

The Effect of Chinese Traditional Culture on Employee Green Behavior: Literature Review

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Received: Jan. 6, 2020 Accepted: Jan. 24, 2020 Online published: Feb. 9, 2020

doi:10.5296/ijhrs.v10i1.16189

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijhrs.v10i1.16189>

Abstract

China is the most populous country in the world. With the total GDP ranking second in the world, environmental protection issues are imminent. The employee green behavior can protect the environment and save resources. It is an important factor in the organization's sustainable development, and Chinese traditional culture has always influenced people's code of conduct. Based on the theory of planned behavior, this study explores the process of Chinese traditional culture influence on employee green behavior through perceived value, Guanxi and psychological contract, and establishes a research model. It is expected to provide references and recommendations for follow-up researchers and business management.

Keywords: Chinese traditional culture, perceived value, guanxi, psychological contract, employee green behavior

1. Introduction

In order to promote employee green behavior, it is important to understand some factors that influence employee green behavior and how these factors affect employee green behavior. For example, some scholars have explored from the perspective of human resource

management (Dumont, Shen, & Deng, 2017), corporate strategy (Norton, Zacher, Parker, & Ashkanasy, 2017), and leadership characteristics (Wang, Zhou, & Liu, 2018) influencing factor of employee green behavior. Among them, green transformational leadership will influence employees' green behavior through the consistency of followers' values (Wang et al., 2018), and Altruistic values will improve green behavior (Zhang, Zhang, Zhang, & Cheng, 2014). Therefore, it is important for an organization whether the employee's green values are consistent with the values that the organization supports and promotes (Dumont et al., 2017). The behavior of Chinese people is generally influenced by traditional Chinese values (Zhang & Chen, 2017). Leaders of Taoism with one of the traditional Chinese cultures can cultivate employees' environmental attitudes and green behaviors (Xing & Starik, 2017). Confucianism in Chinese traditional culture advocates diligence and thrift, against extravagance and waste (Pan, 2009), for example, the Master said, "Extravagance leads to insubordination and parsimony to meanness. It is better to be mean than to be insubordinate." (Confucian Analects / Book VII. Shu R.).

First, Chinese traditional culture has been shown to influence consumer purchasing intentions (Zhang & Jolibert, 2003). Perceived value is also used to study consumer purchase intentions. For example, the customer's green perceived value of the product determines the customer's green purchase intention (Chen & Chang, 2012). At the same time, perceived value has been proved to affect employees' behaviors, and perceived value affects the turnover of the new generation of employees (Chen, 2015).

Second, the psychological contract has always been an important factor affecting employee behavior. Psychological contract fulfillment affects organizational citizenship behavior (Ahmad & Zafar, 2018). The psychological contract is positively related to performance within the role and organizational citizenship behavior, while psychological contract breach of employees will reduce their work effort (Turnley, Bolino, Lester, & Bloodgood, 2003). The psychological contract fulfillment mediates the relationship between employee work values and organizational citizenship behavior (Chen & Kao, 2012).

Third, Guanxi plays an important role in Confucian society. Theoretical studies have shown that the establishment of a strong Guanxi with the right people in China is the key to long-term commercial success (Yeung & Tung, 1996). Chinese values have a positive impact on Guanxi (Taormina & Gao, 2010). On this basis, follow-up scholars have further expanded their research. The entrepreneur's Zhong-yong thinking will influence the innovation performance of employees through Guanxi (Ma, Liu, Gu, & Dou, 2018), and asset specificity and Competitive Environment can influence Green Supply Chain Collaboration through Guanxi (Luo, Chong, Ngai, & Liu, 2015).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Basis and Research Hypothesis

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is often used to study consumer behavior, such as American consumers choosing green hotels (Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010), and young Vietnamese consumers buying energy-efficient appliances (Nguyen, Lobo, & Nguyen, 2018),

Chinese consumers' choice of green hotels (Wang, Wong, Narayanan Alagas, & Chee, 2019). In addition, based on the theory of planned behavior, generativity and self-enhancement values influence the environmentally responsible consumption behavior through environmental behavioral intentions (Urien & Kilbourne, 2011), and generativity refers to a desire for life, to make things beyond one's own life (Kotre, 1984), self-improvement values refer to values related to power, wealth, authority, and influence on others (Urien & Kilbourne, 2011). Similarly, the theory of planned behavior explains the role of culture assessed from a self-identification perspective on green behavioral intentions (Mancha & Yoder, 2015).

Theory of Planned Behavior adopts three variables: behavioral attitudes, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control to predict behavioral intentions and actual behaviors. In addition, factors such as personal and socio-cultural (e.g., personality, experience, age, gender, cultural background) indirectly affect behavioral intentions and behavior through behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

2.1.1 Behavioral Attitudes

Behavioral attitude is defined as the degree to which an individual positively or negatively evaluates a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991), such as a study of customers choosing to stay in a green hotel, and behavioral attitudes examine the customer's perception of how they feel about staying at a green hotel (Han et al., 2010). In the context of green marketing, many studies have established a positive correlation between consumer attitudes and behavior (Nguyen et al., 2018; Paul, Modi, & Patel, 2016; Wang et al., 2019). In addition, based on the attitude theory of planned behavior theory, environmental attitudes predict employee's pro-environmental behavior, and environmental attitudes are considered to be personal concerns about the environment (Bissing-Olson, Iyer, Fielding, & Zacher, 2013). Moreover, consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward hotel green practices are significantly positively correlated (Jauhari & Manaktola, 2007).

However, green perceived value encourages individuals' green behavioral intentions in everyday life (Chen & Chang, 2012), and green perceived value is defined as consumer-based environmental aspirations, sustainable expectations, and green needs. The overall evaluation of the net income of the products or services received (Chen & Chang, 2012; Chen, 2013), the green perceived value is mainly to evaluate the environmental protection of products (Y. S. Chen, 2013). Green perceived value is developed on the basis of perceived value. Perceived value predicts consumer behavioral intentions (Konuk, 2018). Perceived value is the customer's evaluation of product expectations (Zeithaml, 1988). In view of this, this study uses perceived value instead of behavioral attitude.

2.1.2 Subjective Norm

Subjective norm is defined as personal pressure perception from others when taking specific actions (Ajzen, 1991), for example in research about customers choosing to stay in green hotels, subjective norms examine the attitudes of people close to the customer that staying at a green hotel while traveling (Han et al., 2010). It highlights the influence of others from

close relationships, such as close friends, relatives, colleagues or business partners (Paul et al., 2016). In addition, subjective norms are the individual's perception or moral obligation, which is seen as a powerful force for green behavior (Wang et al., 2019).

According to previous research literature, Guanxi is considered to be a social network composed of one person and close people (such as family, friends, classmates, teachers) (Taormina & Gao, 2010). Workplace Guanxi is considered to be a daily work task and an exchange activity with colleagues and supervisor-subordinate after work (Yang & Lau, 2015). In addition, the organizational Guanxi promotes the Green Supply Chain Collaboration, which not only links the two parties but also establishes the obligations of long-term business partners (Luo et al., 2015).

In view of this, this study believes that employees who frequently participate in social activities other than cooperation in normal work are more likely to feel pressure perception from colleagues than those who participate less. Therefore, in this study uses Guanxi to replace subjective norm.

2.1.3 Perceived Behavior Control

Perceived behavioral control is defined as the degree to which an individual is expected to feel controllable when taking specific behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). For example, in research on customers choosing to stay in green hotels, Perceived behavioral control mainly examines the customer's own control of staying in a green hotel when traveling (Han et al., 2010). In addition, perceived behavior control is a function of control beliefs (Han et al., 2010). It is an individual's perception and assessment of the resources and opportunities needed for behavior (Wang et al., 2019)

According to the existing literature, the psychological contract is the employee's beliefs, expectations, and views on the degree of mutual obligations (hidden commitments) between employees and employers (Birtch, Chiang, & Van Esch, 2016). Moreover, psychological contracts are beliefs of mutual obligations that employees develop in their relationships with the organization. This belief shapes their relationships and controls their behavior (Freese, Schalk, & Croon, 2011). The psychological contract is mainly researched through two aspects, transactional psychological contract, and the relational psychological contract. The transactional psychological contract is mainly for companies to pay employees based on specific job descriptions, a short-term behavior (Anggraeni, Dwiatmadja, & Yuniawan, 2017); the relational psychological contract is for companies to provide employees with long-term job opportunities (Lo Presti, Manuti, & Briscoe, 2019).

In view of this, this study believes that before employee green behavior, employees should be protected in the company's salary and career planning, which is also a resource required for perceived behavior control. The psychological contract is an employee's assessment of the salary and career development provided by the company. Psychological contracts will be used in place of perceived behavioral control.

In summary, this research will use the theory of planned behavior to explain the impact of traditional Chinese culture on employee green behavior through perceived value, relationship,

and social capital.

2.2 Research Hypothesis

2.2.1 Chinese Traditional Culture and Employee Green Behavior

Traditional Chinese culture includes the cultural ideas of Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism, Legalism and the philosophy of war (Wang, 2017). Since Emperor Wu of Han banishing all schools of thought and respecting Confucianism, Confucianism has become mainstream in China (Kim, 2011). Confucianism reflects the surface structure of traditional Chinese culture, and Taoism is the embodiment of the deep structure of traditional Chinese culture (Zhou & Wu, 1986), which can highlight the importance of Taoism in Chinese traditional culture. Moreover, in the current research on Chinese traditional culture, the mainstream is the use of Confucianism and Taoism (Lin, Ho, & Lin, 2013; Taormina & Gao, 2010). In addition, some scholars have added Buddhism to study traditional Chinese culture on the basis of Confucianism and Taoism, such as Zhang and Jolibert (2003). However, it is well known that Buddhism originated in India, a non-Chinese culture. Theoretically, people with high Confucian and Taoist values are considered to have high levels of Chinese tradition (Lin et al., 2013). Therefore, this study uses Confucianism and Taoism to explore Chinese traditional cultural behavior.

Chinese traditional culture has a significant impact on the frequency of cosmetics purchases by Chinese ladies. The behavioral decisions of Confucianism tend to show status, and the behavioral decisions of Taoism tend to be green and healthy (Zhang & Jolibert, 2003). In addition, the "Wu-Wei" of leader Taoism, multi-thinking and comprehensive harmony are the three main influencing factors of employee green (Huang, 2018).

Confucianism has the characteristics of (Phuong-Mai, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2005). This collectivism can be regarded as a cultural difference and an individualism through independent and interdependent self-construction. The interdependence of self-construction of ideological characteristics always shows a high level of green behavior intention (Mancha & Yoder, 2015), and green behavior intention is an important influencing factor of green behavior (Urien & Kilbourne, 2011). In addition, the "Ren" of Confucianism emphasizes the value of altruism (Du, 2015), which has a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior (Zhang et al., 2014). The influence of Confucianism on employees' green actions is mainly reflected in the leadership authority, relationship orientation, pursuit of harmony and moral culture of Confucian cultural values (Wang, 2017).

Taoism leaders can create a harmonious and passionate environment for employees and can magnify the relationship between Taoist leader and employee green behavior, thus encouraging employees to act in an environmentally friendly manner (Xing & Starik, 2017). In addition, the results of tourist behavior research based on Qingcheng Mountain, the birthplace of Chinese Taoism, shows that local attachment has a positive impact on pro-environmental behavior (Zhang et al., 2014). Although the Taoism scale was not used to study pro-environmental behaviors directly, Du (2015) also did not use the Confucianism scale but used the distance between Confucian temples and enterprises to measure the degree

of influence of enterprises on Confucian culture.

Therefore, this study makes the following assumptions:

H1: Traditional Chinese culture will have a positive and significant impact on employee green behavior;

H1a: Confucianism will have a significant positive impact on employee green behavior;

H1b: Taoism has a positive and significant impact on employee green behavior.

2.2.2 Perceived Value and Employee Green Behavior

At present, research on perceived value is mainly used to study consumers, so consumer value is a synonym for perceived value (Gallarza & Saura, 2006). However, with the change of product consumption to tourism consumption, the perceived value of tourists also changes from product evaluation to destination selection and satisfaction, which are mainly manifested as an emotional experience, functional value, and overall value (Lee, Yoon, & Lee, 2007).

The viewpoint theory of attitude theory expresses that individuals are likely to engage in activities corresponding to a good internal attitude towards the natural environment (Norton, Parker, Zacher, & Ashkanasy, 2015). Pro-environmental attitudes can regulate the impact of daily emotions on pro-environmental behaviors at work (Bissing-Olson et al., 2013).

Internal marketing theory assumes that each member of the organization is a customer (Day & Wensley, 1983). Before effectively serving end customers, employees must be interested in the service and be satisfied with their work (Berry, 1995). Internal marketing has a positive impact on organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Marques, Leal, Marques, & Cabral, 2018). In addition, trust, fairness, and empathy have a positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction (Ndubisi & Natarajan, 2018).

Perceived value can increase customer satisfaction (Prebensen & Xie, 2017). Based on second-hand data from World Values Surveys (WVS), the results showed that have a significant positive correlation between life satisfaction and pro-environmental behavior (Welsch & Kühling, 2010).

In addition, perceived value positively affects commitments (Karjalainen, Shaikh, Saarijärvi, & Saraniemi, 2019). Perceived value positively affects trust (Yuen, Wang, Wong, & Zhou, 2018), and organizational trust positively affects organizational citizenship behavior (Yoon, Jang, & Lee, 2016). However, pro-environmental behavior is driven by a mixture of moral and personal norms and self-interest. Emotional commitment (AC), organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment (OCB-E) have a significant positive impact (Lamm, Tosti-Kharas, & Williams, 2013), and organizational commitments of employee will positively affect environmental behaviors of employee (Kim, Kim, Choi, & Phetvaroon, 2019).

In addition, perceived value positively affects commitments (Karjalainen et al., 2019). Perceived value positively affects trust (Yuen et al., 2018), and organizational trust positively

affects organizational citizenship behavior (Yoon et al., 2016). However, pro-environmental behavior is driven by a mixture of moral and personal norms and self-interest. Emotional commitment (AC), organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment (OCB-E) have a significant positive impact (Lamm et al., 2013), and employee organizational commitments will positively affect employee environmental behaviors (Kim et al., 2019).

Therefore, this study makes the following assumptions:

H2: Perceived value will have a positive and significant impact on employee green behavior.

2.2.3 Guanxi and Employee Green Behavior

The concept of Guanxi is complex and multifaceted. It is a connection, an exchange, and a resource (Fan, 2002). Therefore, Guanxi is not considered a simple relationship, it is personal connection (Chen & Chen, 2004). Within the company, the relationship between supervisors and subordinates is a special dualistic emotional bond that may promote emotional communication between the parties connected by the bond (Chen, Friedman, Yu, Fang, & Lu, 2009). Therefore, Guanxi existing in the workplace is divided into two aspects, one is supervisor-subordinate Guanxi, which is considered to be inclusive and respectful of individuals and supervisors, and the other is co-worker Guanxi, which is considered to be daily work cooperation and Exchange activities after work (Yang & Lau, 2015).

The pro-environmental organizational climate is an important factor that affects employee green behavior (Norton, Zacher, & Ashkanasy, 2012, 2014). When employees observe other people around them participating in specific behavior patterns, they may participate in these behaviors according to the functionalist perspective in order to satisfy, establish and strengthen their social relations (Kim, Kim, Han, Jackson, & Ployhart, 2017).

Drawing on the research results of Guanxi at the organizational level, creating superior relationship value is the basis for the long-term survival and success of green manufacturing enterprises. Guanxi has a positive impact on the interaction between relationship risk and knowledge sharing (Cheng, 2011). Moreover, Guanxi has a positive and significant impact on the implementation of Green Supply Chain Collaboration (Luo et al., 2015).

Although supervisor-subordinate Guanxi has no significant impact on task performance, supervisor-subordinate Guanxi has a positive and significant impact on extra-role performance (i.e., organizational citizenship behavior) (Guan & Frenkel, 2018). However, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is positively affecting organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment (OCB-E). OCB-E is a green behavior of employees driven by a mixture of ethics and personal norms and self-interest (Lamm et al., 2013).

Therefore, this study makes assumptions:

H3: Guanxi will have a positive and significant impact on employee green behavior.

2.2.4 Psychological Contract and Employee Green Behavior

The concept of the psychological contract was first proposed by Argyris (1960). In previous

studies, it has been understood that the core of psychological contracts is the relationship of expectations between employers and employees (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003). These perceived content differences focus on the extent of transactions and relationships (Rousseau, 1989). Transaction contracts are characterized by limited party participation and emphasis on specific, short-term, monetary obligations. Relational contracts emphasize broad, long-term social and emotional obligations, such as commitment and loyalty, in the collective interest (Thomas, Ravlin, Liao, Morrell, & Au, 2016).

Employees with higher relational psychological contracts will have higher emotions and identification with the organization and are willing to devote themselves to the organization, that is, their emotional commitment to the organization will be stronger. Empirical research results show that the relationship-based psychological contract has a positive effect on emotional commitment (Yin & Xu, 2009).

Relational psychological contract fulfillment has a positive and significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment. However, the transactional psychological contract fulfillment significantly negatively affects organizational citizenship behavior and positively affects organizational commitment (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003). In addition, based on the theory of organizational support, psychological contract fulfillment has a significant positive effect on organizational support (Karagonlar, Eisenberger, & Aselage, 2016). However, employee green behavior is driven by a mix of ethics and personal norms and self-interest. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), perceived organization support (POS), and Emotional Commitment (AC) are positively affecting behaviors that significantly affect organizational citizenship behavior toward the Environment (OCB-E) (Lamm et al., 2013).

Psychological contracts positively affect Affective organization commitment and Supervisor organizational commitment (Lapointe, Vandenberghe, & Boudrias, 2013). Affective commitment has a positive and significant on the extra-role performance, while affective commitment has no significant effect on the in-role performance (K. Y. Kim, Eisenberger, & Baik, 2016). The employee in-role performance is more clearly defined than extra-role performance. It is easy for managers to monitor, when performance is poor, in-role performance usually has a more direct negative impact on employees. Therefore, in-role performance is not affected by communication as easily as extra-role performance. According to the self-determination theory, employee green behavior is divided into in-role and extra-role green behavior, and in-role green behavior is based on in-role performance, adding “in environmentally-friendly ways” to complete daily work tasks (Graves, Sarkis, & Zhu, 2013).

Therefore, this study makes assumptions:

H4: Psychological contracts will have a positive and significant impact on employee green behavior.

3. Research Methodology

An extensive literature review was performed in this study. The review focused on several related topics, such as planned behavior theory, traditional Chinese culture, employee green behavior, perceived value, Guanxi, psychological contract. By reviewing the existing literature, this study analyzes and identifies all issues related to traditional Chinese culture, perceived value, Guanxi, psychological contracts, and employee green behavior from the perspective of factors, theory, and methods. The result of this approach is to determine the importance of traditional Chinese culture, perceived value, Guanxi, and psychological contracts, and determine how it affects employee green behavior.

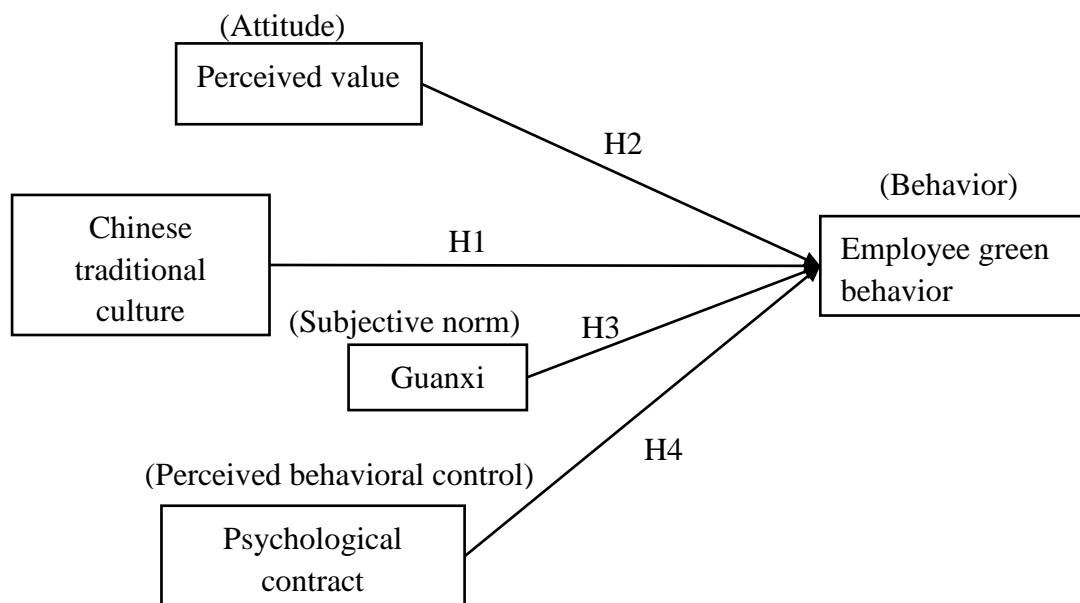


Figure 1. Research framework

4. Conclusion and Limitations

In conclusion, this study established a model of the influence mechanism of employee green behavior based on the theory of planned behavior and emphasized the effect of Chinese traditional culture, perceived value, Guanxi and psychological contract on employee green behavior. At the same time, this study has made a significant contribution to the theory of planned behavior. In the theory of planned behavior, attitudes and subjective norms influence behaviors through behavioral intention. This study found that attitude and subjective norms can be directly predicted by referring to attitude theory and normative theory. So, this study directly adopts behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control when it adopts planned behavior theory. It also provides a comprehensive framework for explaining traditional Chinese culture, perceived value, Guanxi, psychological contract and the relationship of employee green behavior.

The accepted fact is that incorporate management literature, few studies have examined,

verified and tested the impact of Chinese traditional culture on employee green behavior.

There are some limitations to this article. Firstly, since the proposed model needs to be further validated, future research can collect data from employees of the company to test the proposed model and further investigate the hypotheses proposed. Secondly, Confucianism and Taoism are the two main ideas of traditional Chinese culture. Corporate culture and local customs can interfere with Confucianism and Taoism in Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, it is strongly recommended to collect questionnaires in different regions and enterprises to expand the sample diversity.

5. Future Works

As future work, firstly, based on this research model and theory of planned behavior, modify and propose more complex research models to better explain the relationship between traditional Chinese culture and employee green behavior. Secondly, through interviews with employees with rich experience, to obtain items that can reflect the Chinese traditional culture of Confucianism and Taoism. Experts will then be invited to discuss and comment on selected measurement items to increase the effectiveness of the content, and to build a scale using exploratory factor analysis. Finally, the questionnaire was constructed with the Confucianism and Taoism scales of Chinese traditional culture and the maturity scale adopted by other relevant variables, and the collected data were tested again through the questionnaire.

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