer service. Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2021) emphasized the crucial role that employees play in co-creating brand value. Scholars argued that organizations should actively involve employees in the co-creation process, as employees can provide valuable insights and ideas that can help shape the brand's value proposition. Involving employees in the co-creation process can also lead to a sense of pride

and belonging among employee (Re & Magnani, 2022)), which can further motivate them to deliver high-quality service to customers.

Organizations that involve their employees in the co-creation of brand value can reap numerous benefits, including increased employee motivation and commitment (Sarkar & Banerjee, 2019), higher levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty, and a stronger brand identity. By actively seeking feedback from employees and recognizing their contributions, organizations can foster a sense of ownership and investment among employees, which can lead to a more engaged and motivated workforce. As a result, organizations that prioritize the co-creation of brand value with their employees are likely to enjoy greater success in the marketplace.

In an attempt to understand the outcomes of the service-dominant logic and the Vietnam context, several studies have explored the role of employee co-creation behavior along with the mechanisms that trigger employee co-creation of brand value. Using Vietnam boutique hotels as a case study, Nguyen et al. (2021) proposed a model that interfaces tenure, brand communication, and service climate to achieve brand co-creation. In the research paper of Pham et al. (2022), they targeted frontline employees and investigated what type of employees would be more likely to engage in co-creative behavior for the organization. As well as that, there are a lot of research studies now that offer insights into the process of co-creating value as well as contribute to our understanding of it.

Yet there has yet to be a study conducted on the value of co-creation of employees in the wedding services industry in Vietnam, the industry and the working environment in this field are highly conducive to developing brand value and service management. To bridge this research necessities, a comprehensive study is imperative, delving into the intricacies of co-creation in the Vietnamese wedding services sector and shedding light on its potential implications for enhancing brand value and optimizing service management practices.

2.2. Job Stress and Its Impact on Employee Motivation and Performance

Job stress is widely acknowledged as one of the most influential psychological factors shaping employees' behaviors and work outcomes. Following the causal reasoning framework proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986), job stress is positioned as a primary antecedent capable of triggering a chain of negative consequences across the motivational and performance domains. When employees encounter persistent stressors—such as workload pressure, role conflict, or emotionally taxing work environments—their psychological resources tend to decline, leading to reduced enthusiasm, diminished work energy, and weakened engagement. Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that job stress undermines motivation and lowers employees' capacity to invest effort in both routine and brand-related activities (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Hajli, 2014). As motivation declines, employees may withdraw from proactive behaviors, such as sharing ideas or engaging in brand advocacy, which are essential for enhancing co-creation of brand value within the organizational context.

Beyond its impact on motivation, job stress exerts a direct and detrimental effect on both task performance and contextual performance. Under high levels of stress, employees may experience cognitive overload, emotional exhaustion, and reduced self-regulatory ability, resulting in decreased performance quality and less willingness to go beyond formal job requirements. Empirical evidence shows that job stress leads to performance deterioration, reduced productivity, and lower engagement in value-creating activities (Waseem et al., 2020; Hollebeek & Chen, 2014). Furthermore, employees under stress often struggle to maintain cooperative behaviors, provide assistance to colleagues, or contribute voluntarily to team-related initiatives, all of which are critical components of contextual performance that support brand value co-creation. Thus, job stress represents a significant antecedent that not only lowers employees' motivation but also undermines their capacity to perform effectively, justifying the following hypotheses:

H1: Job Stress (JS) has a significant impact on Work Motivation (WM).

H2: Job Stress (JS) has a significant impact on Task Performance (TP).

H3: Job Stress (JS) has a significant impact on Contextual Performance (CP).

2.3. The Role of Work Motivation in Shaping Employee Performance

Work motivation is widely recognized as a central psychological driver that shapes how employees engage with their tasks and responsibilities within the organization. When employees possess strong intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, they tend to devote greater effort, display persistence in the face of obstacles, and demonstrate enthusiasm toward their work roles. Motivated employees are more likely to proactively seek improvement, embrace challenges, and align their personal goals with those of the organization, which ultimately enhances their task-related outcomes (Bakker et al., 2004). Prior studies have highlighted that motivation not only enhances cognitive functioning and work engagement but also contributes to the energy and dedication required to sustain high levels of performance.

Employees with higher motivation are more likely to help colleagues, cooperate within teams, volunteer for extra duties, and participate in activities that strengthen the organization's internal environment (Parker et al., 2010). Such discretionary behaviors are vital for building a collaborative culture and fostering an environment that supports the co-creation of brand value. Moreover, task performance itself has been found to positively relate to contextual performance, as employees who perform well tend to develop stronger self-efficacy, greater confidence, and a heightened willingness to contribute beyond their mandated tasks (Hollebeek & Chen, 2014). This interconnection reinforces the idea that motivated and high-performing employees actively support both operational efficiency and organizational value creation, thereby justifying the following hypotheses:

H4: Work Motivation (WM) has a significant impact on Task Performance (TP).

H5: Work Motivation (WM) has a significant impact on Contextual Performance (CP).

H6: Task Performance (TP) has a significant impact on Contextual Performance (CP).

2.4. Employee Performance and Co-creation of Brand Value

Employee performance, encompassing both task performance and contextual performance, plays a pivotal role in shaping employees' engagement in co-creation of brand value. Task performance reflects the effectiveness with which employees carry out their core job responsibilities, and high levels of performance have been linked to increased self-efficacy, confidence, and a stronger sense of accomplishment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016). These positive psychological outcomes motivate employees to participate more actively in brand-

supportive behaviors, such as delivering quality service, engaging positively with customers, and contributing ideas that enhance the brand experience (Kim & Ko, 2012). As employees excel in their tasks, they are more likely to develop deeper organizational identification and a greater willingness to support initiatives aimed at enhancing customer satisfaction and brand value. In this way, task performance extends beyond functional outcomes to become a catalyst for higher-order contributions to brand value co-creation.

Contextual performance further strengthens this process by promoting voluntary and discretionary behaviors that enhance team dynamics, organizational culture, and overall work climate. Behaviors such as assisting colleagues, demonstrating organizational citizenship, and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships contribute to a supportive work environment that fosters collaboration and shared ownership of brand-related goals (Motowidlo et al., 1997). Such prosocial actions not only improve internal organizational functioning but also heighten employees' emotional attachment and engagement—key drivers of co-creation of brand value (Brodie et al., 2011; Gu & Zhu, 2023). Moreover, job stress can also influence the extent to which employees participate in brand co-creation activities. Employees experiencing high stress may display lower motivation, reduced job satisfaction, and diminished communication effectiveness, which collectively impede their ability to contribute meaningfully to co-creation initiatives (Harter et al., 2002; Kim & Ko, 2012). The relationship between work motivation and brand value co-creation is rooted in the Service-Dominant (S-D) logic, which views employees as proactive resource integrators rather than passive task executors (Waseem et al., 2021). Motivated employees are more likely to transcend their formal job descriptions to engage in extra-role behaviors, such as brand advocacy and creative problem-solving, which are essential for value co-creation (Waseem et al., 2021; Aaker, 1991). Empirical evidence suggests that intrinsic motivation, in particular, fosters a sense of psychological ownership, prompting employees to deliver service experiences that authentically communicate the brand's value proposition to customers (Sarkar & Banerjee, 2019; King & Grace, 2010). Given these interconnected influences, it is reasonable to propose the following hypotheses:

H7: Work Motivation (WM) has a significant impact on Co-creation of Brand Value (CBV).

H8: Task Performance (TP) has a significant impact on Co-creation of Brand Value (CBV).

H9: Contextual Performance (CP) has a significant impact on Co-creation of Brand Value (CBV).

H10: Job Stress (JS) has a significant impact on Co-creation of Brand Value (CBV).

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

A sample of 131 employees in the Southern Wedding Industry in Vietnam was selected for this study. The selection of this specific industry and geographical region is based on practical considerations and the relevance of the context to the research topic. Efforts will be made to ensure diversity in terms of age, gender, position, and academic level to enhance the representativeness of the sample.

Given the estimated number of around 120 wedding convention centers in Ho Chi Minh City up to 2023 (CafelandVN, 2023), the limited diversity within the wedding industry further justifies the survey of 131 employees. The relatively small pool of businesses emphasizes the practicality of the selected sample size, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the available workforce in this specific sector. Given the industry's specificity and the practical constraints of time and budget, the chosen sample size aligns with the research's focused objectives, making 131 survey responses a meaningful and representative dataset for comprehensive analysis.

3.2. Research Model

Job stress refers to the psychological and emotional strain experienced by employees due to work-related demands, pressure, and challenges. High levels of job stress are associated with negative outcomes such as lower job satisfaction, higher turnover intentions, and reduced engagement in work-related activities (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016). Also, high job stress levels may hinder task performance (Motowidlo et al., 1997), thereby impacting the creation

of co-creation brand value among employees (Lusch & Vargo, 2014). Motivated employees are more likely to invest additional effort, exhibit proactive behaviors, and actively contribute to the co-creation of brand value (Podsakoff et al., 2009).

Co-creation of brand value among employees emphasizes the role of employees in actively participating in the value-creation process of a brand (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Task performance can contribute to the creation of brand value through employee engagement and co-creation experiences (Merrilees et al., 2017). Contextual performance encompasses discretionary behaviors that employees engage in, which are not explicitly part of their job description but contribute to the overall effectiveness and success of the organization (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). These behaviors include helping coworkers, volunteering for additional tasks, and engaging in positive interpersonal interactions within the workplace. Contextual performance plays a crucial role in creating a positive work environment, enhancing employee engagement, and facilitating co-creation of brand value among employees' activities (Waseem et al., 2020)

The proposed research framework suggests that job stress negatively influences work motivation, which in turn affects employee engagement in brand co-creation activities. Additionally, high levels of employee task performance and contextual performance positively contribute to the co-creation of brand value. Based on the literature provided above, the research model for the article is shown in Figure 1 as follows.

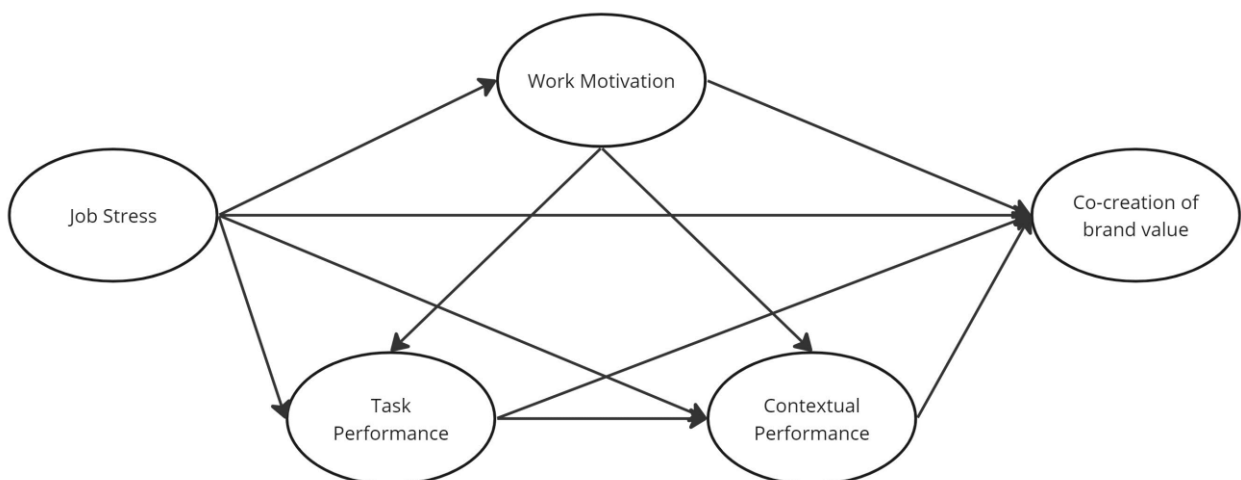


Figure 1. Research Model

3.3. Measurements

The present study utilized a structured survey questionnaire as the primary tool for collecting data from participants. The questionnaire was designed to capture essential information on several psychological and behavioral constructs relevant to employee functioning, including job stress, work motivation, task performance, contextual performance, and co-creation of brand value. These constructs were selected based on their theoretical importance in organizational research and their potential contribution to understanding employee performance and value-enhancing behaviors in the workplace.

All measurement items in the survey were adapted from previously validated and widely used scales. Job stress was assessed using five items based on the Job Demands–Resources framework introduced by Bakker et al. (2004), which views stress as a response to an imbalance between job demands and perceived resources. Work motivation was measured with eight items derived from Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2022), capturing different forms of internal and external motivational regulation. Task performance (seven items) and contextual performance (nine items) were evaluated using the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire developed by Koopmans et al. (2014), providing a multidimensional assessment of both core job duties and supportive, discretionary behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness.

Furthermore, co-creation of brand value was measured using nine items adapted from Hsieh and Chang (2016), emphasizing employees' active participation in reinforcing, representing, and enhancing the brand through their everyday interactions and behaviors. All measurement items across the constructs were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree.” The use of a standardized measurement format and well-established scales enhances the reliability, comparability, and overall validity of the research instrument.

3.4. Research Analysis

This study utilized Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) following the guidelines of Hair et al. (2019). Data were collected through convenience sampling via an online Google Form distributed to wedding studios and related organizations in Southern Vietnam. Participation was strictly voluntary, and the research purpose was clearly explained to all employees who demonstrated a willingness to participate. Although the sample size of 131 is modest, it is statistically adequate for PLS-SEM; the observed path coefficients (ranging from 0.450 to 0.702) are strong enough to achieve a statistical power well above the 0.8 threshold at a 0.05 significance level (Hair et al., 2019).

The measurement model was assessed for reliability and validity. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) for all constructs exceeded the 0.70 threshold. Convergent validity was established with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50, except for Contextual Performance (0.433), which was retained due to its strong CR (0.832) and high factor loadings in this exploratory context (Hair et al., 2019). Discriminant validity was verified using the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio (< 0.90). Additionally, diagnostic tests for Common Method Bias, multicollinearity ($VIF < 3.3$), and predictive relevance ($Q^2 > 0$) were confirmed, ensuring the integrity of the structural results (Hair et al., 2019).

4. Results

4.1. Demographic Results

The demographic analysis of the study participants reveals a diverse but predominantly young and educated sample. The majority of the participants were male (55.7%), with females comprising 43.5% of the total sample. Age distribution data show that 81.7% of participants were between 18 and 25 years old, making this the largest age group represented. While those over 35 years constituted just 2.3% of the sample. In terms of educational attainment, over half of the participants (57.3%) had completed a college or university degree, while 38.2% had finished high school. Regarding current occupational status, the majority were employed as staff members (76.3%). These demographic findings suggest that the

sample predominantly consists of young adults who are relatively well-educated and employed in various professional capacities.

Table 1. Descriptive Results

Demographic Information	Description	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	73	55.7%
	Female	58	43.3%
Age	From 18 to 25	107	81.7%
	From 26 to 35	21	16.0%
	Over 35	3	2.3%
Educational level	Elementary school	2	1.5%
	Junior high school	1	0.8%
	High school	50	38.2%
	College/ University	75	57.3%
	Master	3	2.3%
Current position	Intern	6	4.6%
	Part-time	21	16.0%
	Staff	100	76.3%
	Team Leader / Head of Department / Manager	4	3.1%

4.2. Reliability and Validity Results

Table 2. Reliability and Validity

Construct	Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Job Stress (JS)	JS1	0.82	0.903	0.915	0.932	0.697
	JS2	0.84				
	JS3	0.86				
	JS4	0.83				
	JS5	0.81				
Work Motivation (WM)	WM1	0.72	0.812	0.835	0.878	0.512
	WM2	0.70				
	WM3	0.74				
	WM4	0.75				
	WM5	0.68				
	WM6	0.73				
	WM7	0.76				

	WM8	0.71				
Task Performance (TP)	TP1	0.77	0.795	0.821	0.861	0.512
	TP2	0.72				
	TP3	0.69				
	TP4	0.73				
	TP5	0.75				
	TP6	0.68				
	TP7	0.71				
Contextual Performance (CP)	CP1	0.64	0.701	0.728	0.832	0.433
	CP2	0.67				
	CP3	0.62				
	CP4	0.66				
	CP5	0.65				
	CP6	0.60				
	CP7	0.68				
	CP8	0.69				
	CP9	0.63				
Co-creation of Brand Value (CBV)	CBV1	0.78	0.845	0.864	0.893	0.537
	CBV2	0.74				
	CBV3	0.72				
	CBV4	0.76				
	CBV5	0.71				
	CBV6	0.75				
	CBV7	0.73				
	CBV8	0.70				
	CBV9	0.77				

To assess the internal consistency and convergent validity of the measurement model, reliability indicators including Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were examined for all constructs. As presented in Table 2, the results demonstrate that the reliability of the measurement model is satisfactory and consistent with recommended thresholds for PLS-SEM analysis.

Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.701 (CP) to 0.903 (JS), indicating acceptable to excellent internal consistency across the constructs. The rho_A coefficient, which provide a more accurate reliability estimate in PLS-SEM, also fell within acceptable ranges (0.728–0.915), further confirming construct reliability. Composite Reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.832 to 0.932, exceeding the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70 and indicating strong internal consistency for all constructs (Nunnally, 1978).

Regarding convergent validity, all constructs demonstrated adequate AVE values. AVE scores ranged from 0.433 for CP to 0.760 for JS. Although the AVE for CP was slightly below the conventional 0.50 benchmark, it is considered acceptable given the multidimensional nature and item count of the construct. Moreover, all factor loadings exceeded 0.60, supporting convergent validity. The overall results confirm that the measurement model possesses satisfactory reliability and convergent validity, providing a solid foundation for subsequent structural analysis.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity of the Constructs

Construct	CBV	CP	TP	WM	JS
CBV	0.733				
CP	0.601	0.658			
TP	0.372	0.444	0.716		
WM	0.538	0.768	0.560	0.715	
JS	-0.330	-0.435	-0.278	-0.464	0.835

Note: Diagonal values (in bold) represent the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct

The discriminant validity of the constructs was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. As reported in Table 3, the square root of the AVE for each construct (diagonal values) was higher than its correlations with other constructs, indicating that each latent variable shares more variance with its own indicators than with the indicators of other constructs. Specifically, the square root of AVE values ranged from 0.658 (CP) to 0.835 (JS), all of which exceeded the corresponding inter-construct correlations in their respective rows and columns. These results confirm that discriminant validity is adequately established for all constructs in the model.

4.3. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

The fit indices provide an assessment of the goodness of fit for the structural equation model (Table 4). The SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) measures the discrepancy between observed and model-implied covariances, with a lower value indicating a better fit. In this case, the SRMR value of 0.087 suggests a reasonably good fit. The d_{ULS} (Unweighted Least Squares discrepancy function) and d_G (Geodesic discrepancy function)

also quantify the discrepancy between observed and predicted covariance matrices, with smaller values indicating better fit. The d_ULS value of 3.488 and d_G value of 1.116 suggest a reasonably good fit. The chi-square statistic compares observed and model-implied covariances, with a non-significant value indicating a good fit, although the significance interpretation requires knowledge of degrees of freedom. Lastly, the NFI (Normed Fit Index) compares the proposed model to a null model, with values closer to 1 indicating a better fit (Muthén, 1984; Maydeu-Olivares, 2017).

Table 4. Goodness of Fit Indexes

SRMR	d_ULS	d_G	Chi-Square
0.087	3.488	1.116	733.817

Based on the obtained results, put the remaining indicators from the results of the above analysis into the proposed research model (Figure 1), the analysis will be conducted by PLS-SEM to analyze the results. Analyze the research model of the article and give the results in Table 5.

Table 5. Summary of Hypotheses Testing Results

	Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value	Results
JS→WM	-0.462	0.078	5.895	<0.001	Significant
JS→TP	-0.080	0.067	1.197	0.231	NS
JS→CP	-0.090	0.071	1.273	0.203	NS
JS→CBV	-0.053	0.071	0.739	0.460	NS
WM→TP	0.678	0.072	9.376	<0.001	Significant
WM→CP	0.702	0.099	7.114	<0.001	Significant
WM→CBV	0.052	0.207	0.250	0.802	NS
TP→CP	0.064	0.093	0.685	0.493	NS
TP→CBV	0.150	0.110	1.363	0.173	NS
CP→CBV	0.450	0.135	3.329	0.001	Significant

Note: JS: Job Stress; WM: Work Motivation; TP: Task Performance; CP: Contextual Performance; CBV: Co-creation of brand value among employees; NS: Non-Significant

Firstly, CP showed a significant positive effect on the CBV, with a path coefficient of 0.450 ($p=0.001$). This suggests that higher levels of CP contribute to increased CBV, aligning with previous research highlighting the importance of contextual performance in enhancing brand value (Dyne & LePine, 1998). Secondly, JS demonstrated a significant negative effect on WM, with a path coefficient of -0.462 ($p<0.001$). This implies that higher levels of job stress

are associated with decreased work motivation among employees. Thirdly, WM was found to have a significant positive effect on CP, TP, and CBV. Based on the path coefficient from WM to CP, a higher level of motivation at work was associated with greater contextual performance (path coefficient=0.702; $p<0.001$). As for WM to TP, the path coefficient was 0.678 ($p<0.001$), which suggests that higher work motivation leads to improved task performance. However, the path coefficient between WM and CBV was 0.052 ($p=0.802$), indicating that there was no significant relationship between WM and CBV.

Furthermore, TP to CP and JS to CBV, TP, and CP did not yield significant effects. The path coefficient for TP to CP was 0.064 ($p=0.493$), indicating a non-significant relationship between task performance and contextual performance. Similarly, JS to CBV had a path coefficient of -0.053 ($p=0.460$), JS to TP had a path coefficient of -0.080 ($p=0.231$), and JS to CP had a path coefficient of -0.090 ($p=0.203$), indicating non-significant relationships between JS and CBV, TP, and CP.

4.4. Indirect in the Research Model

Table 6 shows that the analysis of specific indirect effects in the research model provides valuable insights into the mediated relationships among variables.

Table 6. Specific Indirect Effects (significant only)

	Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation	t Statistic	p Statistic
JS→WM→CP→CBV	-0.146	0.064	2.286	0.022
WM→CP→CBV	0.315	0.120	2.629	0.009
JS→WM→TP	-0.313	0.071	4.404	0.000
JS→WM→CP	-0.324	0.071	4.550	0.000

Note: JS: Job Stress; WM: Work Motivation; TP: Task Performance; CP: Contextual Performance; CBV: Co-creation of Brand Value among Employees

Firstly, the specific indirect effect of JS to WM to CP to CBV is statistically significant and negative. This suggests that JS has an indirect negative influence on the CBV through the sequential mediation of WM and CP (Bakker et al., 2004).

Secondly, the specific indirect effect of WM to CP to CBV is statistically significant and positive. This indicates that WM indirectly influences CBV through the mediation of CP. The positive effect suggests that higher levels of work motivation led to increased contextual performance (González-Mansilla et al., 2019), which in turn enhances the co-creation of brand value.

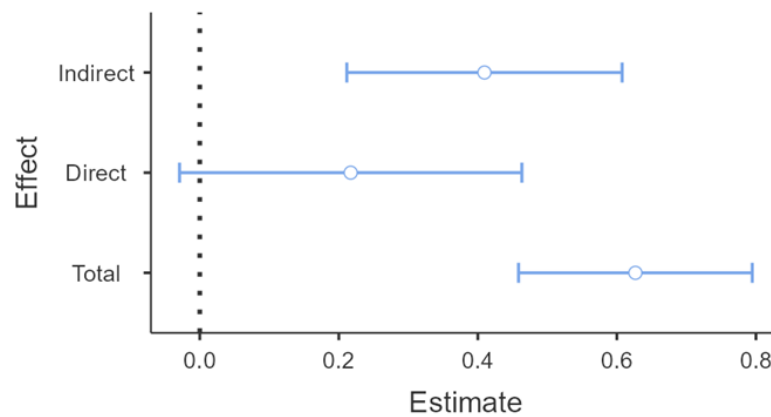


Figure 2. Estimate Plot of CP between WM and CBV

Additionally, the specific indirect effect of JS to WM to TP is statistically significant and negative. This suggests that JS negatively affects TP through the mediation of WM. Higher levels of job stress can diminish work motivation, leading to a decline in task performance among employees. This supports prior research that highlights the influence of motivation on performance outcomes (Steingut et al., 2017).

Lastly, the specific indirect effect of JS to WM to CP is also statistically significant and negative. This indicates that JS negatively influences CP through the mediation of WM. Higher job stress levels can reduce work motivation, subsequently impacting the contextual performance of employees (Dyne & LePine, 1998).

5. Discussion

5.1. A Mechanism of Co-creation of Brand Value among Employees

Contextual performance and work motivation have positive total effects on the Co-creation of brand value. Turner (2017) emphasized the role of employee motivation in driving performance outcomes, including the creation of brand value. Furthermore, their study highlights the importance of contextual performance as a key factor contributing to organizational effectiveness (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). A possible explanation for this result can be found in the complex nature of the concept of co-creating brand value among employees, which is influenced by a number of factors beyond individual motivation to work.

Regarding the negative total effects of job stress on co-creation of brand value among employees, several studies have recognized the detrimental effects of stress on employee performance and engagement. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) found that high job demands and low job resources, which are associated with increased job stress, lead to burnout and reduced engagement. Given that the co-creation of brand value requires active participation and creative efforts from employees, it is reasonable to assume that lower job stress levels would facilitate a more favorable environment for co-creation of brand value among employees (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Although task performance did not demonstrate a significant total effect on co-creation of brand value among employees in the current analysis, it is important to consider additional factors that may influence this relationship. Further investigation is needed to explore these factors and gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between task performance and co-creation of brand value among employees.

5.2. The Interplay of Factors in the Model

The path coefficients offer important insights into the mechanisms underlying employee-driven brand value co-creation. Consistent with prior research, the positive and significant relationship between contextual performance and co-creation of brand value confirms that employees' discretionary and extra-role behaviors play a critical role in shaping organizational outcomes and customer perceptions (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999). This finding reinforces existing evidence that contextual performance is particularly influential in service environments where employee behavior directly affects brand meaning and experience.

The negative association between job stress and work motivation further aligns with well-established stress-motivation theories, suggesting that excessive job demands undermine employees' psychological energy and willingness to engage at work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Similarly, the strong positive effect of work motivation on contextual performance supports earlier studies emphasizing motivation as a key driver of engagement and voluntary performance behaviors (Saks & Gruman, 2014). The positive relationship between work motivation and task performance also corroborates prior findings that motivated employees perform their core duties more effectively (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2008).

However, a noteworthy contribution of the present study lies in the absence of a direct relationship between work motivation and co-creation of brand value. While motivation has often been assumed to directly translate into brand-supportive behaviors, the current findings suggest that motivation alone is insufficient to generate co-creation outcomes. Instead, motivation appears to exert its influence indirectly through contextual performance, highlighting the importance of behavioral enactment rather than psychological states alone. This distinction extends existing research by demonstrating that brand value co-creation emerges not merely from motivated employees, but from employees who translate motivation into proactive, relational, and discretionary behaviors, an insight that is particularly salient in highly interactive service contexts such as the wedding industry.

5.3. Work Motivation and Contextual Performance as Mediators

The indirect effect of job stress on the co-creation of brand value through the sequential path of JS to WM, then to CP, and finally to CBV indicates that job stress indirectly influences the co-creation of brand value by affecting work motivation and subsequent contextual performance. The negative indirect effect suggests that higher levels of job stress may impede employees' motivation and their ability to engage in contextual performance (Witt et al., 2002), thereby hindering the co-creation of brand value. The indirect effect of work motivation on the co-creation of brand value through the path of work motivation to contextual performance and then to the co-creation of brand value indicates a positive indirect effect. This suggests that work motivation positively influences co-creation of brand value by enhancing contextual performance. Higher levels of work motivation are likely to

drive employees to engage in behaviors that contribute to the co-creation of brand value (Nguyen et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the indirect effect of JS on TP through the sequential path of JS to WM and then to TP indicates a negative indirect effect. This suggests that job stress indirectly influences task performance by reducing work motivation, leading to lower levels of task performance. Higher job stress may undermine employees' motivation and their ability to effectively perform tasks, resulting in a negative impact on overall task performance (Bakker et al., 2004; Bakker & Demerouti, 2016)

Lastly, the indirect effect of JS on CP through the path of JS to WM and then to CP indicates a negative indirect effect. This implies that job stress indirectly influences contextual performance by reducing work motivation, leading to lower levels of contextual performance. Higher job stress may diminish employees' motivation and their capacity to engage in contextual behaviors, thus impacting overall contextual performance (Witt et al., 2002).

6. Implications

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by illustrating the complex pathway from internal psychological states to external service behaviors specifically within the wedding sector. Unlike traditional hospitality contexts where routine tasks are often sufficient for customer satisfaction, the wedding industry requires a higher level of personalized engagement and emotional support from employees. The findings suggest that the internal well-being of the staff is a critical prerequisite for achieving brand value co-creation, as job stress acts as a primary barrier that prevents employees from engaging in proactive service behaviors. By highlighting that contextual performance is the key mechanism through which motivation translates into brand value, this study offers a specialized perspective on how service excellence is co-created in high-pressure, ritualistic environments.

From a practical standpoint, the study offers several actionable recommendations for wedding studios and banquet centers to enhance their competitiveness in the emerging Vietnamese

market. Managers should prioritize creating a supportive work environment that actively mitigates stress, especially during peak wedding seasons when the emotional and physical workload is highest. Since voluntary and supportive behaviors are essential for co-creation, organizational strategies should move beyond basic service compliance and instead focus on initiatives that boost intrinsic motivation. This could include professional development programs, peer-recognition schemes, and stress-management workshops. By fostering a culture that encourages employees to view themselves as brand ambassadors who can creatively solve problems during ceremonies, studios can ensure a more memorable experience for wedding couples and successfully build a stronger, more authentic brand image.

7. Limitations and Future Research

Despite the valuable insights generated by this study, several context-specific limitations should be acknowledged. First, the data were collected from 131 employees working in the wedding service industry in Southern Vietnam, using a non-probability sampling approach. Although this sample is adequate for PLS-SEM analysis, the findings may not be readily generalizable to other service industries or cultural settings characterized by different labor structures, customer interaction patterns, or organizational practices. The strong emphasis on customization and emotional labor in the wedding industry may shape employee behaviors in ways that differ from more standardized service environments.

Second, the study relied on self-reported survey data collected at a single point in time, which may introduce common method bias and limit causal interpretation. While statistical diagnostics indicated that common method bias and multicollinearity were not critical concerns, future studies could strengthen methodological rigor by incorporating multi-source data, such as supervisor evaluations or objective performance indicators, as well as adopting longitudinal research designs to better capture dynamic relationships among job stress, motivation, performance, and brand value co-creation.

Third, the absence of significant direct effects for certain structural paths, particularly those involving task performance and job stress, suggests that the influence of these variables on

brand value co-creation may be highly context-dependent. In labor-intensive and experience-driven industries such as wedding services, brand value co-creation appears to emerge primarily through contextual and discretionary employee behaviors, rather than through task execution alone. This finding highlights the need for future research to further explore industry-specific mechanisms and boundary conditions that shape employee-driven co-creation processes. Building on these limitations, future research could extend the present framework by examining other organizational factors, such as leadership styles, service climate, or organizational culture, that may interact with employee motivation and performance. Replicating the model across different service sectors and cultural contexts would also enhance the generalizability of the findings. In addition, qualitative approaches, including interviews or focus groups, may provide deeper insights into how employees perceive and enact brand value co-creation in practice, thereby complementing the quantitative results of this study.

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Appendix

Construct	Item	
Job Stress (JS)	JS1	I often have too much work to do in the time available at the wedding studio.
	JS2	Working at wedding events is emotionally demanding for me.
	JS3	I find it difficult to balance wedding schedules with my personal life.
	JS4	The fast-paced nature of wedding services makes me feel nervous.
	JS5	Many tasks at the studio feel like a heavy burden to me.
Work Motivation (WM)	WM1	I put effort into my job because the wedding industry is very interesting.
	WM2	This job allows me to achieve personal growth and professional satisfaction.
	WM3	I feel a sense of accomplishment when a wedding event is successful.

	WM4	I work hard because my personal values align with the studio's mission.
	WM5	I put effort into my work to ensure long-term job security in the industry.
	WM6	I am motivated by the recognition I receive from management and couples.
	WM7	I want to excel in my role to avoid disappointing my colleagues.
	WM8	I find the tasks involved in wedding planning to be enjoyable in themselves.
Task Performance (TP)	TP1	I managed to plan my work tasks for wedding events efficiently.
	TP2	I kept in mind the specific results I needed to achieve for our clients.
	TP3	I was able to set clear priorities when handling multiple wedding bookings.
	TP4	I carried out my core service duties with high quality and no errors.
	TP5	I managed my time well during the busy wedding seasons.
	TP6	I kept my knowledge about current wedding trends and services up-to-date.
	TP7	I performed my core responsibilities with high standards of quality.
Contextual Performance (CP)	CP1	On my own initiative, I started new tasks when my old ones were completed.
	CP2	I took on extra responsibilities during busy wedding periods.
	CP3	I actively participated in studio meetings and team consultations.
	CP4	I continually sought new challenges in my service delivery.
	CP5	I came up with creative solutions for new problems during event execution.
	CP6	I volunteered for additional tasks that were not part of my job description.
	CP7	I actively worked on improving my work-related skills for better service.
	CP8	I helped my colleagues when they had a heavy workload during events.
	CP9	I maintained positive interpersonal relationships with all team members.
Brand Value Co-creation (CBV)	CBV1	I share ideas with wedding guests to enhance their overall experience.
	CBV2	I provide feedback to the studio to help improve our brand image.
	CBV3	I actively represent our brand values to every wedding couple.
	CBV4	I collaborate with clients to personalize their services, adding brand value.
	CBV5	I encourage guests to share their positive experiences with our brand.

	CBV6	I act as a brand ambassador, consistently delivering the brand promise.
	CBV7	I participate in activities that strengthen the brand's reputation.
	CBV8	I suggest new service features that align with our brand identity.
	CBV9	I work with stakeholders to ensure a cohesive brand experience.