

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

EMPLOYER BRANDING AND ITS SEDUCTIVENESS: A RESEARCH AGENDA

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Abstract

Firms are ceaselessly in the quest to attract and retain talent to reap sustainable competitive advantage. The resource-based view of the firm claims that human resources are the salient source that significantly contribute to the strategic benefit of a firm in turbulent times. Thus, organizations are crafting their employee value propositions to attract and retain talent. It is said that the talented workforce can proactively contribute to the achievement of the firm's strategic goals. Ironically, the loss of talented employees might produce severe consequences for the firm. Thus, it is of greater importance to the firm to craft robust compelling strategies to attract and retain talent. The nascent literature has underlined the importance of employer branding in attracting, retaining, inspiring and engaging the talent for elevating firm excellence. That is to say, employer branding aids firms to hire the best talents and contribute to organizational productivity. The employer branding philosophy develops from marketing literature based on the notion that firms market their products to the outside customer, it should market itself to its inside customers (internal employees). As a result, it can distinguish itself from those of its competitors as a great place to work. Despite the volume of literature on employer branding, many key points and explorations are required to better understand the antecedents and consequences of employer branding. Therefore, the present article aims to give a layout of the work that has been done to date on employer branding, highlights progressing upgrades in the research, and suggests future research directions.

Keywords: Employer branding, human resources, resource-based view, competitive advantage

1. Introduction

Owing to the limitless innovation-driven business climate, one of the major corporate troubles is to satisfy the growing need for executive talent. The success of firms relies on the nature of their labour force who can confront the above challenges. The test with the corporate lies in identification and fascination of talent and such labour force is limited in the present competitive climate (Chhabra and Sharma, 2014). Consequently, it is critical to develop pertinent strategies to captivate the best candidate pool and while nurture and hold the current employees. Kotler (1994) claims that the tasks of effectively recruiting, training and motivating capable individuals to serve the client is characterized as internal marketing. One segment of internal marketing that is as yet immature is employer branding and explicitly employer attractiveness (Berthon et al., 2005). Employer branding focus on a long-term plan to oversee mindfulness and view of employees, potential employees and related interested parties concerning a specific firm (Sokro, 2012). Like genuine product branding, firms have begun to invest in employer branding as employees are the internal clients of the firm.

The employer branding gathers a picture insisting the firm is a decent residence to work (Chawla, 2020). Today, a convincing business brand is key for competitive advantage. It insinuates the way toward perceiving and making a firm brand message, applying standard guidelines to achieving the situation with the employer of choice (Sutherland et al., 2002). Barrow and Mosley (2011) deliberate that employer branding is used not only to communicate the message of the personality of firm as an employer of choice but it has also been used to adjust the instruments and techniques used to move and connect with employees. Even though the employer branding practice obtained critical distinction, the scholastic literature in regards to it is yet insufficient (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004).

Edwards (2009) found a lacune in HR and organizational behaviour fields, the ebb and flow literature are to some degree engaging and zeroed in on specialists. The majority of the marketing research centres around customers, and little examination has explored the work it plays in drawing in specialists (Wilden, Gudergan, and Lings, 2010). Despite the employer branding is for the most part used by firms across Sri Lanka, it has been under-investigated and not a lot recorded in academic pursuits. As opposed to the firms across the developed countries, firms operating in Sri Lanka could attract and hold the talented people for a long time if the craft employer branding strategy. It is of explicit importance in Sri Lanka due to the conditions of its post-war economy, a shortfall of graduates in different regions, and the movement of especially talented workers as there are by and large available open positions abroad, especially in the Middle East because of high wages (Aldousari, Robertson, Yajid, 2017). Thus, it is a great deal for managers in Sri Lanka to attract and retain talent to confront the rapid transformations in the economy.

Therefore, employer branding as a nascent field, it requires additional research to discover the antecedents and consequences of employer branding particularly in Sri Lankan context. Accordingly, first, authors define employer branding. Then, at that point authors present a theoretical establishment for employer branding, utilizing the management works of literature. At long last, the paper presents an agenda for exploring and building employer branding as a compelling practice for HRM.

2. Methodology

Utilized a three-stage iterative process to lead a comprehensive review of EB literature: (1) exploration of the pertinent literature; (2) in-depth structural and content-based investigation of the literature; also, (3) unifying of articles and assemblage into classifications to synthesize the research. Before talking about these stages, the study details the inclusion and search standards of the survey. The formal inclusion measures in the search process included (a) English language, (b) primary study and (c) double-blind peer-reviewed academic journal publication. To enrich the review and deliver a comprehensive view of the topic, we encompassed edited research articles, books and book chapters with empirical findings or 'robust theoretical and conceptual arguments' (Manroop and Richardson 2016). The full papers and books were reaped from reputed databases such as Science Direct (Elsevier), ProQuest business, Wiley Online Library, Emerald Insight, Sage Journals, and Google Scholar where a great range of articles was accredited advisable for the employer branding.

3. Theoretical underpinning

The notion of employer branding emerged during the 1990s. Incidentally, the possibility of "employer branding" was established in 1996. From that point forward, firms working in all industrial regions have set out on the development and vital administration of their pictures to make them in any event, intriguing to certifiable and likely people. As time goes on, employer branding brings additional benefits, as it similarly overhauls the product brand (Backhaus, 2016). The fundamental driver behind the ascent of this idea is the need to draw in and hold the best and the most talented HR. Brands are among an organization's most significant assets and along these lines brand the board is an essential idea in numerous firms. The term branding was at first used to isolate between actual products, yet throughout the long term, it has been saddled to recognize

individuals, places and associations (Peters, 1999). The term employer branding shows the contrast between the characteristics of firms as employers and those of their rivals. Employer branding depicts indistinguishable components of the company's business contributions or climate. Chawla (2020) posit that the employer branding, calling it "a bundle of financial, and psychological returns given by the work, and consistent with the employing firm. The employer branding makes the uniqueness of the firm as an ideal place to work. The ubiquity of employer branding among experts and the absence of academic examination on the topic raises interesting inquiries for the management researchers. Firms currently appear to be assigned huge resources on employer branding crusades, showing that they are finding the worth practically. Notwithstanding the developing pervasiveness of the employer branding practice, scholarly examination on the point is confined to several articles in the marketing literature. Miles and Mangold (2004) declared that the best approach to ideal employer branding was insightful to the firm among a firm and its people. Notwithstanding an unfriendly perspective on this new business reality, firms use employer branding to propel the advantages they offer, including getting ready, calling openings, mindfulness and improvement. By efficiently introducing workers to the offer of the employer branding, the work culture is conformed to the corporate targets, enabling the firm to achieve an excellent culture focus on performing business the organization's way.

Propositions developed

P1: Employer brand associations affect the image of the firm as an employer.

P2: Employer brand image mediates the relationship between employer brand associations and employer attraction.

P3: Employer brand associations enhance the process of person-organization value matching.

P4: Employer branding reinforces and changes organizational culture.

P5: Organization culture mediates the relationship between employer branding and employer loyalty.

P6: Employer branding strengthens organizational identification among employees.

P7: Employer brand loyalty is positively related to employee productivity.

4. Research agenda

In the aforementioned segment, authors were given a theoretical underpinning for employer branding. In this part, a study plan was put forth for creating and approving employer branding as a significant practise for HRM. Regardless, the exploration needs to be coordinated into how firms ought to make and execute fruitful employer branding strategy. Specifically, what process ought to be used to encourage? What are the major incentives of employer branding? What procedures and methodologies ought to be used for the internal and external advertising of the employer brand? What are the obstacles in elevating consistency between the external and internal brand displaying? How is it possible that these would deterrents be managed? (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). The concept "sustainability" has advanced into almost every part of the management, with the attention typically set on dealing with the present resources in a way that guarantees their accessibility for the future (Backhaus, 2016). Importantly, sustainability is a great concern for firms today owing to environmental pressures. Every firm should be mindful in their production and business operations a result significantly affects nature's well-being. Green environmental practices should also be taken into account in terms of their interaction with employer branding. Firms should concern about the triple bottom line of people, profit, planet, to gauge the financial, social, and natural performance of the organization (Oppenheim and Stuchtey, 2015). Sustainability with regards to employer branding can be portrayed as the capacity of the brand to follow through on its promises in a positive manner to expand employee outcomes.

Further, firms are now more focus on innovation as a branding strategy to enhance organizational success. In developed countries, many firms today utilizing innovation as a competitive strategy to

confront dynamic environment and to differentiate from those of their competitors. That is, using innovation strategy firms can attract talent. Despite, firms should integrate their innovation strategy with the employer branding strategy to produce goal-congruence.

The array of employer branding research over the long run has attempted to identify the connections of the central ideal models. The study has imitated and reconsidered exertion done in the spaces of firm allure and firm character. The more inconvenient undertaking is yet to be finished. What is the value of an employer brand? Does employer brand equity exist and what amount does it drive the company's result? Does it add to specialist dedication? Is there a quantifiable differentiation between an organization with strong employer branding likewise, an organization without one? To put it, does a strong employer branding add to worker efficiency in evident and quantifiable manners? (Backhaus, 2016). As referred to by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) in case employer branding is in progress, it ought to be circumspectly managed for it to be effective. This requires estimating the resources made by employer branding and the impact of employer branding on firm performance. Employer branding makes two essential resources employer branding affiliations besides, employer branding devotion. The marketing literature offers directions to looking at brand affiliations and brand steadfastness. Normally, branding has been the space of the advertising capacity. Accordingly, future specialists can likewise focus on research questions. Which role, assuming any, should promoting employer branding? how could the human resources promoting interface be overseen? The most intriguing research question is regardless of whether employer branding assists a firm in accomplishing ideal performance. This is a confounded research question. Further, it is particularly important to explore an immediate relationship between HRM practices and employer branding. It is simpler to decide the degree to which the program has made an influence on firm resources, like HR or the behaviour of the individuals. On the other hand, it would be important to recognize the mediators that work between the employer branding and the firm's net revenue or profit development. To have a superior comprehending of the practice of employer branding, research must be led contrasting discernment of the employer branding image also, the overall reputation of the firm.

5. Conclusion

There is no question that the justification for employer branding is to introduce a positive and enamouring picture to current and expected employees. Employer branding is of the different reputational factors that add to competitive advantage. As time goes on, there has been definitional coast in the employer branding literature. At its introduction, employer branding didn't propose the craving of a firm to be the employer of choice. Firms should unite their management practices with their employer branding attempts. Each time a firm goes through an essential change, an adjustment of ownership, an acquisition, or consolidation, it is central that within and external employer brand advising is current and sensible. Additionally, there are numerous lacunae in knowledge concerning the employer brand that ought to be satisfied through additional research. Such lacune incorporates matters of the brand identity's sources, the components of the brand image, the employer branding process, the connection among the employer brand and other firm's brands and identities, and its capacity to bring about sure results. The information and knowledge regarding these issues should be explored inside a specific socio-economic setting.

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