



Listening to Unheard Voices: Exploring Salespeople's Perspective on The Value of Corporate Heritage

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines salespeople's perspective on the value of corporate heritage to relationship selling and the issue of trust in personal selling situations in the context of emerging markets.

Methodology: An interpretive approach was adopted, and sixteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior salespeople in heritage institutions operating in Jordan.

Findings: the study reveals that corporate heritage is a valuable organizational resource to relationship selling. Reflecting the values of 'trust' and 'affinity', corporate heritage confers trust to salespeople and their products in personal selling situations. Sales managers are advised to utilize corporate heritage to strengthen sales activities and empower salespeople.

Originality: While previous research has explained the significance of corporate heritage to relationship marketing, the significance of corporate heritage to relationship selling and the issue of trust in personal selling situations remain unexplored. Jordan represents a context that has been largely neglected despite being typical for the corporate heritage phenomenon.

Keywords: Corporate heritage; Personal selling; Salespeople; Relationship selling; Trust, Emerging markets; Jordan.

Introduction

Corporate heritage is a corporate marketing concept and a grand institutional phenomenon encompassing aspects meaningfully and relevantly linking an organization's past, present, and future (Balmer and Burghausen, 2015a). As such, corporate heritage, and as the literature attests, is managerially valorized due to its utility vis-a-vis concurrent and future institutional concerns (Urde *et al.*, 2007; Burghausen and Balmer, 2014a; Burghausen and Balmer, 2015a) and to both internal and external stakeholder groups (Santos *et al.*, 2016).

The available corporate heritage research is mainly concerned with making explicit the latter's marketing value in relation to consumers. Researchers on this topic have either explored the marketing managerial perspective on this value (Santos *et al.*, 2016; Rindell and Strandvik, 2021), or investigated consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and intentions toward corporate heritage brands and identities (Balmer and Chen, 2015; Pecot and Merchant, 2022). Thus, there is a scarcity of research that examines salespeople's perspective on the value of corporate heritage to sales and personal selling functions.

The latter is a worthwhile research endeavor as, to date, little is known about how this value is translated to sales and personal selling functions. Previous research has explained the relevance of corporate heritage to relationship marketing (Blombäck and Brunninge, 2016). However, the relevance of corporate heritage to relationship selling has yet to be explored. In particular, corporate heritage, and with the authenticity, credibility, reliability, and trust meanings it reflects (Urde *et al.*, 2007; Hakala *et al.*, 2011), can prove useful to the issue of trust in personal selling situations, which remains as relevant and essential as ever (Friend *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, this study aims to explore the value salespeople assign to corporate heritage in the context of their operations and activities. Salespeople are a company's frontline employees in the market and its

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3 most important group of customer-facing personnel since their influential role in building
4 satisfying relationships and promoting trust with customers (Blocker *et al.*, 2012; Jobber,
5 Lancaster *et al.*, 2019).
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10 The study contributes to the literature on the role of company-related factors in imparting trust to
11 salespeople and their products in personal selling situations. This is attained by revealing
12 corporate heritage and explaining its role as another company-related factor that can confer trust
13 to salespeople and their products in personal selling situations. Additionally, the study further
14 substantiates the resource-based view (Grant, 1991) adopted on the corporate heritage concept in
15 the literature by indicating the strategic value corporate heritage represents to relationship selling
16 by revealing its usefulness to the issue of trust in personal selling situations. This responds to the
17 research call made by Balmer (2013) to explore the latent value of the resource-based view
18 theory to corporate heritage research.
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32 Previous corporate heritage research has been focused on developed countries (Balmer *et al.*,
33 2006; Urde *et al.*, 2007; Balmer and Burghausen, 2015a, 2015b; Santos *et al.*, 2016), or on
34 nations characterized by long provenance like China (Balmer and Chen, 2015). Differently, this
35 study is conducted in Jordan, which is a relatively young, economically unstable, and troubled
36 emerging country (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2018; The World Bank, 2021). Within the
37 literature, it has been asserted that corporate heritage is a phenomenon that especially flourishes
38 in contexts where economic uncertainty and general hardships are the hallmarks (Wiedmann *et*
39 *al.*, 2011; Hakala *et al.*, 2011).
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51 The article continues with a literature review section, in which the researchers present an
52 overview of the corporate heritage topic and justify their aim to examine salespeople's
53 perspective on the value of corporate heritage. Then, the research methodology employed in this
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3 study is outlined, including a discussion of the country context of the study. Next, the study
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5 findings are presented and discussed to lay the ground to highlight its theoretical contribution.
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8 Finally, the study discusses its managerial implications, limitations, and future research
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10 recommendations.

11 **Literature review**

12 ***Corporate heritage***

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14 The first appearance of the corporate heritage notion was in 2006 when Balmer *et al.* introduced
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16 their seminal study (2006), which examined institutional monarchies through a corporate
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18 branding lens. Corporate heritage is an umbrella concept for a multi-level institutional
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20 phenomenon (Balmer and Burghausen, 2015b), that is, in Balmer and Burghausen's words:
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25 “Refers to some aspect of an organizations' past that is still deemed by current internal and/or
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27 external stakeholders to be relevant and meaningful for contemporary concerns and purposes but
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29 concurrently perceived as worth to be maintained and nurtured for future generations; ...”
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32 (2015a, p.367).
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36 Subsequent research further explicated the phenomenon (Balmer and Chen, 2017; Santos *et al.*,
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38 2016; Pecot *et al.*, 2018) and delineated the conceptual differences between its different concepts
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40 and other corporate past-related concepts (Balmer, 2011b; Burghausen and Balmer 2014b). It has
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42 since then continued to attract increasing research interest, particularly during the last two years
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44 (cf. Zeren and Kara, 2021; Rindell and Santos, 2021; Spielmann *et al.*, 2021; Al-Amad and
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46 Balmer, 2023).
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50 The discussion of the phenomenon initially focused on its institutional brand-level manifestation
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52 (Balmer, 2011a; 2011b; Santos *et al.*, 2016), which mainly relates to the continuity of brand
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54 promise expressed in institutional identities, behaviors, and symbolism (Balmer, 2011b). Urde *et*
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3 al. (2007) found that corporate heritage brands are recognized by the presence of five qualities
4 they synthesized in a model they called Heritage Quotient (HQ). According to them, the
5 designation of a brand as a heritage one and the power of its heritage depends on whether it has
6 these qualities and the intensity of their presence. These five qualities are 'track record', 'core
7 values', 'use of symbols', 'history is important to identity', and 'longevity'.
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15 Later, research interest partially shifted to the corporate institutional (Balmer, 2011b; 2013;
16 Balmer and Chen, 2017; Spielmann et al., 2021) manifestations of corporate heritage. Balmer
17 (2011b; 2013) coined the corporate heritage identities concept in reference to this. Corporate
18 heritage identities are viewed as a distinct and non-replicable type of identity in that they draw
19 on institutional traits unique by their relative invariance and augmented role identities (Balmer,
20 2011b; 2013).
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30 The relative invariance percept refers to these traits' ability to remain meaningful due to the
31 meanings stakeholders attach to them despite their invariant essences. Thus, they are viewed as
32 of Omni-temporal relevance (Balmer, 2011b; 2013). The augmented role identities percept refers
33 to these traits' infusion with non-institutional socio-spatially anchored identities in addition to
34 their institutional ones. The latter increases the significance of these traits in stakeholders' eyes
35 and enables the institution that embraces these traits to perform roles beyond conventional
36 corporate purposes (Balmer, 2011b; 2013; Spielmann *et al.*, 2021).
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46 Considering all of the above, corporate heritage is an organizational resource that has a unique
47 value in the market, and it is materialized through specific meanings that heritage institutions and
48 brands reflect and are appealing to customers and stakeholders (Balmer, 2013). Urde *et al.*
49 (2007) stated that heritage brands project the vital meanings of authenticity, credibility, and trust.
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56 With little difference, some postulated that heritage brands represent stability, familiarity, and
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3 trust to customers, particularly in periods characterized by uncertainty (Balmer, 2011b; Hakala et
4 al., 2011). According to others (Hakala *et al.*, 2011; Hudson, 2011; Santo *et al.*, 2015), these
5 meanings can differentiate the brand by means of the conducive perceptions they inspire in
6 customers' minds relative to competing brands.
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12 Therefore, from a resource-based view perspective, corporate heritage is a valuable customer-
13 based intangible organizational asset (Hooley and Saunders, 1993) and an advantage-generating
14 resource (Fathy and Smithee, 1999). If utilized correctly, it can lead to sustainable competitive
15 advantages not only in the area of marketing (Balmer, 2013) but also, as we argue in this article,
16 in the area of sales and personal selling through the functional customer relationship
17 management capabilities (Hooley *et al.*, 1998). The institutional resources that are likely to be
18 helpful for the development of sustainable competitive advantages are characterized by high
19 durability, low transparency, transferability, and replicability (Grant, 1991, p. 123-128).
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32 Corporate heritage is a durable organizational resource that can't be easily depreciated or
33 become obsolete. Moreover, same as corporate and brand reputation, it only requires modest
34 replacement investment rates to maintain it long-term. In this vein, environmental turbulences,
35 which usually shorten the life span of many institutional resources, actually bolster corporate
36 heritage (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2011; Hakala *et al.*, 2011). In addition, every brand's or institution's
37 heritage is unique due to the particular story, circumstances, and backgrounds that have shaped a
38 brand's or an institution's heritage identity (Balmer, 2013). As a result, corporate heritage is an
39 advantage-generating resource that is considerably untransparent, imperfectly transferable or
40 replicable.
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The strategic marketing role of salespeople

Unarguably, personal selling is an immensely effective marketing vehicle (Román and Iacobucci, 2010), and with the advent of the service-dominant logic and value co-creation (Haas *et al.*, 2012; Alnakhli *et al.*, 2021), salespeople are increasingly playing crucial roles in marketing strategy formation and implementation (Malshe *et al.*, 2017; Hayati *et al.*, 2018).

Moreover, they are instrumental in relationship marketing and selling, which have become essential elements of marketing and sales strategy (Morgan and Hunt, 1999; Pousa *et al.*, 2020).

Relationship marketing refers to activities that establish, develop, and maintain long-term and cooperative customer relationships (Hunt and Morgan, 1994; Gummesson, 1998). The latter encompasses personal selling activities commonly referred to as relationship selling and stand in sharp contrast with traditional selling in that they foster the initiation, development, and enhancement of long-term and trust-based relationships with customers (Jolson, 1997; Pousa *et al.*, 2018). The success of these selling activities in fostering such relationships depends on the salesperson possessing encouraging characteristics and practicing desirable behaviors (Friend *et al.*, 2018).

In this vein, corporate heritage communications have proven useful for relationship marketing and for various purposes that ultimately pour into building brand identity (Blombäck and Brunninge, 2016). Hence, and due to salespeople's crucial roles in marketing and sales strategies and relationship selling, it is sensible to explore their perspectives on the value of corporate heritage to relationship selling and the issue of trust in personal selling situations.

Personal selling and corporate heritage: Trust as a common ground

Trust is a building block in the relationship between buyers and sellers (Friend *et al.*, 2018). In particular, trust in the salesperson is a primary driving factor for customer satisfaction (Twing-

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3 Kwong *et al.*, 2013; Shetty and Basri, 2018). However, trust in the salesperson's company is an
4 influential determinant of trust in the salesperson him/herself (Swan *et al.*, 1999; Kennedy *et al.*,
5 2001). Previous research found that company-related factors such as company image
6 (Chattananon and Trimetsoontorn, 2009), company credibility (Belonax *et al.*, 2007), company
7 reputation (Jeng, 2008), and company trust (Andaleeb and Anwar, 1996; Comer *et al.*, 1999) are
8 critical factors in establishing trust in personal selling situations and ultimately contributes to the
9 success of relationship marketing and selling.

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20 Researchers have considerably investigated trust's antecedents and consequences in personal
21 selling situations (Friend *et al.*, 2018; Mangus *et al.*, 2020). This research found that trust in the
22 salesperson and the company are influential drivers for customers' future purchase intentions
23 (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Macintosh and Lockshin, 1997) and commitment (Friend, Hamwi,
24 Rutherford, 2011; Gansser *et al.*, 2021), collaboration between buyer and supplier (Srinivasan *et*
25 *al.*, 2020), and share of the customer (Ahearne *et al.*, 2007).

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34 In this vein, corporate heritage is another company-related factor that could be especially useful
35 to relationship selling and the issue of trust in personal selling situations, owing to the positive
36 meanings it reflects and which are especially helpful in business contexts (Balmer, 2011a;
37 2011b; Balmer and Chen, 2017; Rindell and Santos, 2021). Corporate heritage brands reflect the
38 meanings of authenticity, credibility, reliability, and trust in the eyes of stakeholders (Urde *et*
39 *al.*, 2007; Hakala *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, corporate heritage signals the impactful qualities of
40 stability, reliability, and past performance in markets (Rose *et al.*, 2016). Researchers argued that
41 due to these unique meanings and perceptions, corporate heritage brands have an exceptional
42 ability to survive periods of economic hardships and high uncertainty (Balmer, 2011b;
43 Wiedmann *et al.*, 2011).

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3 Balmer (2011b; 2013) introduced the bilateral trust notion in explaining why heritage institutions
4 and brands are perceived as trustworthy. The latter conceptualizes that trust depends on the
5 authenticity on the part of the heritage institution and the affinity on the part of its stakeholders,
6 where the first stems from invariant and salient corporate heritage features and the second arises
7 from the heritage identity remaining meaningful to stakeholders. In line with this, recent research
8 confirmed that brand heritage increases brand trust, leading to brand loyalty and commitment
9 (Zeren and Kara, 2021) and increasing the financial value of firms (Paek *et al.*, 2021).
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20 This study explores the value of corporate heritage to relationship selling and the issue of trust in
21 personal selling situations in an emerging market. Salespeople are the most critical group of
22 customer-facing personnel as they are influential in establishing satisfying and trust-based
23 customer relationships (Blocker *et al.*, 2012; Jobber, Lancaster *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, it is
24 sensible to conduct this exploration from a salespeople's perspective.
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32 **Methodology**

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34 This cross-sectional study adopts the qualitative research design (Miles and Huberman, 1994;
35 Creswell, 2014) to explore the subjective meanings salespeople assign to corporate heritage in
36 the context of their operations and activities. The cross-sectional research design is commonly
37 used in qualitative research (Bryman, 2016). Moreover, this mixture of research time horizon and
38 methods is not less common within the empirical research of the corporate heritage literature
39 (Urde *et al.*, 2007; Burghausen and Balmer, 2014a; 2015). This is mainly due to the social
40 constructionist and subjective nature of the corporate heritage phenomenon, which implies that it
41 is a multifaceted reality that can change and evolve across contexts and time (Balmer 2011a;
42 2013). Therefore, it is a phenomenon that calls for adopting an interpretive research perspective
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3 to obtain better the data necessary to decipher its complexity, namely, salespeople's subjective
4 meanings and perceptions of the corporate heritage phenomenon.
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8 This study attempts to explicate the phenomenon as salespeople cognize it in line with the
9 traditions of qualitative research situated within the interpretive research perspective (Bryman,
10 2016). Ultimately, this rigorously pours into the study's objective to understand the sales and
11 personal selling value that salespeople estimate regarding the corporate heritage phenomenon
12 and its role in personal selling situations.
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20 To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this study is the first of its kind in terms of its explicit
21 focus on probing salespeople's views on the phenomenon and in relation to their specific roles.
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25 The study is conducted in Jordan, an emerging and relatively nascent country, whilst the
26 available corporate heritage literature is considerably focused on developed countries (Balmer et
27 al., 2006; Urde *et al.*, 2007; Balmer and Burghausen, 2015a, 2015b; Santos *et al.*, 2016), or on
28 nations with remarkably long provenience such as China (Balmer and Chen, 2015; 2017).
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34 Corporate heritage, to reiterate, is a phenomenon wherein the socio-spatial context is exceedingly
35 constitutive to its phenomenological intensity and characterization (Balmer, 2013; Burghausen
36 and Balmer, 2014a, 2015). According to previous studies (Wiedmann *et al.*, 2011; Hakala et al.,
37 2011), corporate heritage brands and identities can be especially meaningful in conditions that
38 resemble those of Jordan, namely, economic troubles and general hardships (British
39 Broadcasting Corporation, 2018; The World Bank, 2021).
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49 ***Data collection and analysis***

50 The study relied on semi-structured in-depth interviews for the collection of its data. The
51 flexibility of this method was assistive in uncovering the informants' different views, attitudes,
52 perceptions, values, and beliefs (Patton, 1990). Furthermore, it helped probe some of the
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3 informants' interesting answers and follow up with intriguing issues or views during the
4 interview (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2018).
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8 Sixteen interviews were conducted with purposefully chosen senior salespeople from ten
9 different heritage institutions operating and were originated (i.e., or re-originated) in Jordan.
10 These companies were selected following the Heritage Quotient model of Urde et al. (2007).
11 Table 1 below illustrates the suitability of the selected companies. The table presents information
12 that the researchers arrived at either through desk research that preceded the interviews or the
13 interviews themselves. Senior salespeople are especially insightful to the purpose of this study
14 due to their substantially long experience in sales and personal selling functions. Moreover,
15 senior salespeople usually have sales managerial roles related to directing, leading, training, and
16 supervising personnel involved in sales and personal selling. Therefore, they can represent the
17 views of personnel engaged in sales and personal selling on issues and topics relating to their
18 work. All the informants have at least twelve years of experience in sales and personal selling
19 within the business sectors of their current companies, including at least four years of experience
20 within their current companies. (See Table 2 below). Thus, having this reasonably long
21 experience in their respective sectors and companies, they can insightfully and thoroughly reflect
22 on their institutions' and brands' heritage in relation to sales and personal selling.
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49 The interviews were conducted in Arabic, the mother tongue language in Jordan. Utmost care
50 was given when conducting the interviews and analyzing and interpreting their data so that the
51 answers provided by the informants reflected their actual views and stances. To reduce
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3 information bias, we have assured informants of anonymity to reduce their intentions to speak
4 unrealistically positively about their companies and brands. We also ensured that the interviews
5 were convenient for the interviewees, conducted in rooms that afforded privacy so the informants
6 could speak freely. Moreover, probing questions helped clarify the informants' views and stances
7 and resolve the inconsistencies that occasionally characterized some informants' initial answers.
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10 The first author conducted the interviews from July to October 2020. They lasted between 25 to
11 75 minutes, with an average interview duration of 41 minutes. All the interviews were audio-
12 recorded, transcribed, and cross-checked by the researchers, leading to textual data that is
13 approximately 71,000 words long. Data saturation (Patton, 1990) was realized as there were no
14 new findings after the eighth interview (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Braun and Clarke, 2021a).
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17 The process of interview analysis began in January 2021 and was concluded in June of the same
18 year. The lead author conducted a word-for-word analysis of the interview data using code labels
19 in the English language. The research team has conducted two meetings during the analysis
20 process to ensure the reliability of the coding. The first meeting was conducted early on during
21 the analysis, where the codes were shared prior to the meeting to be discussed during the
22 meeting. After the initial coding was completed, the research team met again to discuss, and the
23 coding was agreed upon by all the team members (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The analysis was
24 undertaken manually and followed the precepts of reflexive thematic analysis (Terry and
25 Hayfield, 2020; Braun and Clarke, 2021b; 2021c). This qualitative data analysis method is
26 congruent with the philosophical stances and methodological choices (Braun and Clarke, 2021b)
27 outlined above. The analysis process was predominantly inductive. However, literature-based
28 codes were used when this was highly appropriate (Trainor and Bundon, 2020; Braun
29 and Clarke, 2021c).
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3 The first stage of the analysis process generated 110 open codes. These were later categorized
4 into thirteen different sub-themes. The process concluded with the development of four themes.
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6 Each theme represents a facet of the sales and personal selling value salespeople see in their
7
8 institutions' corporate heritage. Figure 1 below presents an example of the coding process.
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16 **Results**

17 ***Theme 1: Trust***

18 This theme of findings reflects senior salespeople's views of their heritage brands as ones that
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20 inspire trust in the market. In their opinion, the long existence of their brands is a major factor
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22 behind this inspired trust (i.e., long existence reflects trust/subtheme). During the interviews,
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24 most of them stated that the long existence of their brands has been encouraging trust and
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26 reassurance on the part of customers towards their brands and themselves.
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30 From the interview discussions, it was evident that the trust heritage brands enjoy is also
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32 nurtured by different streams that all stem from the long existence of these brands. Among these
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34 that were repeatedly mentioned are the financial stability and the consistent performance and
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36 quality of their companies. Put differently, senior managers believe that the long existence of
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38 these brands encourages customers to think positively about aspects such as the financial
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40 stability, quality, and expected performance of their heritage brands and institutions. For
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42 example, one interviewee said:
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48 *“There is no doubt that our history and heritage are very useful in this regard [sales and*
49 *personal selling]. Actually, I think the older a company gets the more it is being trusted by*
50 *customers and the more solid it is being perceived by stakeholders. This is in terms of the quality*
51 *of its transportation services, general performance and financial stability, and the general*
52 *healthiness of the firm. The company has always been there for customers who needed*
53 *convenience and punctual transportation services, and it has very rarely failed them during these*
54 *fifty-plus years.” Company 2*
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3 In this quotation, heritage is highlighted as something useful to sales and personal selling
4 functions. Moreover, this usefulness is explained by the trust heritage inspires in the market.
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6 Additionally, this quote emphasizes long existence as a factor that explains the trust inspired by
7 corporate heritage and determines the amount or the level of this inspired trust, and how this trust
8 is fruitful to the corporate heritage institution or brand.
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15 Moreover, many salespeople expressed the belief that heritage brands are naturally trusted
16 brands, and as a result, customers are attracted to them (i.e., trusted brands/subtheme). According
17 to these salespeople, this attraction to heritage brands facilitates relationship marketing and
18 selling. For example, another interviewee said:
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25 *“Besides, and because of this heritage, there is a well-rooted trust in the brand. They trust this*
26 *brand, so they buy it with closed eyes. And this trust, well-rooted trust, has been generating long-*
27 *term loyalty. People buy frequently, and they belong to it because of this trust. When the online*
28 *community appeared, it became a representation of loyalty that our brand enjoyed. It also*
29 *polished the well-rooted trust we talked about” Company 3*
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33 In this interview excerpt, corporate heritage institutions and brands are described as ones that are
34 intuitively trusted in the market. This intuitive trust has continuously fed customer loyalty to
35 these institutions and brands.
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41 During the interviews, most of the respondents stated that the trust their brands enjoy has
42 considerably helped authenticate their brands’ promises in the eyes of customers. Moreover, it
43 helped the brands enjoy customer trust and a broad base of loyal customers. In this respect, one
44 interviewee said:
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51 *“I think our brand is distinguished by its quality promise, which I believe is very authenticated in*
52 *the market. Authenticated because of many factors, not the least of them is the trust that we*
53 *already enjoy, which to me has been a direct and obvious result of the well-establishment and the*
54 *long existence of the company and the well-established trust with customers and stakeholders*
55 *and the well-maintenance of this trust.” Company 4*
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In this quotation, one feature of corporate heritage institutions and brands is discussed, namely, authenticated quality promise. The latter is a representation and an outcome of the trust that these institutions and brands enjoy. This trust, in turn, is attributed to the well-establishment and long existence of corporate heritage institutions and brands.

Theme 2: Affinity

Like the 'trust' label, 'affinity' is another literature-based concept used to summarize and represent a pattern of this study's findings due to its great suitability to the meanings this pattern embeds. This theme of findings summarizes senior salespeople's views of their heritage brands as ones that inspire affinity in the market. In the senior salespeople's view, their brands are ingrained fabric of their local surroundings and the lives of individuals. An aspect of this that surfaced vividly in the interviews is the brands' socio-spatial rootage (i.e., socio-spatial rootage/subtheme), which in the view of many of the salespeople, has led the brand to be seen as true Jordanian and a true representation in an aspect or more of the Jordanian national and cultural identities. For example, one interviewee said:

"I think being a so old Jordanian company, established by Jordanian people and resources, a local company that Jordanians have had for so long accustomed to seeing, experiencing, and noticing have all led us to be seen as a very naturally genuine aspect of their community and environment. This is why they feel much comfort in dealing with us, and they prefer us."

Company 7

This quotation states that Jordanians see corporate heritage institutions and brands as a genuine aspect of their country and community and a standard element of their daily routine, and thus, they perceive them with affinity. This is explained by these institutions' and brands' features as indigenous ones, established by local people and resources, and more importantly, since long ago. All this led people to become very habitual to corporate heritage institutions or brands.

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3 Additionally, many interviewees explained that their brands, being indigenous Jordanian brands
4 that have been outstandingly successful, are considerably admired by Jordanians (i.e., admired
5 national brands/subtheme). As these salespeople stated, this admiration has further encouraged
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10 Jordanians to perceive these brands with affinity and consider them an ingrained fabric of their
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12 lives and local surroundings. For example, an interviewee mentioned:

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15 *“Many of the Jordanian patients who travel to get treatment in Europe and the US express their*
16 *surprise, pride, and admiration over the social media websites that some of the medicines they*
17 *get in these hospitals are actually Jordanian, carrying the **** name. So, I think it is the feeling*
18 *of being present at a global level for a country that its people feel that they don’t have great*
19 *Jordanian success stories to share and be proud of. Therefore, having *** with all its global*
20 *level success gives them the feeling that there is room for hope and optimism that it is possible to*
21 *have such great national achievements in the future. This also certainly explains why Jordanians*
22 *are so proud and connected, or if you like, emotionally attached to ***** company.”* Company
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28 The above interview excerpt touches upon why Jordanians feel proud of their corporate heritage
29 institutions and brands. This feeling is explained by the success of these institutions and brands,
30
31 which have been at regional and global levels. With their success, and being indigenous to
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33 Jordan, these institutions and brands have been a reason to make Jordanians hopeful and
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35 optimistic about their future and their capabilities.
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40 Another aspect of the affinity theme of findings is the familiarity these heritage brands enjoy in
41 the Jordanian market (i.e., high familiarity stemming from long existence/subtheme). In the view
42
43 of salespeople, this familiarity stems from the long existence of their brands. The interviewees
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45 explained this further, stating that the long existence their brands enjoy implies high brand
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47 visibility and high customer exposure. According to them, these two can be traced back to
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49 customers’ childhood or young adulthood. In addition, almost all the respondents affirmed that
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3 their brands' outstanding familiarity in the market has undoubtedly eased the sale of their
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5 companies' products and positively impacted their sales. In this vein, one interviewee said:

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8 "I think, and this is something that is special and unique to the oldest and still operating
9 companies in the market. This is the popularity and the fame these companies enjoy, which is
10 directly attributed to the very long time these companies have been active in the market. Imagine
11 this, you have been in the market for fifty years now, and in every single day of these fifty years,
12 people are hearing your name seeing your logo, driving next to your lorries, and maybe visiting
13 your stores and using your products." Company 8
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18 The above quotation emphasizes the familiarity that corporate heritage institutions and brands
19 enjoy in the market. This familiarity is another aspect of Jordanians' affinity with these
20 institutions and brands. Familiarity here is represented in the popularity and fame that these
21 institutions and brands have realized due to their long existence in the market. The latter means,
22 that people have been repeatedly, and for a very long time, exposed to and experienced these
23 institutions in various ways. Thus, they became very familiar with them.
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32 Lastly, and during the interviews conducted at only one of the companies, there was a recurring
33 pattern of findings that relates to perceiving the products made by this company as Jordanian
34 national and traditional products (Traditional national product of Jordan/subtheme).
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39 Interestingly, this company's main product is 'Arak,' a traditional alcoholic drink in Jordan. In the
40 view of an interviewee, if there were a national drink in Jordan, it would be 'Arak, particularly
41 the one made by this company.
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46 ***Theme 3: Total marketing excellence***

47 This theme of findings encompasses the views of the senior salespeople on brand heritage as
48 only one of many efficacious levers to sales generation, which they believe requires an effective
49 marketing program.
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3 Based on the interviews, an element of the view that sales generation requires an effective
4 marketing program (i.e., it is more about marketing than only heritage/subtheme) is the unique
5 customer experience through which customers should be able to sense and appreciate the
6 heritage of a company or a brand. To most interviewees, however, the latter requires effective,
7 coordinated, and integrated decisions and activities, not only in personal selling and promotion
8 but also in all marketing mix elements. **For instance, an interviewee said:**

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12 *“People nowadays have changed a lot. A minority of people nowadays are considerably*
13 *attracted to what is old and well-established in communities. Of course, old and well-established*
14 *values, objects, and entities are still precious to all. Still, there is now a majority who first look*
15 *for what really solves their problems and satisfies their needs, regardless of how old or well-*
16 *established it is. This is why old and well-established companies must adopt a broad marketing*
17 *scope. It is through total high-quality marketing programs, rather than only heritage, that old*
18 *and well-established brands can continue to achieve outstanding performance.” Company 2*

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28 In the previous quotation, attention is directed to the effectiveness of the total marketing program
29 as an overarching factor in achieving customer satisfaction. Therefore, and although corporate
30 heritage can be a factor in achieving high marketing and sales performance, it must be supported
31 by the other elements of the total marketing program, which should be no less effective for
32 achieving sustainable customer satisfaction.

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40 In particular, some respondents highlighted the essentiality of innovation and continuous product
41 development to the heritage brand. To them, innovation and continuous product development are
42 one of the major ways through which customers can experience and feel the heritage of a
43 company or a brand. **For example, an interviewee said:**

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50 *“In banking and financial services, you can never rely solely on branding-related matters such*
51 *as brand heritage. In fact, brand heritage is helpful but yet of lesser relevance than being*
52 *adaptive to the developments in financial technology. If you are behind the technological*
53 *developments in this business, no one will come to you because of your image and heritage in the*
54 *market. But if you were in line with the cutting-edge developments in financial technologies,*
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3 *brand heritage can be additional compelling reasons to make customers choose you whenever*
4 *they need to exchange or transfer money.” Company 10*
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8 In this quotation, product development and innovation are spotlighted as factors and elements of
9
10 the total marketing program that are more essential than corporate heritage. Thus, corporate
11
12 heritage needs to be integrated with them for it to be a meaningful and effective element of the
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14 program.
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17 Additionally, most interviewees felt that brand heritage is only one efficacious lever to sales
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19 generation that must work hand in hand with other sales generation levers (i.e., heritage is
20
21 efficacious but not sufficient to generate sales/subtheme). In this respect, heritage is viewed as
22
23 beneficial in the commencement of relationships with customers by the aura of trust and
24
25 credibility it bestows on a company, brand, and salesperson. However, heritage would not help
26
27 later in the relationship if the total marketing offer provided to a customer has been ineffective.
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29 This is why many of the senior salespeople pointed out that relying solely on heritage in such a
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31 case is highly likely to be risky. For example, an interviewee stated:
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37 *“So, as I said, in terms of sales as I said it [heritage] would make it way easier for us to get into*
38 *the room, to set up the meeting. It’s a way easier process I’d say. We decrease our cost by*
39 *getting into the room with these people, and attracting new customers but then again, our*
40 *competitive advantage is how to keep these customers happy, how to obtain them, getting them in*
41 *the first time, I’d say is easier when you have heritage, and you have trust; it would be less*
42 *expensive to attract these people, but I’d say it’s the same process in terms of keeping them*
43 *because the heritage won’t help you if they got a bad experience so they come in, they try your*
44 *service, if it wasn’t good or it wasn’t a service that they need, or they had a bad experience in*
45 *general, they won’t come back whatsoever heritage you have... so it’s easier to get into the*
46 *room, to convince them to come over, to come try your services with brand heritage.”*
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49 Company 9
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52 The above quotation discusses a specific benefit of corporate heritage that relates to the personal
53
54 selling process. This is its ability to ease the opening stage of the personal selling process and
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3 attract new customers at a minimal cost. Also, this quotation states that at later stages of the
4
5 process, corporate heritage needs to be complemented by the other elements of the total
6
7 marketing program that are certainly more effective in concluding a sale and retaining customers.
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10 ***Theme 4: Strategic marketing resource***

11 This theme describes the views of the senior salespeople on heritage being a valuable strategic
12
13 institutional resource helpful not only to marketing and branding but also to sales and personal
14
15 selling. One aspect of this is the perception of almost all interviewees that the heritage of a brand
16
17 and its long existence are influential factors in facilitating sales generation (i.e., heritage
18
19 facilitates selling/subtheme; long existence facilitates selling/subtheme) through the sense of
20
21 trust and affinity (i.e., theme 1 and 2 above) that new and repeated customers feel when dealing
22
23 with a long existent brand and its salespeople. Moreover, to the interviewees, the sense of trust
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25 and affinity reduces the needed sales time and effort to conclude a sale successfully. Thus,
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27 heritage and long existence are unique selling points in the face of competition. For instance, one
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29 interviewee said:
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36 *“Frankly speaking, the way doctors welcome and receive our sales representatives is a way*
37 *different from how they welcome and receive the new or the less older companies’ sales*
38 *representatives. Even if they equally have the same personal competencies and product*
39 *knowledge that our sales representatives have. If the same sales representative visits a doctor*
40 *twice, one wearing **** cap and in the other wearing another company's cap, he will find that*
41 *he was more welcomed and better received and perceived in the first case. So, I think heritage*
42 *does play a role in this respect.” Company 3*
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46 Another interviewee mentioned:
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50 *“One of the areas I'm responsible for is life and medical. If we are in a meeting with a client and*
51 *the client wants a plan valid for 20 years, there is a massive difference when we submit a plan*
52 *that will be matured after 20 years, with our long history, combined with long experience as well*
53 *as our financial strength. This client may say other companies offer cheaper prices, I would*
54 *reply to this saying, excellent, but with our company, you will definitely find us present and able*
55 *to pay back your money after 20 years from now.” Company 6*
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5 In the last two quotations, heritage and long existence are highlighted as two factors that can give
6 corporate heritage institutions and brands an edge over the competition. In the first, heritage is
7 said to be valuable in gaining customers' respect and trust. Moreover, it could be an effective
8 basis for a salesperson to overcome competitors' salespeople when they are equal in terms of
9 their product knowledge and selling skills. In the second, long existence is praised for its ability
10 to compensate for some of the corporate heritage institution's and brand's shortcomings due to
11 the trust and reassurance it inspires in customers.
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21 Based on the interviews, a major aspect of this theme is the belief that 'heritage is a strategic
22 marketing resource' (subtheme). To most interviewees, heritage implies a deep market
23 understanding, and corporate heritage institutions have accumulated great market experience
24 through their long existence. According to them, these are customer attraction factors as they
25 signal credibility and competency. For instance, an interviewee stated:
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34 *‘It’s much easier for a company with heritage to market a product, to build successful*
35 *marketing programs. It’s much easier for them than companies with no heritage, not only*
36 *because the customer trust is already there. But also because of the massive knowledge and*
37 *understanding they have accumulated throughout the years. These are indeed the main assets*
38 *that have enabled companies and brands with heritage to be up to the challenges and the test of*
39 *time. Accumulated knowledge and experience, although intangible, are certainly valuable*
40 *elements of a company's heritage.’ company 7*
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44 This quotation directs attention to a valuable heritage element, namely, the accumulated
45 knowledge and experience of corporate heritage institutions, which greatly explains why
46 corporate heritage amounts to be a strategic marketing resource. With this accumulation of
47 knowledge and experience, corporate heritage institutions stand a great chance of success in
48 every marketing endeavor.
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3 One more aspect of salespeople's cognition of corporate heritage as a strategic marketing
4 resource is its usefulness for successful branding (i.e., heritage is a successful basis for
5 branding/subtheme). According to some interviewees, brand heritage-based mottos appeal to
6 markets, and having a corporate heritage brand eases the marketing and selling of licensing-
7 based and premium-priced product brands. Moreover, other interviewees stated that when
8 heritage is properly utilized, it enriches brand essence, raises brand equity, and leads to iconic
9 brand status, and all these certainly help in selling. For example, one interviewee said:

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12 *“What is also amazing, is the motto that we have ‘*** **’, ‘lifetime companionship’ we try to*
13 *put it in English ‘Lifetime companionship’ which is not true, nobody is using it. But in Arabic,*
14 *when you say ‘**** **’ everyone will realize what you are talking about ****. I think the best*
15 *example on the value of our heritage is this slogan, it’s a heritage by itself. When you see people*
16 *using your motto every time, they think about the product category or come across your name or*
17 *logo.” Company 1*

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30 The above quotation sheds light on corporate heritage's usefulness to branding, with a specific
31 focus on heritage-based mottos, slogans, and taglines. These appear to be very appealing to
32 customers and representative of the value and effectiveness of corporate heritage to branding.

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In addition, many respondents commended brand heritage for its usefulness in brand extension
(i.e., heritage is a successful basis brand extension/subtheme). To them, heritage not only
facilitates the introduction of brand extensions but also fastens the achievement of high brand
awareness and reduces customers' perceived risk of them. In this respect, an interviewee said:

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“To me, the fact that our brand has been around for so long now, more than fifty years, makes
our customers believe that it is definitely the high quality of our brand products that have helped
us survive the competition and the bad economic conditions during all this time. This, in turn,
particularly, the brand's long existence and the high-quality beliefs about the brand, which
resulted from the long existence or the brand's oldness, have been giving momentum for frequent
purchases by customers, not only from the brand’s original products, but also all the brand’s
extensions' products.” Company 7

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5 The above quotation encapsulates many of the faces of the value that corporate heritage
6 comprises, such as customer trust, high perceived and authenticated quality, and customer
7 loyalty. Moreover, this quotation ascertains the relevance of this value to a specific and delicate
8 topic within branding, namely, brand extension. Customers' positive beliefs about corporate
9 heritage brands can be a solid basis for obtaining success for all corporate heritage brand
10 extensions.
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19 *Thematic network of findings*

20 As shown in Figure 2 below, the 'strategic marketing resource' theme is a cornerstone to the
21 storyline of the study findings as it links between the other themes of findings. Firstly, this theme
22 is linked to the 'trust' and 'affinity' themes since both represent prominent aspects of the
23 strategic marketing and sales value of corporate heritage in the view of salespeople. Secondly,
24 the 'strategic marketing resource' theme is linked to the 'total marketing excellence' theme, and
25 this link manifests in the salespeople's belief that corporate heritage is only one lever to sales
26 generation, which calls for an effective total marketing program. Thus, in addition to the five
27 sub-themes that make up the 'strategic marketing resource' theme, the 'trust' and 'affinity'
28 themes further explicate why and how salespeople perceive their institutions' heritage as a
29 strategic marketing resource that is useful to relationship selling in and the issue of trust in
30 personal selling situations.
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46 [insert figure 2]
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50 **Discussion**

51 This study is distinctive as it examines corporate heritage in emerging markets. Moreover, it is
52 the first to elucidate how corporate heritage is a helpful organizational resource to relationship
53 selling and the issue of trust in personal selling situations. Previous research confirmed the
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3 positive role that some company-related factors might play in imparting trust to salespeople in
4 personal selling situations. Company image (Chattananon and Trimetsoontorn, 2009), credibility
5 (Belonax *et al.*, 2007), reputation (Jeng, 2008), and trust (Comer *et al.*, 1999) have been all
6 suggested as company-related factors that encourage trust between customers and salespeople. In
7 this study, we present corporate heritage as another company-related factor that can effectively
8 impart trust to salespeople in personal selling situations.
9

10 The study is conducted in an emerging market context, and its findings confirm previous
11 research findings in developed markets. As to the 'trust' theme of findings, recent research
12 reported a strong association between brand heritage and brand trust (Zeren and Kara, 2021).
13 Additionally, more older years of brand establishment were found to be more effective than less
14 older years of brand establishment in invoking brand heritage images and enhancing attitudes on
15 the part of customers (Pizzi and Scarpi, 2019). Besides, the disclosed salespeople's view on
16 brand heritage being a factor of customer attraction is consistent with previous research findings.
17 For instance, brand heritage, expressed by the founding date or brand logo, is a factor that signals
18 high product quality to customers (Pecot *et al.*, 2018). In this vein, too, quality was disclosed as
19 an efficacious corporate heritage brand trait (Sammour *et al.*, 2020).
20

21 Additionally, previous research found that heritage institutions and brands are augmented with
22 non-institutional identities that imbue them with symbolic importance within their socio-spatial
23 surroundings (Balmer, 2011a; 2013). Among these are national and cultural identities (Balmer
24 and Chen, 2015; 2017; Al-Amad and Balmer, 2023). These findings go hand in hand with this
25 study's 'affinity' theme, particularly the studied brands' socio-spatial rootage and their
26 representation of Jordan's national and cultural identities.
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3 Moreover, childhood memories were recently highlighted due to their role in authenticating
4 corporate heritage brands (Rindell and Santos, 2021). Also, earlier research posited that
5 corporate heritage brands reflect familiarity, stability, and trust (Hakala et al., 2011; Balmer,
6 2011b). All this comes in line with the study's finding concerning the familiarity of heritage
7 brands which stems from these brands' long existence and contributes to customers' affinity to
8 these brands in the view of the salespeople.
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11 In line with the 'total marketing excellence' theme of findings, corporate heritage literature is
12 copious with explicit allusions to the necessity of maintaining heritage brands' and institutions'
13 relevance and responsiveness to the marketing environmental changes and stakeholders' needs
14 (Urde *et al.*, 2007; Hudson, 2011). Likewise, recent research revealed that consumer experiences
15 and nostalgic experiences are factors in authenticating a corporate heritage brand (Rindell and
16 Santos, 2021) and enhancing purchase intentions (Song and Kim, 2021). Additionally,
17 innovation and creativity were reported as among the essential key traits of the John Lewis
18 partnership's brand heritage (Sammour *et al.*, 2020).
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21 The findings of this study are highly consistent with previous research findings. Altogether, the
22 findings fill knowledge gaps in how salespeople perceive the value of corporate heritage to sales
23 and personal selling functions. Moreover, the findings explain how the marketing value of
24 corporate heritage translates to relationship selling and the issue of trust in personal selling
25 situations in an emerging market. The findings revealed that corporate heritage is another
26 company-related factor that can be particularly useful for relationship selling and trust-based
27 customer relationships. This is realized through the trust it confers to salespeople and their
28 products in personal selling situations.
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Conclusion

The study findings explain the valuableness of corporate heritage as an organizational resource to relationship selling as perceived by senior sales managers of heritage institutions operating within the emerging market of Jordan. The findings show that corporate heritage is a 'strategic marketing resource' useful to relationship selling and the issue of trust in personal selling situations. This usefulness mainly lies in the 'trust' and 'affinity' values that corporate heritage institutions and brands inspire in the market, thus conferring trust to salespeople and their products in personal selling situations and easing relationship selling. However, corporate heritage must be integrated with a totally effective marketing program to reach its full potential.

Theoretical contribution

This study contributes to sales and personal selling and corporate heritage literature. As for the first, the issue of establishing trust in personal selling situations remains as relevant as it has ever been. In this respect, the study represents a substantial extension to the literature on trust in personal selling situations (Amyx *et al.*, 2016; Friend *et al.*, 2018; Mangus *et al.*, 2020), particularly the role of company-related factors (Belonax *et al.*, 2007; Jeng, 2008; Chattananon and Trimetsoontorn, 2009), as it reveals and explains the role corporate heritage play in imparting trust to salespeople and their products in personal selling situations. As for the second, the study further supports the resource-based view adopted within the corporate heritage literature (Hudson, 2011; Balmer, 2013; Paek *et al.*, 2021). This is for the first time explored in the context of an emerging market and in relation to sales and personal selling functions. The findings illustrate the sales and personal selling value senior salespeople assign to the heritage of a brand or an institution as a factor (i.e., organizational resource) that can grant them an aura of trust in personal selling situations. The latter is a uniquely relevant stakeholder perspective given

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3 the nature and importance of salespeople's role in today's business organizations, which has
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5 received a dearth of research interest.
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8 *Managerial implications*

9 Long-existing companies that possibly have heritage should consider taking advantage of it in
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11 strengthening their sales activities and empowering their salespeople (i.e., building capabilities).
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14 This is critically important for the emerging markets' indigenous companies, which are
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16 increasingly exposed to competition from multination companies originating from the developed
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18 markets. The study findings invite the senior managers, particularly sales managers, to
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20 incorporate their institutions' heritage in their salesforce training programs to ensure that their
21
22 sales trainees get an adequate orientation about the relevant aspects of their institutions' heritage.
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25 Facts, events, and stories taken from the corporate past are likely to be useful presently and
26
27 prospectively in framing the company as a trustworthy partner and a deeply-rooted local entity.
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30 These are all examples of heritage aspects that salesforce training programs should cover.
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33 Additionally, these training programs must go beyond the mere transference of abstract
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35 knowledge about the company's heritage to take a more practical stance. Senior managers are
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37 advised to train their salespeople to actively use this knowledge and combine it with the different
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39 selling skills commonly used in the selling process (Jobber *et al.*, 2019). In this vein, managers
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41 can use the corporate heritage identity implementation strategies (i.e., Narrating, Visualizing,
42
43 Performing, and Embodying) suggested by Burghausen and Balmer (2014a).
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48 Furthermore, the findings allude to the influential role that corporate heritage marketing (Balmer,
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50 2013) can play as a primary set of activities in perfecting the employment of corporate heritage
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52 for sales and personal selling functions. For example, integrated corporate heritage
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54 communications that emphasize a corporate heritage institution's trust and affinity can enhance
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3 customers' awareness and recognition of an institution's corporate heritage, creating warm
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5 prospects that salespeople can easily turn into actual customers.
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8 *Research limitations and recommendations*

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10 The study has some limitations that should be outlined. First, the qualitative nature of this study
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12 and its country-specific focus restrict the generalizability of its findings. The latter should be
13
14 applied along the lines of analytical generalizability rather than statistical generalizability.
15

16
17 Second, the study relied on data collected from senior salespeople to examine their perspectives
18
19 on the sales and personal selling value of corporate heritage. Therefore, any interpretation of the
20
21 findings should be strictly based on this purpose and perspective. Third, the study's cross-
22
23 sectional design implies that it did not account for time-related factors that may impact the
24
25 soundness of its findings in future replications. Finally, there was variation in the number of
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27 informants interviewed in the selected companies (see Table 2). Companies 1, 3, 4, 6 have more
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29 representation in the study's sample of respondents than the rest of the selected companies.
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33 However, this variation is attributed to the extended access obtained in some companies and the
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35 availability of more than one insightful senior salesperson to the study's purpose at these
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37 companies. Considering the qualitative exploratory nature of our study, in which findings are not
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39 claimed to be statistically generalizable, this variation does not weaken the robustness of the
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41 study findings.
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45 Research replications in emerging countries with characteristics similar to Jordan, whether in
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47 Asia, Africa, or Eastern Europe, can further reveal the peculiarities of the corporate heritage
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49 phenomenon and its value to relationship selling and the issue of trust in personal selling
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51 situations in the emerging markets' research context. Moreover, future research can investigate
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53 how sales managers can use corporate heritage to manage customer relationships in the face of
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3 economic and political instability that characterize many emerging countries. Researchers
4 interested in this line of inquiry are also encouraged to look into the differences and the
5 interrelationships between trust in the salesperson's company and trust in the salesperson
6 him/herself.
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12 In the course of analysis, minor findings highlight collectivism and tribalism, which characterize
13 many of the emerging countries' societies, as factors that may further increase the value of
14 corporate heritage to relationship marketing and selling. These can make an interesting research
15 direction for future corporate heritage studies in emerging countries.
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23 Furthermore, the usefulness of brand heritage to brand extension is another minor thread of
24 findings that deserves attention. Case studies examining successful brand extensions of corporate
25 heritage brands can be especially fruitful in affirming and explaining this. Finally, this study
26 relied on a sample of corporate heritage institutions that operate in various industries and
27 markets. Thus, future studies may focus on specific industries and specific categories of business
28 and consumer products, which may reveal new findings. Arguably, the trust and affinity of
29 corporate heritage institutions and brands may be of greater importance for sales and personal
30 selling functions associated with the shopping, specialty, and unsought products in the case of
31 consumer markets, and the installations, component parts, and business services in the case of
32 business markets.
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53 On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.
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Table 1: Heritage quotient criteria (source: Urde et al. 2007) and the study sample.

Studied heritage institution	Criterion 1: Track record Performance as proof that a company has lived up to its values and promises over time.	Criterion 2: Longevity The consistent demonstration of other heritage elements.	Criterion 3: Core values Long-held core values that have guided corporate behavior and thinking.	Criterion 4: Use of symbols Symbols are used to express meanings and values. and heritage.	Criterion 5: History is important to identity History is considered as important to the firm's identity. It impacts how it operates and its future decisions.
Company 1/ Foods manufacturer	- Geographical expansion from the West Bank of Jordan River to Jordan and beyond - Recent penetration of the frozen foods market, in addition to long-dominated cold cuts and canned meats markets	-Established in the 1920son the West Bank of River Jordan - Has always been known for its high-quality products	- High-quality products	- Has kept the same logo, slogan, and some designs.	- Proud of heritage, evident in marketing communications
Company 2/ Touristic transportation services	- Dominance in the local tourist transportation market	-Established in the West Bank of Jordan River 1960s and relocation to Amman, Jordan, shortly after that - It has been long associated with safety and punctuality	- Safety and punctuality	- Consistent logo that reflects core values	-History is considered an essential point of strength in the face of increasing competition
Company 3/ Pharmaceutical manufacturer	- Global company and leader in the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry	- Established in Jordan almost half a century ago - Has been consistently directed towards high-quality and affordable medicines	- high-quality and affordable medicines	- Logo has evolved but remained consistent with core values of high quality and affordability	- Proud of Jordanian roots and identity - New headquarters in London but biggest hub in Jordan
Company 4/ Alcohol producer	- Most prominent alcoholic beverages producer in Jordan during the last sixty years	- Established sixty years ago - High quality has been continuously embodied in its products	- High quality	- Has kept the same logo that reflects the core value	History is a strategic resource for marketing communications
Company 5/ Print house	- The leading print house to the Ministry of Education and publishing houses locally - Recent expansion to packaging markets - played a substantial role in education and acculturation in the kingdom	- Established in1960s - Has been keen on being synonymous with high quality in printing and packaging	High quality in printing and packaging	-	Communicates its story in every possible way

Company 6/ Insurance company	Has been leading the insurance industry in Jordan, offering a wide variety of insurance products	- One of the oldest insurance companies in Jordan, established in the 1960s. - Well-known for its professionalism and high-quality customer service.	- professionalism and high-quality customer service	- Has kept the same logo that reflects the core value	- Proud of its history but only recently began a purposeful attempt to communicate this to the public, primarily through social media and its websites
Company 7/ Paints producer	-Leading position in its industry locally and regionally; production facilities in ten countries, and products are marketed in eighty countries	- International paints producer, established in Jordan in the 1960s - Well-known for high-quality paints	- High-quality	- Logo has changed over time.	- Very proud of its story and takes pride in the achievements it has realized across the years
Company 8/ distributor of hardware	- Among the most successful importers and (retail and industrial) distributors of hardware and a huge range of household items	- Established 1970s - Its success is attributed to high-quality and customer service values	-High-quality customer service	- Has always had the same logo.	- No clear evidence of the company's appreciation of the importance of its history.
Company 9/ Exchange House	Leader of Jordan's money transfers and exchange services, partially realized through its intensive presence and innovative services	- Established 1960s - Has always been seen as a very reliable and trustworthy exchange house	-Trust and reliability	- Logo has always been consistent with its core values through the trustworthy tribal family name it contains	- The company highlights its long history, story, and its founder's values in its communications, particularly on its website
Company 10/ Exchange House	Pioneer of money transfers and exchange services in Jordan	Established 1940s - It has associated itself with the values of trust, reliability, and excellent customer service	Trust, reliability, and excellent customer service	- Trust and reliability have been embodied in the company's logo, which features the owners' reputable tribal name	- Has been keen on highlighting its long history in all its marketing communications

Table 2: An overview of the study informants

company	Sales manager	Job title	Age	Gender	Years of experience within the respective industry	Years of experience within current company
1	A	Country sales manager	50	M	16	12
	B	Cluster sales manager	47	M	14	8
	C	Regional sales manager	42	M	12	6
2	A	Executive sales manager	51	M	0	20
3	A	Cluster sales manager	38	M	8	4
	B	Key account sales manager	44	M	10	8
	C	Regional sales manager	39	F	0	16
4	A	assistant general manager for sales	48	M	10	11
	B	Field sales manager	42	M	8	7
5	A	Deputy general manager (sales, marketing, etc.)	41		3	16
6	A	Assistant general manager for life and medical (sales, marketing, etc.)	54	M	7	23
	B	Senior sales manager for life and medical	48	M	7	12
7	A	Key account sales manager	38	M	9	5
8	A	Deputy general manager (sales, marketing... etc.)	40	M	3	13
9	A	Assistant general manager for sales	49	M	6	9
10	A	Assistant general manager for sales	52	M	12	10

Figure 1: Illustrative example of the coding process

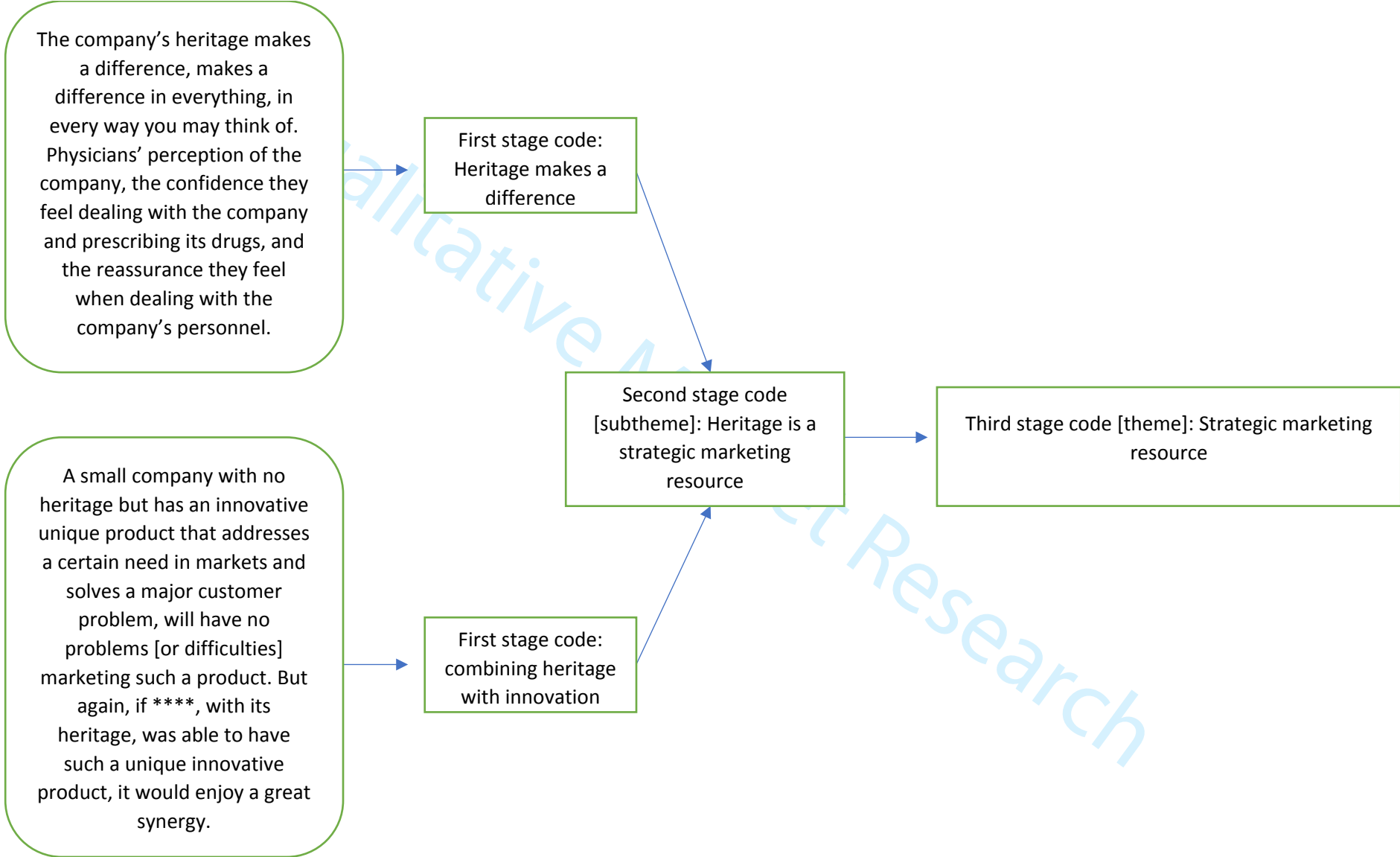


Figure 2: The thematic network of findings

