

Antecedents to Employer Branding

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Abstract

In the present competitive era, it has become difficult for organizations to attract and retain talented employees. In view of this constraint many organizations have adopted the employer branding concept in organizations. However, it has been found that multinationals and large business entities practice employer branding but it is not being practiced in SMEs in Pakistan. Thus, SMEs in Pakistan are not able to operate at full capacity due to lack of talented workforce. Past studies despite the importance of employer branding have used it in large industries. Moreover, these studies have examined the consequences of employer branding and have not adequately examined the mediating roles of personal organization and recruitment. This study has examined the effect of employer branding on organizational identification, personal organization, recruitment and satisfaction. Additionally, this study has also examined the mediating roles of personal organization and recruitment. The sample size for the study was 415 SMEs in Karachi. Smart PLS was used for testing the measurement and structural model. The results show that employer branding has a positive and statistically significant impact on organizational identification, personal organization, recruitment and job satisfaction. In addition, the study found that personal organization has a positive and significant effect on organizational identification while recruitment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Further, we find that recruitment mediates the relationship between employer branding and job satisfaction.

Keywords: *Employer branding, organizational identification, personal organization, satisfaction, recruitment.*

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Introduction

Employer branding is the unique and distinct corporate identity of an employer perceived by existing and prospective employees (Xie, Bagozzi & Meland, 2015). In the present era, organizations have become highly competitive and tend to attract suitable employees from the market (Cunningham & Rowley, 2008). Many organizations are also positioning themselves as employers of choice (Bari, Cheema & Haque, 2005). Large organizations use employer branding effectively as compared to SMEs. Most SMEs are under-performing which reduces their ability to retain talented employees (Khalique et al., 2011). Botha, Bussin & Swardt (2011) argue that employer branding significantly effects employee retention. Organizations that brand themselves as market leaders tend to use employee value propositions and target suitable employees. This strategy increases the retention rate and positively effects employee morale, productivity and profitability (Botha, Bussin & Swardt, 2011). Additionally, employer branding promotes a conducive working environment and motivates the workforce (Lakshmi & Sohail, 2013).

Organizations that are attractive to potential employees also enhance their image. Potential employees generally do not turn down employment offers from such organizations (Joseph, Sahu, & Khan, 2014; Jiang & Iles, 2011). Eshoj (2012) argues that employer branding promotes good human resource practices and also provides opportunities for development and growth. Additionally, it gives an edge to such organizations (Chaitra & Murthy, 2016). An important aspect of employer branding is brand association that enhances brand image and attractiveness. Additionally, brand association creates brand identity which leads to loyalty and emotional attachment (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) argue that brand association improves employees brand perception and loyalty.

It has been observed that many SMEs are still not using employer branding concepts (Chaitra & Murthy, 2016). SMEs in Pakistan have a significant growth potential but their performance is weak mainly due to the lack of a skilled and motivated workforce (Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). Khalique et al., (2011) argue that SMEs performance in Pakistan will improve if they use the employer branding concept. Past studies have examined the relationship of employer branding with factors such as corporate reputation, training and development and best human practices in developed economies (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). However, few studies in developing countries have adequately examined the association between employer branding and factors such as organizational attractiveness, organizational culture, employee expectations and retention (Kristof, 1996).

Literature Review

Employer Branding

Employer branding has emerged by applying marketing and branding strategies in HR practices. Employer branding is the presentation of an organization in such a way that potential employees get attracted while the current employees get motivated and committed towards it. Hence, current and potential employees are the target audience of employer branding. In order to operationalize the definition of employer branding, one must first know what a brand is. According to Swystun (2007), a brand is a combination of tangible and intangible attributes, symbolized in the form of a trademark, which when managed appropriately creates influence and value. Employer branding is linked with the concept of branding. Organizations with a strong brand image provide a unique and pleasant working environment to employees (Lemmink, Schuijf, & Streukens, 2003).

Working environment varies from one organization to another. Organizations tend to invest in their working environment for creating differentiation and a competitive advantage (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Working environment is inclusive of both tangible and intangible aspects which include the ambiance of the organization and potential for growth and development (Ambler and Barrow, 1996). Ambler and Barrow (1996) argue that an employment offer is a combination of economic, psychological and functional benefits. An employment offer also contributes significantly towards building a brand name for the organization. It has been observed that some employees value the quality of work experience over financial rewards (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). Martin and Beaumont (2003) argue that employer branding is concerned with building and projecting a positive brand image of the organization. In addition, employees are attracted to those organizations that share similar values.

Dell et al., (2001) suggest that employer branding helps in creating a positive identity for the organization. Organizational identity includes organizational policies, values and employee behavior. Many organizations attract potential employees by differentiating their employment offers from competitors. This strategy attracts talented workers and helps in building a sustainable relationship. Employer branding programs involve highlighting unique organizational value propositions (Knox, Maklan & Thompson, 2000; Lloyd, 2002).

Employer Branding and Organizational Identification

Several organizational activities promote organizational identification and behavior. It has been argued that symbolic attributes of employer branding have a significant association with organizational identification (Edward & Cable, 2009). Knox, Maklan & Thompson (2000) suggest that identifying the attributes of current employees is important

for organizational identification, social values and diversity values. Diversity values include team spirit, competence and a friendly relationship with colleagues (Edward & Cable, 2009). Furthermore, diversity values make an organization attractive for potential employees.

Organizational identification also depends on the strong external image of the organization. Employee competence and reputation also contributes in building organizational identification (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002). Organizational brand personality has a positive association with employer branding, brand identification and employee satisfaction (Edward & Cable, 2009). Punjaisri & Wilson (2011) developed a comprehensive model on brand identification and internal employer branding activities and empirically tested the model in an organization. The study found that employee over the age of 30 years have a strong association with internal brand activities and identification as compared to employees of other age groups. Similarly, well-educated employees have a strong relationship with brand identification.

H1: Employer Branding has a positive impact on organizational identification.

Employer Branding and Personal Organization

Reputed organizations promote personal organization and employer branding activities (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Past studies have found that employer branding has a significant association with personal organization (Edward & Cable, 2009). Knox, Maklan & Thompson (2000) suggest that reputable brands tend to identify the attributes of current employees to ensure it matches with the social values of the organization.

Employer branding also depends on the strong external image of the organization. The competence and reputation of employees also contribute in building the image of the organization (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002). Punjaisri & Wilson (2011) developed a comprehensive model on employer branding and empirically tested the model in an organization. The study found that employees above the age of 30 have a strong association with internal brand activities and personal organization as compared to the employees of other age groups. Punjaisri & Wilson (2011) also suggests that well-educated employees have a strong relationship with brand activities and personal organization.

H2: Employer branding has a positive impact on personal organization.

Employer Branding and Recruitment

The signaling theory of marketing suggests that potential employees are uncertain about prospective employers (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). Thus, employer branding helps in communicating information about the organization and reduce uncertainty

for an employee (Erdem et al., 1999). From a marketing perspective, it is argued that an employment opportunity is a product offered to a potential employee (Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). Prospective employees prior to applying for jobs tend to research about the brand image of the firm. While employees can easily gather information about the job location, salary package and job description, however, it is difficult to ascertain the cultural values of the organization. Many firms use employer branding strategies to communicate information related to the work environment, organizational culture and values to the prospective employees. The accessibility of all relevant information also enhances the trust of employees in the organization.

Berthon, Ewing, & Hah (2005) suggest that an important aspect of employer branding is attractiveness. Attractiveness refers to the set of envisioned benefits that a potential employee expects in working for a specific organization (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). On the contrary, Meffert et al., (2002) argue that employer branding is beneficial for both the prospective employer and employee. Furthermore, employer branding helps new employees to develop organizational identification and feel elevated in working for a prestigious firm. Thus, employer branding enhances the motivation and morale of employees. Firms should allocate sufficient resources for employer branding to ensure that employees give preference to such organizations.

H3: Employer branding has a positive effect on recruitment.

Employer Branding and Job Satisfaction

Employer branding and job satisfaction are positively correlated. Employer branding is inclusive of an organization's culture, values, systems and interpersonal relations (Singh & Rokade, 2014). The pleasant and conducive environment in a reputable firm helps to differentiate it from competitors (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Employees are attracted to organizations that promote work-life balance and provide market-based compensation (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016). The job satisfaction level of employees also increases as a result.

Mihalcea (2017) argues that employer branding can be seen as a strategic tool that generates job satisfaction and loyalty. Employer branding can be created through the following steps. First, use internal analysis which includes examining existing values, culture, competitive position of the firm in the market and prevailing HR polices. Second, to develop a value proposition for employees i.e. the benefits to be offered to existing and potential employees. Third, to focus on external marketing, i.e. communicating about the culture and values of the organization to the outside world. Fourth, to focus on internal marketing, i.e. motivating employees by delivering what they were promised at the time of appointment (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014).

Firms that use employer branding as a strategic marketing tool will have satisfied employees. Employer branding will also lead to brand loyalty and brand association (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Strong employer branding helps in attracting qualified employees, improve interpersonal relationships and enhance organizational performance. Moreover, employer branding improves the employee retention rate, decreases organizational costs and positively affects organizational identification (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Past studies have found a positive impact of employer branding on job satisfaction (Yalim & Mizrak, 2017; Davies, Mete & Whelan, 2018).

H4: Employer branding has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

Organizational Identification and Job Satisfaction

Organizational identification helps employees in developing a bond and sense of belonging with the organization (Mael & Tetrick, 1992). Edwards & Peccei (2007) define organizational identification as a psychological linkage an employee holds with the organization which enables him to form a deep and self-defining bond with the organization. Boroş (2008) argues that it is important for employees to feel part of the organization that they are working for. Both employees and employers should develop a synergy between their core values (Fuller, Marler & Hester, 2006).

Organizational identification stimulates job satisfaction and reduces the uncertainty faced by employees (Tyler & Blader, 2001). Consequently, firms expect that employees will adopt organizational norms and values. A strong and positive relationship between employees and employers promotes organizational identification and employee satisfaction (van Dick et al., 2008). Organizational identification often helps in understanding a range of employee behaviors (van Dick et al., 2008). This includes employee commitment (Cole & Bruch, 2006), turnover intentions (van Knippenberg et al., 2005), resistance to change (van Dijk and van Dick, 2009) and employee cooperation (Tyler & Blader, 2001).

Organizational identification promotes self-concept, self-definition and self-identity in employees (van Knippenberg & van Schie, 2000). As a result, employees consider themselves as a social entity and part of the organization (Edwards & Peccei, 2007). Moreover, organizational identification creates an affective and cognitive bond between employees and the firm and has a positive influence on employee behavior. Furthermore, organizational identification also leads to a higher level of employee commitment and encourages employees to achieve organizational goals (Dutton et al., 1994; Reade, 2001). Past studies have found a positive association between job satisfaction and employee commitment (van Dick et al., 2008).

H5: Organizational identification has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

Personal Organization and Job Satisfaction

Personal organization is a process in which individuals organize their time and skills in such a manner that they become more efficient and effective. Personal organization leads to job satisfaction (Kristof, 1996). In addition, time management improves the efficiency of employees and provides free time for other social activities. Matanda & Ndubisi (2013) argue that the compatibility between organizational goals and personal organization stimulates commitment and employee satisfaction. Past studies have found that personal organization is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, career development, employee performance and personal wellbeing (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). It has been observed that organized employees are able to balance work-life conflicts and life-work conflicts.

Consequently, organized employees have cordial relationships with family members, peers and colleagues (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013, Erdogan, Bauer, Truxillo, & Mansfield, 2012). Erdogan et al., (2012) suggest that employees tend to have different levels of personal organization. Personal organization can also be developed through counselling and training. Therefore, many organizations spend resources for training and counselling employees. Prior studies have found a positive association between personal organization and job satisfaction (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991).

H6: Personal organization has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

Recruitment and Job Satisfaction

Recruitment is a process of appointing suitable employees in an organization for achieving its strategic goals. The three important components of recruitment process are identification, attraction and engagement (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). Traditionally, job advertisements were used to communicate specific information about the job position such as salary, educational and professional qualifications, experience and job description (Yalim & Mizrak, 2017). However, firms with employer branding use multiple channels including traditional media, social media and word of mouth communication. Additionally, firms also attract talented employees through shared norms and values. This practice enables an organization to maintain the motivation and commitment level of its employees (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2016). Before posting job advertisements externally, many organizations prefer to fill the job position by accommodating existing employees. By accommodating an existing employee to a new job position, an organization is able to enhance the commitment and motivation level of the employee. This practice helps an organization to nurture its existing employees which have common values and norms (Stariņeca, & Voronchuk, 2014).

It has also been argued that good human resource practices help employees in understanding the job requirements, growth and development opportunities. Sound human resource practices in an organization also helps in reducing unrealistic employee expectations, turnover and absenteeism, while enhancing job satisfaction (Suszko & Breaugh, 1986; Inuwa, 2015).

H7: Recruitment has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

Personal Organization and Organizational Identification

Employees whose personal goals and organizational goals are aligned tend to be more committed and loyal (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). The integration between individual organization and organizational identification have been discussed extensively in the past literature, but studies have found that it is not very common in many organizations (Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). On the contrary, many studies have found that there is a significant conflict between personal organization and organizational identification (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). Stariņeca & Voronchuk (2014) suggest that the conflict between personal organization and organizational identification can be reduced by promoting the social interaction culture. Consequently, it leads to increased employee commitment and performance. It has also been argued that the transition from educational institution to professional institution is a slow process. Therefore, it may be suggested that both the employers and employees have to make a deliberate effort to align personal and organizational goals (Lemmink, Schuijf, & Streukens, 2003). Collins & Stevens (2002) found that many organizations focus on organizational conditions including reward structure, job design, commitment, but they tend to pay little attention to personal identification factors including self- identity, personal values, and need satisfaction.

H8: Personal organization has a positive impact on organizational identification.

Employer Branding, Personal Organization and Organizational Identification

Reputed organizations promote personal organization and employer branding activities. Past studies have found that employer branding has a significant association with personal organization (Edward & Cable, 2009). Knox, Maklan & Thompson (2000) suggest that a reputable brand tends to identify the attributes of current employees to ensure it matches with the social values of the organization. Employer branding also depends on the strong external image of the organization. The competence and reputation of employees also contribute in building the image of the organization (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002).

Personal organization is a process in which individuals organize their time and skills in such a manner that they become more efficient and effective. Personal organization leads

to job satisfaction (Kristof, 1996). In addition, time management improves the efficiency of employees and provides free time for other social activities. Matanda & Ndubis (2013) argue that the compatibility between organizational goals and personal organization stimulates commitment and employee satisfaction. Past studies have found that personal organization is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, career development, employee performance and personal wellbeing (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). It has been observed that organized employees are able to balance work-life conflicts and life-work conflicts. The theoretical discussion suggests that employer branding has a positive effect on personal organization. In addition, personal organization has a positive effect on organizational identification. Therefore, we argue that the relationship between employee branding and organizational identification is mediated by personal organization.

H9: Personal organization mediates the relationship between employer branding and organizational identification.

Employer Branding, Recruitment and Satisfaction

The signaling theory of marketing suggests that potential employees are uncertain about prospective employers (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). Thus, employer branding helps in communicating information about the organization and reduces uncertainty for a potential employee (Erdem et al., 1999). From a marketing perspective, it is argued that an employment opportunity is a product offered to a potential employee (Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). Prospective employees prior to applying for jobs tend to research about the brand image of the firm. While employees may easily gather information about the job location, salary package and job description, however, it is difficult to ascertain the cultural values of the organization. Many firms use employer branding strategies to communicate information related to the work environment, organizational culture and values to the prospective employees. The accessibility of all relevant information also enhances the trust of employees in the organization. Recruitment is a process of appointing suitable employees in an organization for achieving its strategic goals. The three important components of recruitment process are identification, attraction and engagement (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). It has also been argued that good human resource practices help employees in understanding the job requirements, growth and development opportunities. Sound human resource practices in an organization also help in reducing unrealistic employee expectations, turnover and absenteeism while enhancing job satisfaction (Suszko & Breaugh, 1986; Inuwa, 2015). The theoretical discussion suggests that employer branding has a positive effect on recruitment. In addition, recruitment has a positive effect on job satisfaction. Therefore, we argue that the relationship between employee branding and job satisfaction is mediated by recruitment.

H10: Recruitment mediates the relationship between employer branding & satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study is presented in Figure 1. The framework suggests that it has eight direct relationships and two mediating relationships.

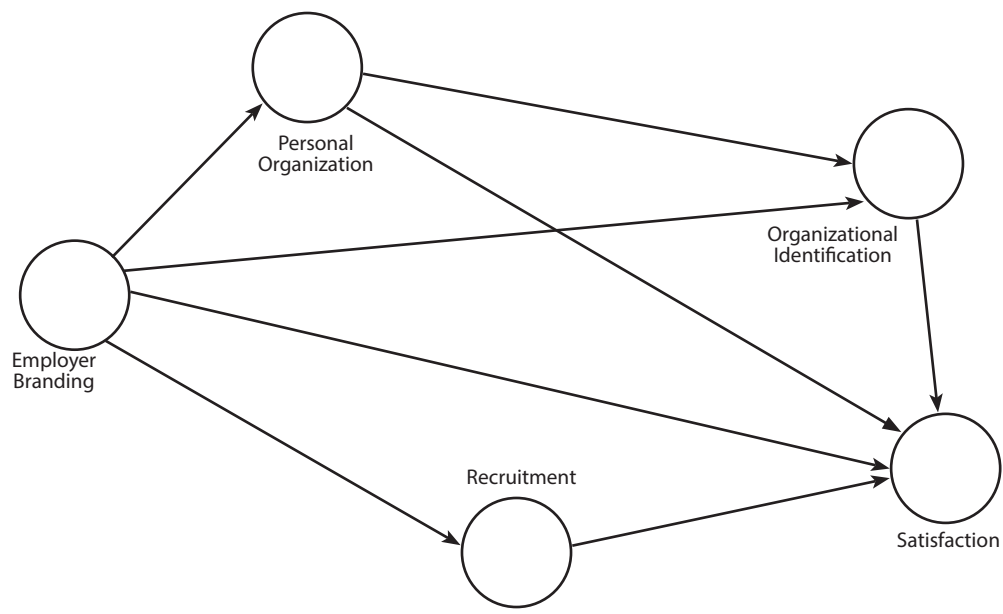


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Sample

The study uses data from four SMEs associations in Karachi. The quota sampling technique was used to identify the group of respondents from the population. Table 1 presents a breakdown of the respondents sampled from each of the four SME associations.

Table 1: Population and Sample

Registered Trade Association	Registered Members	Sample
Federal B Area	212	36
North Karachi	632	109
Korangi	483	83
SITE	1087	187
Total	2414	415

Constructs in the Questionnaire

The study has five variables (constructs) which were measured on the seven point Likert scale, where seven represents strongly agree and one represents strongly disagree. The following sections present a discussion of each variable and its measurement.

Personal Organization

Personal organization is a process in which individuals organize their time and skills in such a manner that they become more efficient and effective (Kristof, 1996). This study measures personal organization through a scale containing five items adapted from Cable & Judge (1996). The reliability of the scale has ranged between 0.77 and 0.87 in previous studies.

Employer Branding

Employer branding is the presentation of an organization in such a way that potential employees get attracted while the current employees get motivated and committed towards it. This study measures employer branding through a scale containing four items adapted from Slavković, Pavlović, & Simić (2018). The reliability of the scale has ranged between 0.81 and 0.89 in previous studies.

Organizational Identification

Edwards & Peccei (2007) define organizational identification as a psychological linkage an employee holds with the organization which enables him to form a deep and self-defining bond with the organization. This study measures organizational identification through a scale containing five items adapted from Mael & Tetrick (1992). The reliability of the scale has ranged between 0.75 and 0.83 in previous studies.

Job Satisfaction

Locke (1969) defines job satisfaction as the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one’s job values. This study measures job satisfaction through a scale containing four items adapted from Slavković, Pavlović, & Simić (2018). The reliability of the scale has ranged between 0.79 and 0.89 in previous studies.

Recruitment

Recruitment is a process of appointing suitable employees in an organization for achieving its strategic goals. There are three important components of the recruitment process which are identification, attraction and engagement (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). This study measures recruitment through a scale containing four items adapted from Slavković, Pavlović, & Simić (2018). The reliability of the scale has ranged between 0.76 and 0.87 in previous studies.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the research variables are provided to ascertain their univariate normality and internal consistency. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Constructs	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
Personal Organization	4.88	1.13	-0.35	0.03	0.88
Organizational Identification	5.00	1.15	-0.48	0.09	0.85
Satisfaction	5.08	1.21	-0.51	0.01	0.87
Employer Branding	5.19	1.16	-0.74	0.54	0.77
Recruitment	4.19	1.12	-0.62	0.65	0.86

The results suggest that employer branding (Mean=5.19, STD=1.16, SK= -0.74) has the highest skewness and personal organization (Mean=4.88, STD=1.13, SK= -0.35) has the lowest skewness. Additionally, recruitment (Mean=4.19, STD=1.12, KR= 0.65) has the highest value of kurtosis and job satisfaction (Mean=5.08, STD=1.21, KR= 0.01) has the lowest value of kurtosis. As the skewness and kurtosis value lie between ± 3.5 , therefore, the variables can be considered to have univariate normality. In addition, personal organization (Mean=4.88, STD=1.13, α = 0.88) has the highest value of Cronbach alpha while employer branding (Mean=5.19, STD=1.16, α = 0.77) has the lowest. Therefore, the variables have acceptable level of internal consistency.

Convergent Validity

The study ascertained convergent validity of the research variables through their composite reliability and average variance explained. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Convergent Validity

Constructs	Mean	Std. Dev	Composite Reliability	AVE
Personal Organization	4.88	1.13	0.92	0.74
Organizational Identification	5.00	1.15	0.89	0.62
Job Satisfaction	5.08	1.21	0.90	0.65
Employer Branding	5.19	1.16	0.85	0.61
Recruitment	4.19	1.12	0.91	0.71

The results suggest that personal organization (Mean=4.88, STD=1.13, CR = 0.92) has the highest composite reliability while employer branding (Mean=5.19, STD=1.16, CR = 0.85) has the lowest. Moreover, personal organization (Mean=4.88, STD=1.13, AVE = 0.74) has the highest value of average variable explained while employee branding (Mean=5.19, STD=1.16, AVE=0.61) has the lowest. As the values of composite reliability and AVE are greater than 0.7 and 0.6, respectively, we may conclude that the variables have acceptable convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity

The uniqueness and distinctiveness of the variables were examined through the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results are presented in Table 4

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

	1	2	3	4	5
Employer Branding	0.86				
Organizational Identification	0.64	0.79			
Personal Organization	0.56	0.5	0.81		
Recruitment	0.58	0.5	0.49	0.77	
Job Satisfaction	0.72	0.56	0.51	0.55	0.84

Table 4 suggests that the square of each pair of correlation is lower than the square root of average variance explained. Therefore, the variables may be considered as unique and distinct.

Structural Equation Modeling

The study applied structural equation modeling using the Smart PLS software to test the hypotheses. The statistical results are presented in Table 5. In addition, the measurement and structural models are presented in Figure 2 and 3 respectively.

Table 5: Statistical Results from SEM

		Beta	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
H1	Employer Branding -> Organizational Identification	0.52	0.53	0.1	5.00	0
H2	Employer Branding -> Personal Organization	0.56	0.56	0.08	7.25	0
H3	Employer Branding -> Recruitment	0.58	0.58	0.07	8.89	0
H4	Employer Branding -> Job Satisfaction	0.53	0.5	0.12	5.29	0
H5	Organizational Identification -> Job Satisfaction	0.13	0.12	0.08	1.63	0.1
H6	Personal Organization -> Job Satisfaction	0.12	0.1	0.08	1.17	0.12
H7	Recruitment -> Job Satisfaction	0.18	0.15	0.08	2.00	0.03
H8	Personal Organization -> Organizational Identification	0.21	0.21	0.1	2.01	0.02
H9	Employer Branding -> Personal Organization -> Organizational Identification -> Job Satisfaction	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.98	0.16
H10	Employer Branding -> Recruitment -> Job Satisfaction	0.09	0.09	0.05	1.97	0.03

The statistical results from SEM suggest that we found support for seven hypotheses i.e. H1, H2, H3, H4, H7, H8 and H10. On the contrary, three hypotheses were not supported by the results i.e. H5, H6 and H9.

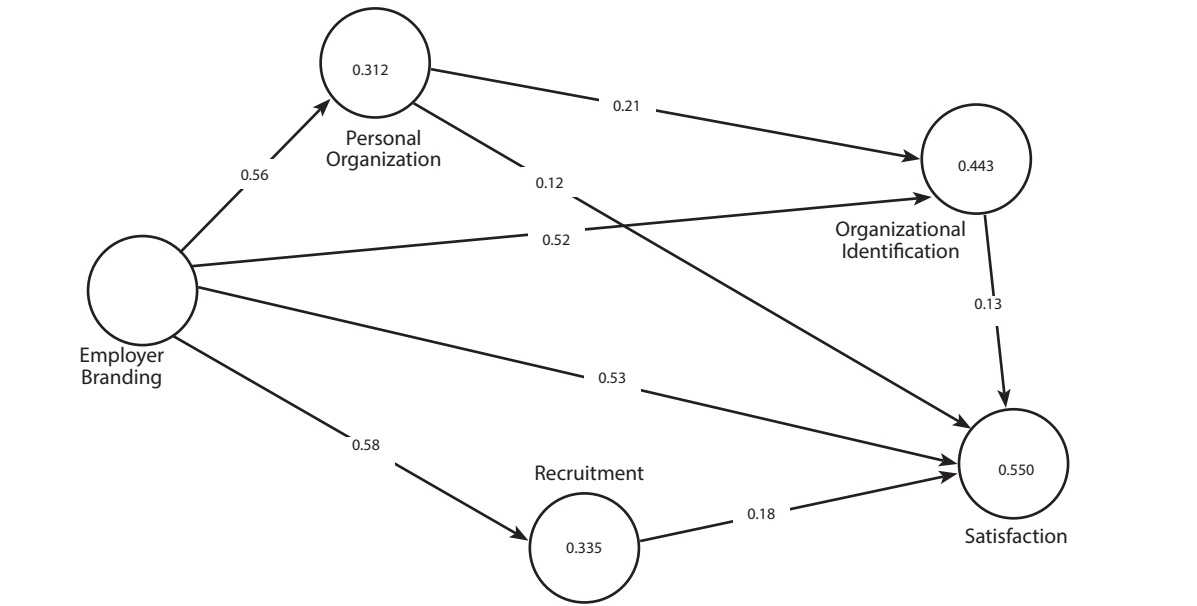


Figure 2: Measurement Model

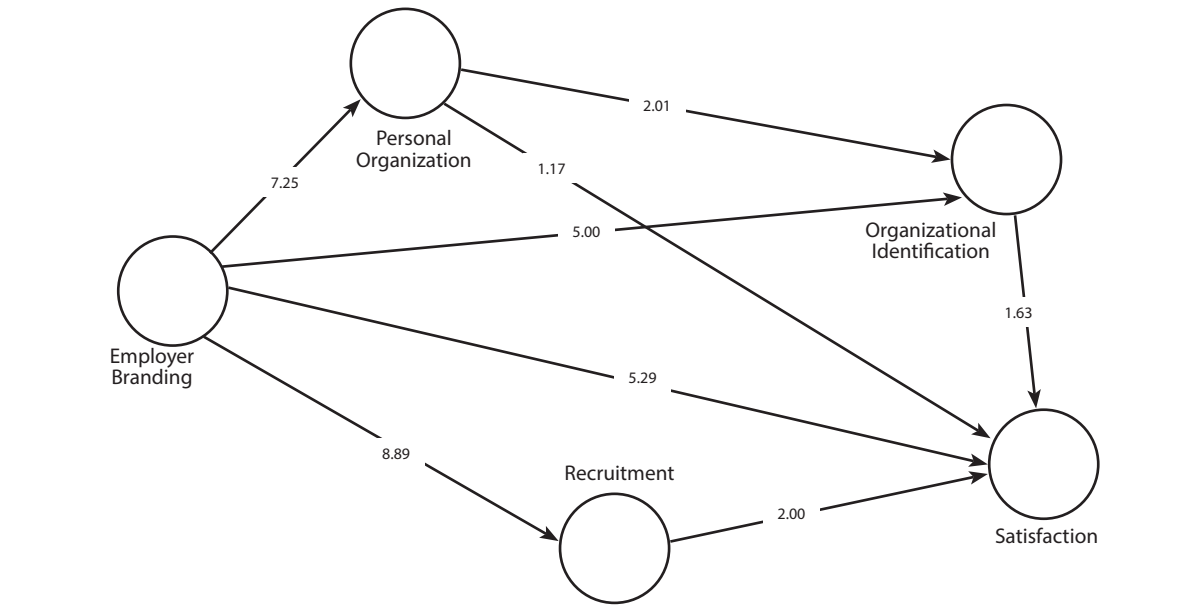


Figure 3: Structural Model

Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

This study examined eight direct relationships and two mediating relationships between the research variables. The statistical results from SEM suggest that we found support for seven hypotheses. The relevance of the results with earlier literature are discussed in the following sections.

Employer Branding and Organizational Identification

The first hypothesis examines the impact of employer branding on organizational identification. The hypothesis was supported by the results ($p < 0.05$). It has been argued that symbolic attributes of employer branding have a significant association with organizational identification (Edward & Cable, 2009). Knox, Maklan & Thompson (2000) suggest that identifying the attributes of current employees is important for organizational identification, social values and diversity values. Diversity values include team spirit, competence and a friendly relationship with colleagues (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). Furthermore, diversity

values make an organization attractive for potential employees.

Organizational identification also depends on the strong external image of the organization. Employee competence and reputation also contribute in building organizational identification (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002). Organizational brand personality has a positive association with employer branding (Edward & Cable, 2009). Punjaisri & Wilson (2011) developed a comprehensive model of brand identification and internal employer branding activities and empirically tested the model in an organization. The study found that an employee over the age of 30 years has a strong association with internal brand activities and identification as compared to employees of other age groups.

Employer Branding and Personal Organization

The second hypothesis examines the impact of employer branding on personal organization. The hypothesis was supported by the results ($p < 0.05$). Reputed organizations promote personal organization and employer branding activities (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002). Past studies have found that employer branding has a significant association with personal organization (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). Sasser & Arbeit (1976) suggest that a reputable brand tend to identify the attributes of current employees to ensure it matches with social values of the organization.

Employer branding also depends on the strong external image of the organization. The competence and reputation of employees also contribute in building the image of the organization (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002). Punjaisri & Wilson (2011) developed a comprehensive model of employer branding and empirically tested the model in an organization.

Employer Branding and Recruitment

The third hypothesis examines the impact of employer branding on recruitment. The hypothesis was supported by the results ($p < 0.05$). Employer branding helps in communicating information about the organization and reduces uncertainty for an employee (Erdem et al., 1999). From a marketing perspective, it is argued that an employment opportunity is a product offered to a potential employee (Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). Prospective employees prior to applying for jobs tend to research about the brand image of the firm. While employees can easily gather information about the job location, salary package and job description, however, it is difficult to ascertain the cultural values of the organization. Many firms use employer branding strategies to communicate information related to the work environment, organizational culture and values to the prospective employees. The accessibility of all relevant information also enhances the trust of employees in the organization.

Berthon, Ewing, & Hah (2005) suggest that an important aspect of employer branding is attractiveness. Attractiveness refers to the set of envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organization (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). On the contrary, Meffert et al. (2002) argue that employer branding is beneficial for both the prospective employer and employee. Furthermore, employer branding helps new employees to develop organizational identification and feel elevated in working for a prestigious firm. Thus, employer branding enhances the motivation and morale of the employees. Firms should allocate sufficient resources for employer branding to ensure that employees give preference to such organizations.

Employer Branding and Satisfaction

The fourth hypothesis examines the impact of employer branding on job satisfaction. The hypothesis was supported by the results ($p < 0.05$). Firms that use employer branding as a strategic marketing tool will have satisfied employees. Employer branding will also lead to brand loyalty and brand association (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Strong employer branding helps in attracting qualified employees, improve interpersonal relationships and enhance organizational performance. Moreover, employer branding improves the employee retention rate, decrease organizational cost and positively affects organizational identification (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Past studies have found a positive impact of employer branding on job satisfaction (Yalim & Mizrak, 2017; Davies, Mete & Whelan, 2018).

Organizational Identification and Satisfaction

The fifth hypothesis examines the impact of organizational identification on job satisfaction. The hypothesis was not supported by the results ($p > 0.05$). Organizational identification stimulates job satisfaction and reduces the uncertainty faced by employees (Tyler & Blader, 2001). Consequently, firms expect that employees will adopt organizational norms and values. A strong and positive relationship between employees and employers promotes organizational identification and employee satisfaction (van Dick et al., 2008). Organizational identification often helps in understanding a range of employee behaviors (van Dick et al., 2008). This includes employee commitment (Cole & Bruch, 2006), turnover intentions (van Knippenberg et al., 2005), resistance to change (van Dijk and van Dick, 2009), and employee cooperation (Tyler & Blader, 2001).

Organizational identification promotes self-concept, self-definition and self-identity in employees (van Knippenberg & van Schie, 2000). As a result, employees consider themselves as a social entity and part of the organization (Edwards & Peccei, 2007). Moreover, organizational identification creates an affective and cognitive bond between employees and the firm and it has a positive influence on employee behavior.

Personal Organization and Job Satisfaction

The sixth hypothesis examines the impact of personal organization on job satisfaction. The hypothesis was not supported by the results ($p > 0.05$). Personal organization leads to job satisfaction (Kristof, 1996). In addition, time management improves the efficiency of employees and provides free time for other social activities. Matanda & Ndubisi (2013) argue that the compatibility between organizational goals and personal organization stimulates commitment and employee satisfaction. Past studies have found that personal organization is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, career development, employee performance and personal wellbeing (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). It has been observed that organized employees are able to balance work-life conflicts and life-work conflicts.

Consequently, organized employees have cordial relationships with family members, peers and colleagues (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013; Erdogan et al., 2012). Erdogan et al., (2012) suggest that employees tend to have different levels of personal organization. Personal organization can also be developed through counselling and training. Therefore, many organizations spend resources for training and counselling employees. Prior studies have found a positive association between personal organization and job satisfaction (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991).

Recruitment and Job Satisfaction

The seventh hypothesis examines the impact of recruitment on job satisfaction. The hypothesis was supported by the results ($p < 0.05$). Recruitment is a process of appointing suitable employees in an organization for achieving its strategic goals. The three important components of recruitment process are identification, attraction and engagement (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011).

Traditionally, job advertisements were used to communicate specific information about the job position such as salary, educational and professional qualifications, experience and job description (Stariņeca & Voronchuk, 2014). However, firms with employer branding use multiple channels including traditional media, social media and word of mouth communication. Additionally, firms also attract talented employees through shared norms and values. This practice enables an organization to maintain the motivation and commitment level of its employees (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2016). Before posting job advertisements externally, many organizations prefer to fill the job position by accommodating existing employees. By accommodating an existing employee to a new job position, an organization is able to enhance the commitment and motivation level of the employee. This practice helps an organization to nurture its existing employees which have common values and norms (Stariņeca & Voronchuk, 2014).

Personal Organization and Organizational Identification

The eighth hypothesis examines the impact of personal organization on organizational identification. The hypothesis was supported by the results ($p < 0.05$). Employees whose personal goals and organizational goals are aligned tend to be more committed and loyal (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). The integration between individual organization and organizational identification have been discussed extensively in the past literature, but studies have found that it is not very common in many organizations (Lemmink, Schuijff, & Streukens, 2003). On the contrary, many studies have found that there is a significant conflict between personal organization and organizational identification (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). Stariņeca & Voronchuk (2014) suggest that the conflict between personal organization and organizational identification can be reduced in an organization by promoting social interaction culture. Consequently, it leads to increased employee commitment and performance. It has also been argued that the transition from educational institution to professional institution is a slow process. Therefore, it may be suggested that both employers and employees have to make a deliberate effort to align personal and organizational goals (Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). Collins & Stevens (2002) found that many organizations focus on organizational conditions including reward structure, job design, commitment, but they tend to pay little attention to personal identification factors including self-identity, personal values, and need satisfaction.

Employer Branding, Personal Organization and Organizational Identification

The ninth hypothesis examines whether personal organization mediates the impact of employer branding on organizational identification. The hypothesis was not supported by the results ($p > 0.05$). Reputed organizations promote personal organization and employer branding activities (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). Past studies have found that employer branding has a significant association with personal organization (Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). Schlager et al., (2011) suggest that a reputable brand tend to identify the attributes of current employees to ensure it matches with social values of the organization. Employer branding also depends on the strong external image of the organization. The competence and reputation of employees also contribute in building the image of the organization (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002).

Personal organization is a process in which individuals organize their time and skills in such a manner that they become more efficient and effective. Personal organization leads to job satisfaction (Kristof, 1996). In addition, time management improves the efficiency of employees and provides free time for other social activities. Matanda & Ndubisi (2013) argue that the compatibility between organizational goals and personal organization stimulates commitment and employee satisfaction. Past studies have found that personal organization is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, career development, employee performance and

personal wellbeing (Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). It has been observed that organized employees are able to balance work-life conflicts and life-work conflicts.

Employer Branding, Recruitment and Satisfaction

The last hypothesis examines whether recruitment mediates the impact of employer branding on job satisfaction. The hypothesis was supported by the results ($p<0.05$). Prospective employees prior to applying for jobs tend to research about the brand image of the firm. While employees can easily gather information about the job location, salary package and job description, however, it is difficult to ascertain the cultural values of the organization. Many firms use employer branding strategies to communicate information related to the work environment, organizational culture and values to the prospective employees. The accessibility of all relevant information also enhances the trust of employees in the organization. Recruitment is a process of appointing suitable employees in an organization for achieving its strategic goals. The three important components of the recruitment process are identification, attraction and engagement (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). It has also been argued that good human resource practices help employees in understanding the job requirements, growth and development opportunities. Sound human resource practices in an organization also help in reducing unrealistic employee expectations, turnover and absenteeism while enhancing job satisfaction (Suszko & Breaugh, 1986; Inuwa, 2015).

Conclusion

Employer branding is the unique and distinct corporate identity of an employer perceived by existing and prospective employees. In the present era, organizations have become highly competitive and tend to attract suitable employees from the market. Many organizations are also positioning themselves as employers of choice. Using structural equation modeling, the study finds that employer identification has a positive and statistically significant impact on organizational identification, personal organization, recruitment and job satisfaction. In addition, we find that personal organization has a positive and significant effect on organizational identification while recruitment has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. Further, we find that recruitment mediates the relationship between employer branding and job satisfaction.

Annexure 1

Constructs and Items in the Questionnaire

Organizational Identification

- When someone criticizes my organization it feels like a personal insult.
- I am very interested in what others think about my organization.
- When I talk about my organization, I usually say we rather than they.
- My organizations’ successes are my successes.
- When someone praises my organization, it feels like a personal compliment.
- If a story in the media criticized my organization, I would feel embarrassed.

Recruitment

- The company spends considerable resources on finding suitable individuals for vacancies.
- Finding suitable individuals for vacancies is an objective and impartial process.
- Various sources, such as the Internet, specialized agencies or human resources experts, are used to find potential candidates.
- The company uses different strategies to attract talented individuals.
- The company is trying to engage people who have the ability to think creatively.

Employer Brand

- As the employer, the firm in which I work stands out in relation to other firms.
- To me, the firm in which I work is attractive as an employer.
- Others people think the company where I work is a good place to work in.
- Jobs in the company are paid above the average.
- Work is done in good working conditions.
- There is a good balance between the time spent at work and free time.
- There are good opportunities for promotion and an improvement in the company.
- Relationships among the employees are good.
- The company offers quality products and/or services.
- The company has a good potential for development in the forthcoming period.

Employee Satisfaction

Generally, I am satisfied with the fact that I work in this company.
I am satisfied with the working environment which I do my job in.
I enjoy my work.
I am adequately paid for the job.
Doing my current job is not too stressful. The job gives me a sense of personal fulfillment.
In the company, I have all the necessary conditions and resources for doing business.
I am satisfied with collegiality at work.
I am satisfied with the relationship with my superiors (managers, bosses, directors).
I have a feeling that the company takes care of its employees.

Personal Fit

To what degree do you feel your values 'match' or fit this organization and the current employees in this organization.
My Values match those of current employees in organization.
Do you think the 'personality' of this organization reflect your personality.

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