

**T.C.
ISTANBUL OKAN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE SCIENCES**

**THESIS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
IN BUSINESS PROGRAM**

SONIA TAKALI

**INTERNAL MARKETING INSIGHTS: ITS
INTERDISCIPLINARY FUNCTIONS AND
THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYER BRAND
ATTRACTIVENESS ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR**

**THESIS ADVISOR:
Doç. Dr. Hakan ÇORA**

Istanbul, May 2022

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ABSTRACT

Various approaches and models directed into tactful and strategic employee engagement endeavors through employer brand attractiveness have been developed within the Internal Marketing framework. This later is further scrutinized by diving into its broader background and concept. That is in its turn the fusion of the Human Resources systems and Marketing strategies. Most organizational theories and empirical studies built to prove a certain presumption in the social sciences sector, do not exhibit perfect or complete results, as samples are taken from a purely realistic and human framework. Nevertheless; they may serve at designating different aspects as regards to the needed processes for developing an effective strategic internal marketing function; namely a one focusing on engaging employees via an attractive brand image. Standards or elements constructing an attractive employer brand along with those constructing employee engagement aspects, have been the subject of many empirical studies. In fact, various temptations have been working on extracting or deducting the most relevant and influencing employer brand values affecting employee engagement. This study designates a detailed description of the impact of each value of employer brand on each aspect of employee engagement, and which value influences the most each aspect within a context of the Information Technology sector. Theoretical foundations of this research are divided into two main parts; the first hovers around the broad concept of Internal Marketing, and the intertwining of Human Resources and Marketing notions to intersect in Internal Marketing. and the second part mainly covers the research problem, that is the narrower and more specific aspect of Internal Marketing; the impact of Employer Brand Attractiveness on Employee Engagement. The empirical part will sustain prior literature with a study within an Information Technology sector context. Finally, sixteen hypotheses will be tested to draw out the conclusion; they are built on the research model, consisting of investigating each aspect of Employer Brand Attractiveness on each aspect of Employee Engagement. that in its turn will result in confirming theoretical foundations along with empirical processes. out of sixteen hypotheses, fourteen will be accepted and four will be rejected. the thing that will demonstrate the positive effect of Employer Brand Attractiveness on Employee engagement on both general and profound levels within the information technology context. Keywords: Information Technology, Internal Marketing, Marketing Management, Human Resources Management, Employer Brand Attractiveness, Employee Engagement.

ÖZET

İçsel Pazarlama çerçevesinde, işveren markası çekiciliği yoluyla taktiksel ve stratejik çalışan bağlılığı çabalarına yönelik çeşitli yaklaşımlar ve modeller geliştirilmiştir. Bu daha sonra, daha geniş arka planına ve kavramına dalarak daha fazla incelenmiştir. Bu da İnsan Kaynakları sistemleri ile Pazarlama stratejilerinin birleşimidir. Sosyal bilimler sektöründe belirli bir varsayımı kanıtlamak için inşa edilen çoğu örgütsel teori ve ampirik çalışma, örnekler tamamen gerçekçi ve insani bir çerçeveden alındığı için mükemmel veya eksiksiz sonuçlar sergilememektedir. Bununla birlikte; etkili bir stratejik iç pazarlama fonksiyonu, yani çekici bir marka imajı yoluyla çalışanların ilgisini çekmeye odaklanan bir fonksiyon geliştirmek için gerekli süreçlere ilişkin farklı yönlerin belirlenmesine hizmet edebilirler. Çekici bir işveren markasını oluşturan standartlar veya unsurlar ile çalışan bağlılığı unsurlarını oluşturan unsurlar birçok ampirik çalışmaya konu olmuştur. Aslında, çalışan bağlılığını etkileyen en ilgili ve en etkili işveren markası değerlerini çıkarmak veya çıkarmak için çeşitli cazip çalışmalar yapılmıştır.

Bu çalışma, işveren markasının her bir değerinin çalışan bağlılığının her bir boyutu üzerindeki etkisinin ayrıntılı bir tanımını ve Bilgi Teknolojileri sektörü bağlamında her bir boyutu en çok hangi değer etkilediğini belirlemektedir.

Bu araştırmanın teorik temelleri iki ana bölüme ayrılmıştır; ilki geniş İçsel Pazarlama kavramı ve İçsel Pazarlama'da kesişen İnsan Kaynakları ve Pazarlama kavramlarının iç içe geçmesi etrafında dolaşmaktadır. ikinci bölüm ise esas olarak araştırma problemini, yani İçsel Pazarlama'nın daha dar ve daha spesifik yönünü, İşveren Markası Çekiciliğinin Çalışan Bağlılığı üzerindeki etkisini kapsamaktadır. Ampirik bölüm, Bilgi Teknolojileri sektörü bağlamında bir çalışma ile önceki literatürü destekleyecektir. Son olarak, sonuca ulaşmak için on beş hipotez test edilecektir; bunlar İşveren Markası Çekiciliğinin her bir yönünün Çalışan Bağlılığının her bir yönü üzerinde araştırılmasından oluşan araştırma modeli üzerine inşa edilmiştir. bu da ampirik süreçlerle birlikte teorik temellerin doğrulanmasıyla sonuçlanacaktır. on altı hipotezden on dördü kabul edilecek ve dördü reddedilecektir. bilgi teknolojisi bağlamında İşveren Markası Çekiciliğinin hem genel hem de derin düzeyde Çalışan bağlılığı üzerindeki olumlu etkisini gösterecek olan şey.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bilgi Teknolojileri, İçsel Pazarlama, Pazarlama Yönetimi, İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi, İşveren Marka Çekiciliği, Çalışan Bağlılığı.

ABBREVIATIONS

A	Absorption
APPV	Application Value
D	Dedication
DEVV	Development Value
EB	Employer Brand Attractiveness
ECOV	Economic Value
EE	Employee Engagement
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
IM	Internal Marketing
INTV	Interest Value
IT	Information Technology
SOCV	Social Value
V	Vigor

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This research mainly hovers around Internal Marketing; its concept, functions, the intertwining departments indispensable for the out spring of its notion.

As Gronroos (1983; 1990) [1.1] also sustains the idea of Internal Marketing being a process of involving service culture establishment, a marketing approach to human resource management, spreading out marketing information to employees and reward and recognition system implementation. All of these processes stand as essential constructs of Human Resources and Marketing departments, the thing that explicitly implies the interchangeable functions and operations between the two departments, resulting in Internal Marketing establishment and development. This analogy and disciplines intersection of these two notions delivers better insights about the notion of IM.

From a narrower scope; this study investigates a paramount and major aspect of internal marketing that is the impact of employer brand attractiveness on employee engagement in the Information technology sector. The extraction of employer brand and employee engagement dimensions, along with exploring the relationship between each one and the other adds a more profound characteristic to this research.

This research aims at diving into the roots of IM along with its interdisciplinary aspects and the exact levels of its function. Therefore it may be deemed as a utilitarian source for a more comprehensive IM conceptualization and employment.

When it comes to employer brand image influence on employee engagement in the Information Technology sector, just fewer studies have undertaken this topic especially with the profound evaluation of different related aspects provided by this research.

The first major aspect of this study is the paramount importance of this subject lies in providing insights regarding the central role of internal marketing in organizations as a never ending potential for improved profitability, and maintainer of reliable performance by competent employees; That are attracted and retained by an effective strategic IM.

The analogy between Marketing and Human Resources Management was a major focus of several researchers like Berry (1984), George (1977) and Kotler (1972) [1.2]. This congruence gave the floor to the emergence of three distinct groups of clients: the organization working staff, senior managers like those of CEO. and external parties including potential employees, unions related to government, regulatory agents and especially consumers. This implies that HR and Marketing managers are faced with the same kind of challenges; they both need to accomplish the same kind of tasks. In fact, marketing is not only concerned by products and markets, but also by the social process, through which exchanging value is accomplished. The exchanged value here is the mere reflection of the organization or firm (corresponds to the brand image). Meanwhile, managers working closely or within HRM may be involved in the same exchange process between prospective employees and the organization itself. Correspondingly, HR should be knowledgeable to a deep extent about the needs of external customers as well as the internal ones.

For, it may stand as a bridge or middle ground; upon which a communication system between these two may be established. This equally implies that HR should be well versed in marketing strategies, as well as the aspects of brand attractiveness, that may be employed as a strong weapon to attract, retain and on a deeper level engage potential employees. Hence, HR managers should be profoundly immersed in marketing strategies and updated with changing business needs. These indispensable interdepartmental functions stand as a solid and central foundation of Internal Marketing conceptualization.

The second major aspect of the study; is whether this internally communicated brand image will stand consistent in engaging employees on different dimensions, through its different dimensions itself. This research question has been drawing researchers' attention, like (Sartain & Schumman, (2008), Angelopoulou, (2015) and (Chawla, (2020) [1.3]. On a practical level, the analogy between HR and marketing will be tested from a specified aspect. As employer brand attractiveness is the most crucial mission of any given marketing strategy, while employee engagement is one of HR basic tasks. Hence, the empirical part will be investigating this specific feature of internal marketing within the information technology sector context.

The research outline will be as follows, after the abstract and introduction; the second chapter will cover the theoretical foundations of HR and Marketing concepts with their interdepartmental disciplines, intersecting in IM concept. A second major part in literature review will be dedicated to a certain aspect of IM that is of employer brand impact on employee engagement.

The third chapter will cover Research Methodology and analysis parts and ends up validating or rejecting the 16 suggested hypotheses.

The fourth and final chapter will deliver the research conclusion, contributions, limitations and future studies insights.

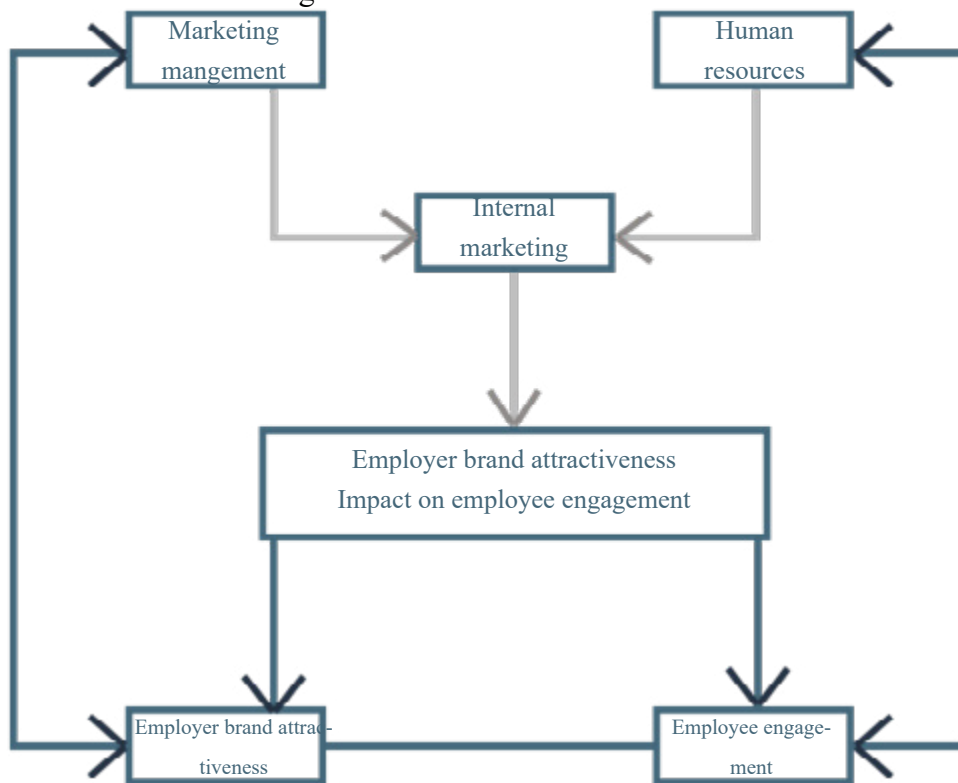


Figure 1.1: I.M interdisciplinary functions

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

2.1.1: IT DEFINITION

Information Technology (IT) definitions are mainly derived from European literature context. However, in the US, its utilization proved to be in a much limited and restricted sense. Leavitt & Whisler (1958) [2.1] claimed that the reason for “information technology” term labeling; is mainly emphasizing computer employment to sustain decision making as well as organizational information treatment. Forester (1985) [2.2] states that Information Technology is gathering, storing, treating and transmitting data or information; that essentially stands as the vital fluid of complex and sophisticated industrial societies.

Attempting to get a closer perception of this compound term, Kearney (1984) [2.3] conducted a study entitled ‘the barriers and opportunities of information technology—a management perspective’. In the findings of the study, he established a technical IT definition that elaborates the different ways computers are employed in industry and commerce; from traditional data processing to text processing. These two later operations switched to be more integrated and developed during the last few years. The union of these two processes resulted in a more precise and defined IT concept. In fact, an official definition was elaborated in IT and public policy in a government periodical. It generally states that Information Technology hovers around programmable devices utilization in the purpose of data treatment, may it be for human delivery or machinery control. The handled or treated data may take different forms like text, image, data, sound or even signals. As for its treatment, it may be performed via collecting, storing, retrieving, processing, transmitting and displaying.

Information Technology is further concerned with computing technologies, office equipment, telecommunication and engineering. Each of these terms have a clear and detailed definition, but still, they are neither concerned with organizational matters related to IT, nor reflect its utter impact on firms. Keen (1985) [2.4] supported this opinion and further explained that IT has both physical and abstract notions, i.e. strategy process is based on the physical aspect, yet these physical aspects may develop different impacts depending on IT notions and dimensions; like time, software, interconnection with other technologies, etc...

Economic Analysis or, “BEA”. It fundamentally categorizes IT into “ACAM” in other words; “Office, Computing and Accounting Machinery” that mainly stands for computers [2.5].

A certain category of researchers focused more on computer capital while another category scrutinized BEA’s broader category, that is; “IPE” that stands for “Information Processing Equipment” [2.6]. This later incorporates engineering, scientific, communication, equipment, instruments.

Another important point to mention is IT capital incorporation of software and related services. Recent studies often examine the productivity of information systems staff and, or employees utilizing computers. Hence, work productivity is calculated via the output amount divided by a level certain work input amount. Another IT task is calculating multifactor productivity, also called total factor; it is a measure of organizational effectiveness and efficiency as it adapts with changes occurring on the input level. Nevertheless, needed data for multi-factor calculations is sophisticated.

In closing, Information Technology is a crucial implement in sustaining the smooth running of business processes. With all its different aspects and layers; it stands as a cornerstone in all kinds of corporations.

2.1.2: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

Information Technology (IT) has witnessed a rapidly increasing diffusion, thanks to computer related equipment price reduction. This led to the replacement of this equipment by investing in different types of labor and capital. Therefore, many investors and economic agents took advantage of the generous return of their investments; that were based on ordering and restructuring IT activities in a way that would increase its roles. This substitution or replacement was manifesting hand in hand with technical changes. Robert M. Solow (1957) [2.7] developed a whole, consistent economic framework covering this change; as it suggested the replacement of intensive IT production with cursory productive mode.

That is, substitution means a motion in a given function concerning the production function, and it manifests if IT intensive equipment introduction and production; deliver returns and benefits caught and incarnated by IT users along with their suppliers. Whereas, technical shift stands for a change in the product function itself and it has been discussed by John C. Williams, Jack Triplett; John C. Williams, Federal Reserve Board, Brookings Institution,... [2.8]

Solow's seminal work discusses this fundamental and basic divergence between substitution and technical change. In addition, he suggests a solution to this "productivity paradox", for it is characterized by rapid and fast investment on one hand, and a slow growth concerning productivity on the other hand [2.9].

In fact, many economists insist on this paradox to describe and convey that IT has undergone a considerable evolution. Erik Brynjolfsson and Shinkyu Yang (1996) recapitulated Solow paradox and Jack Triplett (1998) [2.10] reviews, in fact; substitution does not demand market interference, for investment inducements are already achieved by the price, thanks to equipment demand-supply equilibrium.

On the other hand, Technical change demands that intervention, for; markets in this case malfunction in terms of providing sufficient inducements to cover investments.

A part from the returns is contributed by third parties, taking advantage from IT positioning without investing in its equipment and reforming their economic activities.

Stephen Oliner and Daniel Sichel (1994) and Stephen Oliner and, reported in Jorgenson and Stiroh (1995) [2.11], highlighted the enormous substitution in terms of computers in business as well as household sectors. In fact, computer prices went down in the 80's and 90's. As a result of this price reduction; IT organizations strove to boost HR management quality and achieve both efficiency and effectiveness in ordering and managing the personnel information, here the emergence of Management Information System (MIS) has been marked. Fueled by IT evolution; production was rapidly growing on low cost, the thing that gave the floor to MIS to thrive more.

Throughout history; namely the legislative or low cost era (1960s to 1980s) after the Second World War, the IT sector witnessed several challenges, mainly related to competition. After that, another important era marked the evolution of the IT sector; the high Technological era, from the 90s to our present day. It was characterized by a religious goal of reducing costs, in order to boost efficiency and effectiveness along with production and added value. The focus was shifting on personal learning and development rather than administrative scope, therefore; organizational needs would be achieved.

The invention of computers goes back to 1978, but; it was only employed in performing basic tasks like calculations that were hard to perform mentally. But this was far from storing, retrieving or managing data, and even when this goal was achieved; it was only confined to governmental institutions and some outstanding organizations. Computers underwent several progressive steps, they first started with vacuum tubes to end up finally with a whole electronic system. Computers became more and more sophisticated in terms of hardware (creation of different programs and internal systems) also in terms of software (creation of smaller and different in shape computers)

The progress ended up giving path to the use of other applications like banking, statistics, calculations, etc...

Thanks to the never ending progress in this field, the scope of required skills and qualifications has widened. i.e. before computers' invention, required qualifications were from mathematics, statistics, electrical and mechanical engineering.

As IT started thriving, it was utilized in more sophisticated and analytical tasks including the management of employees' personal data and their development process tracking.

2.2: INTERNAL MARKETING

2.2.1: INTERNAL MARKETING DEFINITION

Zand, (1974); Bushe and Shani,(1991) defined the internal marketing system as a parallel learning or collateral structure [2.12]. It is simply a promotion of the firm's objectives, products and services addressed to the employees of the firm itself.

This may strengthen the employee-firm bond, enhance their conviction of what they are working on and hence boost their engagement and level of dedication, therefore the thriving of the firm.

The promotion of the firm's objectives, products and services is a marketing function. The difference here is that the employee is treated like an internal customer, to whom the firm's vision, mission and values are communicated, in order to foster his awareness and loyalty toward his job position. Flipo (1986) proposes that, "the more cooperative the interrelations (customer-orientation for personnel, useful participation for clients), the easier the marketing objectives are to meet" [2.13].

This would lead to employees' engagement and dedication, that is a Human Resource role, via a marketing function of promoting the firm's objectives. One of the most important components and functions of the HR department; is engaging workers and raising their awareness about organizational goals as it would build a solid base of dedicated employees that are sustained and supported throughout all the firm phases, may they be ups or downs.

Therefore internal marketing is a clear congruence between the two departments of HR and Marketing. This enhances integration; by providing the needed dynamic to an open communication system.

2.2.2: INTERNAL MARKETING THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

This section will cover major theoretical points in available literature as regards to Internal Marketing.

- Berry (1981 1987) [2.14] suggests that marketing research is substantial in the service firms interested in a more profound understanding for internal customer needs. In addition, to change and enhance job-products, dividing and categorizing employee markets, employing advertising and personal selling techniques to attract potential employees is of a substantial importance.

- George (2015); (the original work was published in 1984) [2.15] suggests that Internal marketing focus; lies essentially in exchanging processes between organization - employees and employment opportunities – internal customers (employees).

- MacStravic (1985) [2.16] studied Internal marketing as a systematic approach to accomplish a positive relationship with employees. This would result in achieving internal marketing goals and objectives, along with reaching a considerable level of productivity and efficiency.

- Berg (1986) [2.17] suggests that internal marketing witnessed a management shift. From human resources management to symbolic resources management. Internal marketing enables management to generate and manage symbols that attribute a meaning and essence to organization members and boost them to react according to available strategic programs.

- Jones (1986) [2.18] claims that internal marketing makes interaction and collaboration between different functions smoother, to enhance total service delivery system. Internal marketing has a considerable weight on strategic and tactical levels.

- Flipo (1986) [2.19] claims that internal marketing mainly hovers around the communication between employees and customers (external and internal customers). An effective management of internal customers' market, will inevitably lead to an effective management of external customers' market too, as they are closely interdependent.

- Tansuhaj, Randall, and Mccullough (1988) [2.20] view Internal marketing as a leader to employee development. Through recruitment, training, communication, motivation and retention; employee attitudes and behaviors will acquire a positive aspect that in its turn will lead to employee satisfaction, commitment, involvement and motivation.
- George (1990) [2.21] perceives internal marketing as a development and maintenance mechanism addressing service-minded and customer-conscious employees. Nevertheless, only applying internal marketing strategies is not enough for service culture growth and development. In fact, a persistent ongoing partnership with organizational behavior (organizational personality, structure and leadership) is crucial for the attainment of a well sustained organazional ground.
- Piercy and Morgan (1990) [2.22] claim that internal marketplace should be divided and categorized into distinct groups, that have different needs. Moreover, internal marketing strategy should be established and developed around these segments.
- Grönroos (1990) [2.23] claims that internal Marketing is a crucial tool to achieve a successful external marketing. For, it train, retain and motivate customer- oriented employees. Therefore, internal marketing is deemed a major goal to be achieved by organizations.
- Greene, Walls, and Schrest (1994) [2.24] claim that internal marketing should be at the organization's head. I.e. it must emanate from the top, and reach the bottom in an organized, smooth way; to achieve a healthy organization. Internal marketing will eventually generate employees' satisfaction, motivation an enthusiasm to enhance service performance.
- Piercy (1995) [2.25] perceives internal marketing as a tool of bringing internal parties closer and lessening strict internal policies that may hinder customer satisfaction.
- Cahill (1995) [2.26] views internal marketing as a form of an effective HR management; that seeks external customer's satisfaction. He further elaborates the necessity of learning and development for an organization; to acquire and well perform internal marketing skills.
- Grönroos (1995) [2.27] perceives internal marketing is a whole entity, a continuous process that needs collaboration and cooperation between marketing, operations and human resource functions.
- Varey (1995) [2.28] further elaborates that internal marketing mainly hovers around sales and customer service notion. For, IM is perceived as customer orientated and quality culture.
- Hales (1994) [2.29] within a critical point of view; suggests that internal marketing conceptual ground is peppered with shortcomings and contradictions. He sustains this idea on his individualistic view; that perceives the contradiction of an effective human resources management with teamwork and organizational commitment.

2.2.3: INTERNAL MARKETING HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

The concept of internal marketing was brought to the surface 25 years ago. It was introduced as a solution to the problem of consistently delivering high service quality by Berry et al (1976) [2.30].

The Internal Marketing concept has emerged and developed in literature since the 1970s. Many firms have gradually identified and used the Internal marketing program; “internal marketing is considered a prerequisite for successful external marketing” Grönroos, (1990a, p.8) [2.31].

Several researchers like Berry and Parasuraman, (1991); George, (1990); Grönroos, (1985); Gummesson, (1987a) and Lings, (2000) [2.32] claim that implementing Internal Marketing campaigns will lead to fostering the service and product quality.

Internal marketing basically puts emphasis on integrating marketing-oriented management (Varey, 1995; Grönroos, 1983) [2.33]. More recently, Schultz, Kim and Kang (2014, 457) admitted the high potential of Internal Marketing as a concept and discipline. They suggested that despite the fact that its “development and practice is barely 20 years old, it has exerted a major impact on many areas of marketing and marketing communications” [2.34].

The notion of Internal Marketing has witnessed several definitions and descriptions throughout time. For; it is defined as a process (Kliatchko 2005, 2008) [2.35], a philosophy (Gould 2004; Smith 2012) [2.36], a tactical (Lee and Park 2007) [2.37] and strategic tool (Kerr and Patti 2013) [2.38] within marketing (Duncan, and Mulhern 2004) [2.39]. It was extended to corporate (Einwiller and Boenigk 2012) [2.40] and organizational (Christensen and Cornelissen 2011; Christensen, Firat, and Torp 2008) [2.41] domains.

Criticisms also embody a part of the theoretical development of Internal Marketing and its history. For instance; Cornelissen and Lock (2000, 9) proposed the most-cited criticism of Internal Marketing, arguing that it was “a management fashion with a lack of theoretical content and rigor” [2.42]. In response, Schultz and Kitchen (2000) [2.43] argued that Internal Marketing was a developing theory still in its infancy.

More recently; researchers generally acknowledge that Internal marketing represents accepted practice in the marketing communications field (Kitchen, Brignell, Li, and Jones 2004; Taylor 2010) [2.44].

For a better understanding of Internal Marketing and its application, the conceptualization of the organization or firm as an internal market is crucial. Generally, researchers have been embracing the idea of a firm being an internal market for its own products and services. Thereby, they view « Microeconomic Theory » as a guiding paradigm to the concept and application of Internal Marketing. Here, there is a dwelling upon marketing concept too ; for its scope has been broadened to include people, organizations and firms along with consumers, products and services as Kotler and Levy (1969) [2.45] suggest.

According to Perry (1998) (49); the first customer adaptation views in IM, utterly hovered around quality management perspective as well as shed-lighting service delivery process. An earlier view of Gronroos, (1982) [2.46] claims that this service delivery would be effective; if high- conscious, intuitive and motivated employees would be available. Berry and Parasuraman (1991), perceived IM application as “viewing employees as internal customers, viewing jobs as internal products that satisfy the needs and wants of these internal customers while addressing the objectives of the firm” (p. 272) [2.47], and this stands as a perfect paradigm to Gronroos view as well. Employee satisfaction stage brings to surface the complexion of ‘services marketing’, and IM influence on boosting the quality of services when it comes to buyer-seller intercourse.

Gronroos (1982) illustrated the next development stage for internal marketing, he called it “interactive marketing” concept (p. 32) [2.48]. It is basically an approach centered on customers; hence it can also be called customer orientation approach. Gronroos argues that the relationship or simply the interaction between buyers and sellers contribute to various marketing chances; these chances shall be absolutely grabbed, which requires highly customer-oriented employees.

Another earlier view of internal marketing application proposed that it may be tightly related to an effective human resources management. Bateson (1991) states that: “At first sight this appears to be a massive invasion of the prerogative of the personnel function, and indeed, in many ways it is” [2.49]. The advocates of this opinion based their arguments upon the fact that HR’s main goal after all is “successfully hiring, training, and motivating able employees” [2.50] that will stand as brand ambassadors and key elements for an effective internal marketing application.

Rafiq & Ahmed, (2000); Ballantyne, (2003); Lings, (2004) [2.51] illustrate the third and currently prevailing IM concept, that in its tern, was established from prior conceptualizations limitations. An important point this third view unveiled, is the way IM works as a strategy implementation fastener. In fact, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) [2.52] identified previous IM discussions shortfalls, namely the ones related to viewing employees as customers; one of the earliest IM approaches. Since it is directly related to the notion of product; as sometimes employees may not be convinced of the product they are promoting for. However, management may pressure them to cooperate. This may be explained by the negative association; i.e. a “product” is made in order to be sold, regardless of the fact that it may be unwanted.

Ahmed et al. (2003) [2.53] supposed that internal marketing is context-specific for social construction. Within the same framework, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) [2.54] stated that IM has undergone a noticeable development that may be recapitulated in three separate but interrelated stages: employee satisfaction, customer orientation, and strategy implementation.

Furthermore, the notion of employees as customers may downgrade the actual external customers, i.e. displace them to become a second concern, therefore hindering marketing processes. Correspondingly, Mudie (2003) [2.55] puts emphasis on various shortfalls concerning Gronroos claims [2.56]; namely those of employing marketing tactics with employees to place them in the customer position; thus, pushing them to be customer-oriented. As a matter of fact, these criticisms are related to management; for Mudie asserts that IM’s “view of the internal customer as a mean to an end affords little concern for care and much desire for control” (p. 1273) [2.57].

In addition, Varey and Lewis (1999) suggested that the development of IM requires broadening its scope by incorporating “internal relationship marketing,” “internal relationship management,” or “internal social process management” (p. 939) [2.58].

On the same ground, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) [2.59] assumed that IM involves strategy implementation as well as change management. Therefore, the urge to boost the quality of internal communication for better strategy implementations is asserted by these perceptions. Correspondingly, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) visualize IM as: “... A planned effort using a marketing-like approach to overcome organizational resistance to change and align, motivate and interfunctionally coordinate and integrate employees towards the effective implementation of corporate and functional strategies in order to deliver customer satisfaction through a process of creating motivated and customer oriented employees.” (p 454) [2.60]. Pondering in this IM perception, an observable and noticeable congruence with ‘management’ definitions and concepts like “change management” may be spotted, as Kotter, 2002; Bolman & Deal, (2003) suggest [2.61]. Within the same context, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) claim that IM is “a change management implementation methodology suitable for a wide range of contexts” (p. 453) [2.62] would be valid; hence, effectively support the idea of this research.

2.3: HUMAN RESOURCES

2.3.1: HUMAN RESOURCES DEFINITION

Chadwick, (2010) and Jiang et al.,(2012)[2.63] claimed that defining HR notion has been ambiguous, for the variation in the department component and the internal relationship between these components themselves. Becker and Gerhart, (1996); Boxall and Macky, (2009); Jiang et al.,(2012) [2.64] supposed that there is a general perception of HR systems containing a number of different levels. These levels consist of HR policies, practices and processes as Schuler, (1992); Monks and McMackin, (2001); Kepes and Delery, (2007) suggest (69). These three elements produce outcomes that may directly affect employees and organizations on a wider scope (Nishii et al., 2008; Boxall et al., 2011) [2.65].

Theoretically speaking; Bowen and Ostroff, (2004) state that working on the ‘strength’ of HR system implies that it would be a ‘linking mechanism that builds shared, collective perceptions, attitudes and behaviors among employees’ (206) [2.66]. On the other hand, there are claims that the skeleton of HR systems is incomplete (Boselie et al., 2005; Chadwick, 2010) [2.67].

In closing; Human Resources is simply a term used to refer to the human capital in the organization or firm. It is anything that is related to employees or members in service of the company, by anything in relation to the worker life cycle in the organization; from his recruitment to his quitting. Anything in between like employees’ problems, development, training, compensations etc... , is under the umbrella of the Human Resources department.

The Human Resources system is indispensable in all firms, regardless of types and specializations, as the whole organization would be centered on the human capital that is the cornerstone of any company, and of a paramount importance for its survival. HR does not only play an administrative role, but also a strategic one; substantial for the company's success and thrive.

2.3.2: HR DEPARTMENT DIMENSIONS

According to Dave Ulrich and Joe Grochowski, (2018) [2.68], the Human Resources system has nine essential dimensions or components, indispensable in the construction of an effective department.

1. HR reputation
2. HR context or environment; i.e. HR settings and criteria, crucial for work shape and direction.
3. HR strategy; i.e. the steps followed to achieve HR mission and goal.
4. HR design; in other words, the way the HR department is organized. Its processes, roles and structure
5. HR contribution to organizational competency.
6. HR analytics; i.e. HR systematic and methodological steps, upon which better HR investments and choices would be achieved.
7. HR practices
8. HR professionals; their key criteria, as regards to knowledge and practices, for they are considered to be one of the most departmental outstanding assets.
9. HR work techniques.

2.3.3: HR STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES

According to Becker and Gerhart, (1996) [2.69] HR mainly consists of policies, processes or strategies that may be translated into practices. They mainly stand as distinct components intertwined with different organizational levels. Kepes and Delery (2007: 390) stated that HR policies provide “guidelines and benchmarks for specific HR activities” they also ‘reflect what an organization is trying to achieve, not how it will achieve its goals’ [2.70].

On a practical level, a principal issue took place; Becker et al., (1997); Kepes and Delery,(2007) [2.71] discussed whether or not HR practices go in compliance with one another on one hand, and the resulting cooperative impact that may be produced (positive or negative). Kepes and Delery, (2007: 390–391) stated that; HR processes have been depicted as indicating ‘detailed explanations of how the HRM practices are executed’, along with being ‘more directly affect employees, their behaviors and attitudes than do policies’ [2.72]

Lawler’s early research (1986) [2.73], covering high-involvement work practices elaborates that these kinds of practices may be run via operations, incorporating skills and knowledge improvement. Spreading information and power, along with performance rewarding serve at employees’ motivation catalysts.

Albeit the paramount role of processes within the HRM system, relatively little research dwelled upon their concept, practices and roles. This may be explained by them being the least corporeal aspect within the HR system. This may equally implies the challenge of identifying and measuring it, following the same procedures of those employed in HR practices. Boxall and Macky (2009: 7) [2.74] stated that ‘to make genuine theoretical progress, researchers must therefore go beyond the list of practices and seek to identify the processes and mediating variables’ these variables are expected to influence HRM practices.

2.3.4: A NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR HRM

It is difficult to predict the future of HRM, as all indications reflect that there will be continuous changes because of globalization’s non-ending effects and technological advances; hand in hand with fundamental changes in the job market. As a result of these unstable factors there will always be room for unexpected transformations in terms of firms, competition, employees and strategies. Therefore, the evolution of HRM as a contemporary discourse is inevitable. Here, comes the urge for constant innovation and creativity endeavors by Human Resources managers and professionals.

HRM researchers, on theory and practice levels (Patrickson and Hartmann 2001; Weisner and Millett 2003; Bartlett and Ghoshal 2003; Zanko 2003; Lansbury, Kitay and Wailes 2003; Losey, Meisinger and Ulrich, 2006; Boudreau and Ramstad 2009) [2.75] proposed that implications of global economic forces like changes in inflation, expanded tariff reductions along with the increase in multilateral and bilateral free trade agreements (e.g. Australia–Singapore, Australia–New Zealand, Australia–US, APEC) request high focus and attention on international Human Resources Management prototypes.

Moreover, the proliferation of business methods or models that Human Resources professionals and managers need to be more sensible towards, like business ethics and corporate administration and management of workers’ job and personal life equilibrium, are being more prioritized. For, they are considered to be a substantial asset for HRM’s new strategic approach. Also, communication and information technology evolutions like the third industrial revolution or digital revolution, satellite links, cellular telephone networks and high speed fiber optic cables (Hunt, 2003) [2.76]; command the implementation of strategic international or global HRM models. This would be feasible through revolutionary new approaches to Human Resources Management strategies, practices, organizational culture and structures. Erwee (2003) illustrates:

« . . . in the competitive process of globalization and complexity, it is becoming critical to manage sustainable multinational organizations more effectively by using Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), and to link this with strategic needs in the larger organizational context. .

. . However, (they) must also work within the confines of (their) local environment as well as a range of laws, politics, culture, economies and practices between societies. » [2.77]

Human resource researches like Ulrich, Huselid, Lepak & Snell, and Collins [2.78] suggest that the ‘new’ HRM approach may either focus on HRM ‘value management’, ‘strategic partnering’ and Founding the HR ‘architecture’ for the firm’s success, or may fuse ‘macro connections’ with the growth or outsourcing of traditional Human Resources operations to front line managers and external HR consultants (Kramar, 2003) [2.79].

Ulrich (2006) [2.79] claimed that HRM thriving and survival requires a value addition to four key elements;

- First, workers seeking competence and showing dedication, engagement and commitment.

- Second, engaged front-line managers who are immersed in achieving the planned strategy.

- Third, attracting and retaining loyal customers who exhibit interest in the firms’ products and/ or services.

- Fourth, key investors who are constantly chasing the stock price growth.

For better implementation of the above, an establishment of HR strategies for business, employees and HR function itself, is crucial. Here, the concept of partnership between senior managers and HRM specialists is reflected by HR professionals and general managers.

Chris Georgiou, HR Director, AGC and Westpac Financial Services, claimed that ‘to be effective, you need to partner with the business very closely and that means not necessarily just understanding the business but really participating at the business level’ (Rance, 2000) [2.80].

Also, John Cooper ; a partner at Freehills consultancy sustains this point by claiming that ‘HR needs to make sure it is a critical part of the decision making processes that go with the new technology and the strategies to globalize’. In addition, Boudreau (2009) stresses on this opinion suggesting that ‘HR must extend its focus from the services it provides to the decisions that it supports... like finance and marketing, the HR function helps the firm operate within a critical market . . . the market for talent’ [2.81].

Furthermore, Dowling and Roots (2009) elaborate that; strategic HRM should be more concerned with ‘finding the pivotal areas where optimization and increased performance may be attained . . . the new science of human capital’ [2.82]. One of the crucial points here is HR professionals’ eagerness to prove their forethoughtfulness and profound understanding of the business environment, the challenges and opportunities in the market and the means through which, they may ensure the perfection and completion of the organization’s goal. HR should be endlessly providing and nurturing creativity and innovation, especially in organizational culture. I.e. the establishment and development of proper HR backup; a well-built workforce, along with a solid foundation of organizational ethical codes. For, these are crucial assertions for transparency and accountability that were strengthened right after the 2009 global financial crisis (Holdsworth & Lundgaard, 2009; Wilson, 2009; Wilson, 2009) [2.83].

2.3.5: HR STRATEGIC EVOLUTION

Many researchers in the Human Resources realm have undertaken HR through historical and strategic evolution. Taylor, (2011); Nankervis et.al, (2011); History of Human Resource Management, (2010); Kelly, (2003); Ogier, (2003) [2.84] and many others have illustrated its progress like follows;

- Pre-World War II, 2000 BC – 1000 BC; it all started by selecting leaders for tribes; scrutinizing matters of safety; health, hunting and the general well-being of members of the tribe. Progressively, the notion of Human Resources started to assimilate its earliest features.

- 1700 – 1900; this era marked the emergence of Scientific Management Theory (it was the philosophy of the time). The breakout of the famous industrial revolution led to the replacement of simple and small industries by large factories. This in its turn, led to the birth and rise of a huge workforce, strengthened by immigrants from every corner of the world seeking new jobs and lifestyles.

All of this paved the way to the introduction of personnel functions in the purpose of keeping track of workers' records. This in its turn led to the emergence and rise of middle level supervisors, more exploitation of workers and increase in child labor. The gap between workers and supervisors was noticeably widened. This led to the increase of miserable working conditions thus, it gave the floor for the emergence and rise of labor unions to demand fair work conditions for workers and guarantee their rights.

Here, the personnel function was rising and wide spreading mainly in the UK and the US to guarantee welfare and introduce recognized and strict administration.

- 1920 – 1930; a change of the strict personnel function is being introduced thanks to the behavioral studies that have risen during that era. Motivation and encouraging practices supported by the Hawthorne studies, the notion of employee satisfaction started to have a paramount importance, thus discussions and implementations of better wages and good working conditions were brought to the surface.

- Post World War II, 1945 – 1960 ; this era was marked with the progress of « Human Relations Movement », thanks to this later, management system of the time was shaped. Employee productivity was a main concern, it was strongly shed-lighted through various motivation techniques, as well as the focus on welfare issues; job description was an expanding concept that helped the improvement of employees' recruitment and selection, compensation and evaluation strategies were rising as motivation tools. Not to mention the official recognition of trade unions in various countries like the UK and USA that stood as a strong weapon to guarantee employees' rights and diminish the exploitation that was common not quite long ago. In addition, the rise of collective demands for more employee welfare, resulted in the enactment of various employment laws. Also, the growing progress of computer technology led to the emergence of job analysis.

Progressively, the personnel function included recruitment, labor relations, training, benefits and government relations divisions. The first Human Resources Management (HRM) software Comprehensive Occupational Data Analysis Program (CODAP), was created and developed in the USA, for better job description identifications and roles assignment. Later, computer technology included payroll, inventory and accounts.

- Social Issues Era, 1963 – 1980; the onset of the 60's marked the embarkation of the Civil Rights Movement. This later shaped the management mindset of the time. In addition, the enactment of the civil rights act (1964), abolished all forms of job discrimination and resulted in equal employment opportunities for everyone. The predominant transition was from personnel management to Human Resources Management; this boosted the use of computer technology for better HR functions, like accuracy, speed, storage and reporting of HR data.

The rise and progress of Human Resources Information System (HRIS) hand in hand with the increased activities of trade unions resulted in the enhancement of working conditions and terms of employment. In addition to the adoption of numerous laws that boosted occupational health and safety, retirement benefits and tax regulation. These developments led to employee's participation in management decision making. Therefore, boosted their enrollment in training and development programs.

- Cost-Effectiveness Era, 1980-early 1990s; As history evolves, the emphasis was more on increasing productivity, which resulted in the automation of workplaces, and the shift from employee administration system to employee development and involvement system. Efficiency and effectiveness were two key terms in this era. With the introduction of technology, hard and soft Human Resources approaches and the elevation of employee return on investment, more attention was paid to boosting productivity with lowering costs.

- Technological Advancement Era, 1990 – present day; this era is ruled by the power of globalization and fast-growing change caused by massive technological revolutions and non-ending demand for more efficiency. Increasing competition has taken place in all industries, which created the need for Strategic Human Resources Management. In addition, more sensibility and awareness of the HR role as a bed-rock in the success of the firm, was progressively growing. Along with an increasing effort to attract, retain, develop and engage talents. The expansion of workforce evaluation approaches; like balanced scorecard and performance appraisal techniques, also caught considerable attention. Furthermore, more contribution of HRM to competitive advantage has been underlined; Human resources planning techniques, diversity and talent management.

Additionally; with the rise of technological advancement, the development of e-HR, e-training, e-recruitment, telecommuting, online, flexible work arrangements and virtual teams, along with social media expansion ; changes in HRM have taken place in terms of more powerful networking, emergence of influencers and massive media impact, that resulted in the rise of new notions like "green-economy".

2.3.6: THE INTERFACE BETWEEN HR AND INTERNAL MARKETING

One of Internal Marketing cornerstones is to guarantee satisfied employees, recognizing that management indeed cares for their needs, happiness and prosperity in the workplace. Correspondingly, Human resources practitioners claim that they are responsible (in the same way of internal marketing) for ensuring employees well-being.

Recently, with the IM culture introduction, an adequate application of this notion's visions and concepts, is interpreted into employees satisfaction and positive attitudes in the workplace and towards their job. This inevitably includes their job commitment, motivation and involvement, that will be translated into their satisfaction according to Tansuhaj et al, (1991) [2.86].

Moreover, several researches and empirical studies support that there is a strong link between IM and customer satisfaction as (Tansuhaj et al., 1987) [2.87] suggested, and service quality like (Richardson and Robinson, 1986) [2.88] claimed. According to (Berry, 1981; Donnelly et al., 1985; George, 1990; Sasser and Arbeit, 1980) [2.89], this will boost employees' spirit to give the maximum effort and dedication into their work. This way will guarantee the satisfaction of external employees as well.

IM is envisaged to have a direct impact on HR as it is said that technical Human Resources effectiveness is derived from internal marketing effectiveness. Therefore, It is assumed that technical effectiveness is fiercely related to strategic orientation. Hence, there is a strong link between IM and technical, strategic HR. Another significant point that sustains this view was proposed by Ahmed, Rafiq, and Saad (2003) [2.90]. They claim that boosting employees' efforts, commitment and involvement, stand as major goals for IM. Correspondingly, Dunne & Barnes, (2000) [2.91] acknowledge the importance of Human Resources Management (HRM) in providing a better comprehension of internal customers philosophy, thanks to psychological theory.

IM essentially works on upgrading employees' competencies and abilities and communicating the brand concept with them. That is also an HR function; hence, it better shed-lights IM and HR connection.

The below figure demonstrates HR processes, sustaining internal marketing practices.

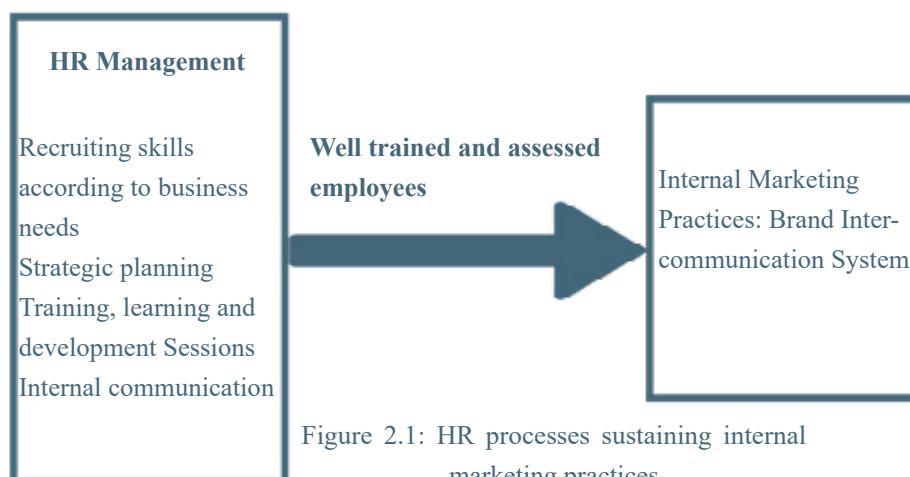


Figure 2.1: HR processes sustaining internal marketing practices

2.4: MARKETING MANAGEMENT

2.4.1: MARKETING MANAGEMENT DEFINITION

According to the American Marketing Association (AMA) (2004) (Marketing News 2004, p. 1): “Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders.” [2.92]

AMA renewed marketing definition in 2007, (Marketing News 2008, p. 28): “Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” [2.93]. Within a historical context Gundlach (2007) [2.94] illustrates that these definitions were following four other paramount marketing definitions, that were established in the same way by AMA consecutively in 1935, 1948, 1960 and 1985.

In the fall of 2007, a particular section from the “Journal of Public Policy and Marketing” [2.95] covered marketing definitions shortcomings by publishing a series of articles highlighting this matter; they introduced alternative marketing concepts, criticism and analysis. Throughout history, significant efforts and attention were devoted to revisit and update official marketing definitions by the AMA, the fact that distracted pondering over relative matters like marketing strategies.

2.4.2: MARKETING DEPARTMENT STUCTURE

Throughout time, macro-organizational structural form was the central focus of most researchers and academics in the marketing department; utilized by the firm to plan, implement, and monitor marketing tasks. Weitz and Anderson (1981) [2.96] developed four broad categories that are essentially employed to design, implement and track marketing strategies; functional, product, market, and matrix organizations.

The functional category of organizations is discerned by its different functional marketing experts like; sales managers, market research manager, advertising manager. Etc... supervised by a marketing vice president that stands as a coordinator between their tasks and activities. In fact, this category of organizations is the most uncomplicated and elementary one; having the simplest structure of marketing organizations. Despite its functionality; this organization is threatened by collapse in case it developed a growing number of customer groups, products or functions; for the vice president would be unable to smoothly run the numerous challenges of marketing tasks.

Whereas, the second organization’s category i.e. product management organization, is perfectly able to cover these challenges by simply adding another layer of managers into the previous basic structure.

This form is mostly required when having a wide set of products; therefore, introducing product managers is the key to effectively run a particular address, the challenge of managing many products at a time.

Kotler (1980) [2.97] claims that this category of organizations along with its structure, would never replace the functional type, it just includes a new set of managers that are fundamentally program coordinators.

As a matter of fact, some firms face coordination issues due to the multifunctionality of one product, hence challenges may arise because of the various needs of different markets; that therefore, demand various marketing strategies and programs. These obstacles gave birth to the third marketing organization category i.e. market management. This category is distinguished by being close to the product management system, nevertheless; product managers are replaced by market managers that stand as marketing activities coordinators addressing a particular group of customers.

As for the fourth organizational category; Weitz and Anderson (1981) [2.98] illustrate that it is characterized by intertwining resource or functional managers with program managers or product and market managers. Positioning them at the same hierarchical level is known as the matrix organization. In the winter 1985, the journal of marketing p 14 [2.99] illustrated the idea of generating groups according to the matrix category to work on projects linked to a particular set of products or markets, or both of them simultaneously.

While the structural type approach was utilized in stratifying the numerous dispositions used by firms to plan and organize marketing activities. This approach was criticized for having several shortcomings; in fact, when emphasizing broad macro-organizational types, there was neglect towards the structure and coordination of various activities within different types of organizations. i.e. an organization that has a large consumer base, may alternate from the same form or category utilized by service organizations or industrial firms depending on the control of product managers, their impact on performance and their communication with other departments.

Moreover, another reason that led to the criticism of the traditional approach is that it deliberately overlooks the debate of whether a marketing task or activity may be accomplished within the organization, or there is a need for an external agent. Especially that it is quite challenging nowadays not to rely on external marketing parties; like advertising agencies, sales representatives, independent channel members or research organizations. Here, the organizational category proves a considerable shortcoming; that is contemplating about a particular portion of marketing activities. Furthermore, it has been proven that traditional view does not carefully cover the intertwining thread between the structure and components of marketing tasks and previous performance. This later may be measured according to several dimensions; that no structural organizational form is possibly able to perform on these dimensions.

2.4.3: MARKETING TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

A strategy is generally defined by a long-term course of action outlined to accomplish a certain goal. In a business framework, it mainly stands for an assemblage of managerial decisions later translated into actions. A strategy focuses on organizational differentiation, as its main goal is to distinguish a firm from its competitors and brace its competitive advantage. A business strategy should be adequate to the organization's mission, vision and goals, i.e. congruous with its environment and resources.

In a marketing context, Jain (2004) [2.100] suggests that a strategy is a plan set by an organization or firm, its main purpose is to distinguish or differentiate this later from its competitors with a positive aspect, with taking into consideration customer needs and satisfaction.

Shane (2000) [2.101] suggests that a marketing strategy requires a designed plan translated into decisions and actions to attain the goal of competitive advantage.

Another important point in marketing strategy to mention is "Product Strategy"; Kotler and Armstrong (2006) [2.102] state that a product is the value offered or laid into the market to get attention and satisfy a certain need. They state that a consumer product is the one exchanged or bought by the final consumer to cover personal needs, generally for consumption. Borden (1984) [2.103] perceive the product as quality, design, features, brand name and size, i.e. these characteristics, if employed in a strategic way; they would stand as tools for a more effective marketing process.

In the same context, Mohammad et al, (2012) [2.104] claimed that a physical appearance of a product; namely labeling and packaging, contribute to a considerable extent to whether the product is noticeable or not by customers, hence inspect and purchase it.

Kazemand Heijden, (2006); Kemppainen et al, (2008); Ogunmokun and Esther, (2004); Owomoyela et al, (2013) [2.105] suggested that the impact and influence of a product have a noteworthy effect on business performance. Busch and Houston (1985) [2.106] claim that the product may embody anything that may satisfy a customer and cover a specific need for him. Hence, a product may be a physical subject, place, service, organization or even an idea as Kotler (1991) [2.107] states. Thus, a product stands as a crucial notion in the marketing mix that has the ability to determine whether the organization would survive or not.

An important strategic marketing tool is Promotion; or simply influencing and persuading customers with the product in question; this is mainly performed via communication.

Borden; (1984) [2.108] states that promotion mainly sustains sales, personal selling, advertising and public relations, hence; direct marketing. Kotler, (2007) [2.109] illustrates the paramount importance of promotion in the marketing mix. Within the same framework, Amine and Cavusgil, (2001); Francis and Collins-Dodd, (2004) [2.110] have clarified the outstanding link between promotion and business performance.

Researchers like Barrett, Ballou, and Weinstein (2000); Bowman and Gatignon (1996) [2.111] supported the fact that there is a consequential relationship between marketing mix.

Bowman and Gatignon (1996) [2.112] suggested that an implementation of an outstanding and effective marketing mix strategy may empower a young organization to outperform a pioneer one.

Leonidou et al. (2013) [2.113] established a relevant relationship between the performance payoff for UK manufacturing organizations embracing “Greening” marketing mix. On the same ground; Grzegorzczuk (2013) [2.114] conducted a study investigating performance rate of Poland banks after implementing an effective marketing mix strategy; he concluded that financial returns have increased, the thing that supports the significant link between performance and marketing mix strategies.

2.4.4: MARKETING MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC EVOLUTION

Established in the 1950s, the Marketing Management school of thought has undergone major evolutions and development until our present day. Sheth & Parvatiyar [2.115] have investigated marketing relationship growth and evolution. Sheth & Parvatiyar (2000) [2.116] claim that among different schools of thought developed in the 1970s, Relationship Marketing remained constant in partner relationship and customer management studies.

Every school of thought combined its predecessors in a progressive body of knowledge. Bartels (1962) [2.117] thinks that the institutional school of thought included the product or commodity notion by stressing marketing performance by manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers.

Thereafter, Bartels, (1962) [2.118] claims that the functional school incorporated product and institutional notions by stressing marketing processes performed by marketing institutions.

In addition, studies supported that, other school realms successions were integrated into marketing thought history. Also, there is evidence of integration of the domains in the succession of schools in the history of marketing thought. Moreover, the incorporation of other disciplines into these schools of thought assemblage was profoundly marked.

Through history, an interdisciplinary movement has emerged; most notable:

Consumer Behavior; known as the heaviest sub—marketing discipline. Sheth & Gardner, (1982) [2.119] illustrated that the establishment of sub-marketing discipline highlighted the incorporation of psychological, sociological, anthropological, and other social science concepts into the stream of marketing school of thoughts.

Another discipline to mention is Marketing Channels Management. Its sub-discipline foundations are mainly; social science and management disciplines; consequently, they gave the floor to inter-organization management emergence. The advancement and progress from marketing management school to Relationship Marketing school was underlined by a demand of Relationship Marketing school of thought incorporated into managerial schools of thought. This is shed-lighted by relationship management requirements. These implications lead the way to realizing the necessity of three marketing management disciplines:

The first is management of marketing functions and processes like product, promotion, and traditional marketing mix, including the 4 Ps.

Second, Market Management, i.e. market place, and market space management including channel and brand management, generally performed by manufacturers, while category and shelf space management generally performed by retailers.

The third discipline is Relationship Management; implemented on the level of all marketing channel components, this includes Partner and customer relationship as well as supply chain management.

2.4.5.: THE INTERFACE BETWEEN MARKETING MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL MARKETING

Literature related to this field has witnessed several attempts to apply marketing mix strategies and concepts on internal marketing. In fact, Piercy and Morgan (1991), Barnes (1989) [2.120] have worked to categorize this vision vis-a-vis the 4Ps framework of McCarthy (1964) [2.121].

Nevertheless; the abstract nature of marketing notion resulted in Booms and Bitner's (1981) [2.122] enlarging the Marketing Mix concept to include; process, people (participants) and physical evidence, in addition to Product, Price, Promotion and Place. In fact, this new notion of 7Ps instead of 4, serves in boosting the effectiveness of internal marketing programs. That is; the three new added dimensions, explicitly acknowledge the two intertwining and interdependent concepts requisite for better product and service delivery. This integration is one of the elementary IM program endeavors. Collins and Payne (1991) [2.123] stated that; on a strategic basis, a product may stand for marketing strategies, whereas the notion of "sold" stands for the values indispensable for making a work strategy or plan. Flipo (1986) [2.124]; Berry and Parasuraman (1991) [2.125] suppose that on a tactical level, it is possible that the product incorporates new standards or measures for performance, equally new ways for addressing customers may they be external or internal.

Although the importance of internal customer satisfaction levels has been increasingly emphasized and prioritized over this of external customers, Albrecht (1990); Gummenson (1987); Heskett et al. (1994) [2.126] have highlighted the strong link between the two. More precisely, Heskett et al. (1994) and Nagel and Cilliers (1990) [2.127] laid out the different dimensions, upon which, the intersection of internal and external customer satisfaction is tangible. Gremler et al., (1994) [2.128] believe that they are positively linked. therefore; external and internal marketing are positively interrelated in their turn.

Cowherd and Levine (1992) [2.129] conducted a study that resulted in determining internal customer satisfaction impact on product quality, that inevitably impacts the satisfaction of external customers. As a matter of fact, this positive correlation is even stronger for services; for the employee, playing the role of service provider, is more related to the external customer on communication level.

Morrison (1996) [2.130] has conducted one of the most fruitful works when it comes to internal and external marketing relationship, as she suggests five extra role behaviors dimensions; conscientiousness, altruism, civic virtue, sportsmanship, and courtesy. These dimensions, as she literally states, "crucial for ensuring service excellence" (p. 497) [2.131].

Therefore, employees' extra role behaviors addressed into external customers, contribute to the enhancement of external marketing strategies and processes.

Cf. Anderson & Sullivan, (1993) and Oliver & Swan, (1989) [2.132] explored the relationship between external marketing operations or processes. This investigation resulted in concluding that external customer satisfaction positively depends on a good level of service quality. Thereby, the positive correlation between external customer satisfaction and loyalty, and organizational thrive and profitability is even more strengthened.

The below figure demonstrates the common points; upon which external and internal marketing notions and strategies are constructed.

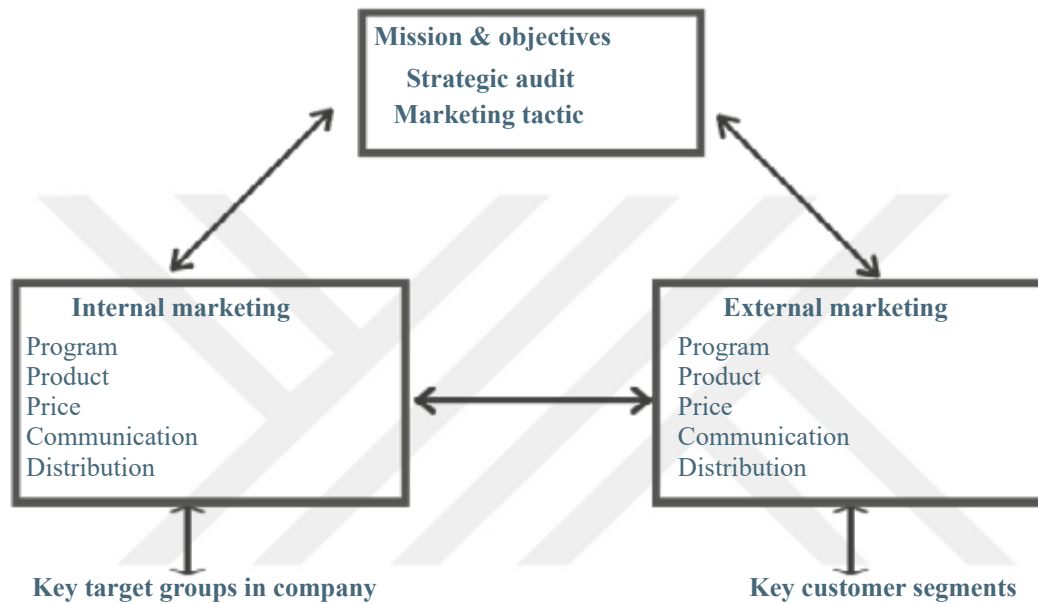


Figure 2.2: Piercy, N. and Morgan, N. (1991). Internal marketing-the missing half of the marketing programme. Long Range Planning, 24 (2), 82-93.

2.5: THE INTERSECTION OF HR AND MARKETING DISCIPLINES IN INTERNAL MARKETING

Product marketing has been always directed towards external customers, hence; it can be said that its implementation has been attained through embracing a form of organization or firm that incorporates a marketing department. In fact, this may be frequently and normally arranged in the context of product and brand management lines; with a special focus on developing marketing plans directed to external customers satisfaction.

Generally the most encountered issues regarding these plans are organizational policies along with interdepartmental competition and rivalry; that hinders co-operation between functional parties indispensable for the application of these plans.

With the introduction of internal marketing, the notion of customers started to include employees as customers themselves, but internal ones.

Though many marketers assert that it is challenging to communicate marketing to external customers without the sophistication of internal marketing introduction in the middle.

Some authors and researchers have shed-lighted the importance of the interaction process between the contact persons of the organization and external customers. Carlzon (1987) [2.133] was of the pioneers who recognized the paramount role of internal and external customer interaction; as he called it "moments of truth" [2.134] for the organization. The focus here is mainly on service employees, as their role is critical for the provided product is deemed a performance; like Lovelock, (1983) [2.135] illustrates. This interactive operation is crucial when it comes to boosting the establishment, development and keeping consistent relationship with employees. Therefore, guaranteeing customer retention, which is one of the biggest organizational assets and a guarantee of long term success itself. Sasser, (1976) [2.136] suggests that a successful service or product organization; is smoothly able to sell the job to employees before offering or selling its services or products to customers.

Cf. Gremler et al., (1994) [2.137] supported the vision of the necessity of internal customers' satisfaction because they are the medium to success key. Moreover, Rosenbluth and Peters (1992) [2.138] suggested prioritizing employees' needs, to an extent of placing them even before customers' needs. For, their needs would be successfully fulfilled when those of employees are successfully fulfilled as well.

Furthermore, it has been claimed that IM advocates are simply and clearly in favor of acquiring common skills and knowledge from marketing and human resources management. Bateson (1991) illustrates in the same context that "a massive invasion of the prerogative of the personnel function, and indeed, in many ways it is" (p. 270) [2.139].

Another point that supports this vision is that HR management theorists and researchers, namely Kotler (1991) stated that HR is all about "successfully hiring, training, and motivating able employees" [2.140]. This brings onto the surface, the critical role of HR in recruiting, selecting and retaining potential employees indispensable for the above discussed communication process, that will lead to organizational thrive. Therefore, Marketing and HR departments have strongly intertwining roles in IM introduction and maintaining.

The below figure is adopted from Kotler and Armstrong (1991) [2.141], elaborating the continuity and interdependency of Human Resources, i.e. management and marketing in sustaining Internal Marketing processes.

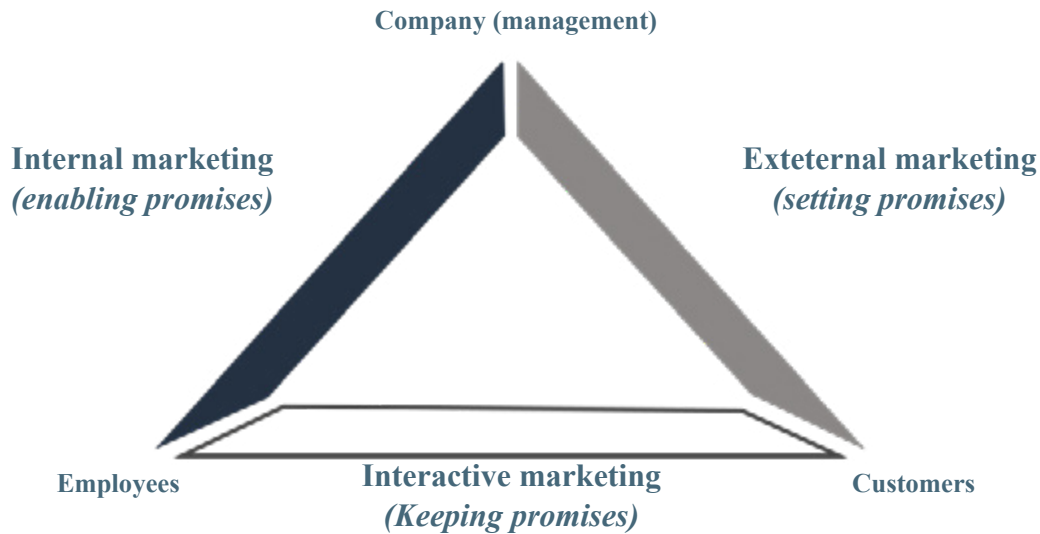


Figure 2.3: Service Marketing Triangle – adopted from Kotler and Armstrong (1991)

2.6: INTERNAL MARKETING FROM A NARROWER SCOPE

2.6.1: EMPLOYER BRAND THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

This section covers employer brand theoretical background, along with the most prominent views and studies upon which it is based.

- One of the earliest studies by Gardner & Levy, (1955) [2.142]; elaborated the need of branding research in marketing literature. They further explained the brand notion, as a sign, a figure that symbolizes all the features attributed to a certain product, service or any marketed entity.
- Levitt, (1980) [2.143]; claims that the basic purpose of branding is to differentiate or distinguish marketed entities from one another.
- Davies, (2008) [2.144]; claims that marketing differentiation boosts competitive advantage. In addition, branding notion strengthens employees-organization bond.
- Lloyd, (2002) ([2.145] elaborated that employer branding is prerequisite for an attractive and decent workplace.
- Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, (2005) [2.146] suggested the application of employer branding to boost employer attractiveness, that is defined by an association of advantages that draw potential employees to a certain organization.
- Ruchika & Prasad, (2017) [2.147] claimed that external and internal communication have an indispensable role in building an outstanding brand image.
- Cable & Judge, (1994); Chatman, (1989, 1991) [2.148]; perceived employer brand attractiveness as an ancestor of brand equity. For, an organization's equity gets more significant when employer attractiveness gets more powerful.
- Kunerth and Mosley (2011) [2.149] claimed that initiatives done by organizations; help boosting employer brand image. Therefore, draw, retain and engage employees.

- Burawat, Kuntonbutr, and Panisa (2014) [2.150] stated that employer brand is applied by organizations; eager to meet employees expectations in order to retain and engage them.
- Within a critical framework; Burawat, Kuntonbutr, and Panisa (2014) [2.151], claimed that one of employer brand shortcomings that it does not provide an explanation, as to why employees display different levels of engagement, despite being subjected to the same level of employer attractiveness.
- Within another critical framework, Backhaus & Tikoo, (2004) [2.152], claimed that despite being an advanced notion in marketing, when it comes to internal application, employer brand is still in need of growth and development.

2.6.2: INTERNAL BRANDING

Harris & de Chernatony (2001) [2.153] claim that employees' values and behaviors should be on the same page with the brand's values and goals. That is to say, employees are central organizational assets, consequently they play an elementary role in the brand building process; their behaviors and states of mind may empower the brand values or diminish them if there is an inconsistency between these two constituents.

Here comes the notion of internal branding, Bergstrom et al. (2002) [2.154]; underlined three essential points, first; an effective communication system with employees that covers all brand details, second; persuading them with its worth and standards, and third; associating even small tasks to "brand essence" distribution and delivery.

Sergio Zyman, the former Coca-Cola marketing chief officer states that: 'Before you can even think of selling your brand to consumers, you have to sell it to your employees.' (2002, p. 204) [2.155]. He further illustrates the way the brand gets positioned in customers' minds, confirming the fact that this positioning is profoundly dependent on the employees of that organization or firm. Therefore, the internal branding notion deeply connects employees behavior and spirit with the brand itself, along with organizational mission, vision and values.

2.6.3: EMPOLYER BRANDING

Lloyd (2002) has depicted Employer Branding as a 'sum of a company's efforts to communicate to existing and prospective staff that it is a desirable place to work' ([2.155]. Sherry (2000) [2.156], claims that advertising switched to be of a critical importance as to endeavors made to identify, gain and retain skilled employees. Progressively, advertising became a tool for creating the 'employer brand' as well as establishing and supporting employer propositions that should be unique and different.

Ambler and Barrow (1996) [2.157] were pioneers in bestowing the term 'employer brand' on the notion.

They further illustrated that it is ‘the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company’ (p. 187) [2.158].

Ewing et al. (2002) [2.159] further elaborated that an employer brand has a personality, presence and especially positioning like any traditional brand; hence, it is mainly immersed into establishing a certain image in potential customers’ minds.

Hewitt, an HR consultant, developed five steps to developing a strong employer brand [2.160]:

First; a good understanding of the organization.

Second; the creation of “compelling brand promise” for employees playing the brand mirror role.

Third; the development of measurement standards to ensure brand promise fulfillment

Fourth; reinforce and sustain all practices that may boost the brand promise.

Fifth and finally, executing and measuring brand image implementation processes and their effectiveness.

In addition Ritson (2002) [2.161] claims that organizations with outstanding employer brands; have the ability to reduce employee acquisition cost and enhance employee relations. Collins and Stevens (2002) [2.163], supported prior studies and researches, linked early recruitment activities with a form of decision making indirectly; via two employer brand image dimensions; the first is general opinions towards the firm and the second is job attributes perception.

2.6.4: EMPLOYER BRAND ATTRACTIVENESS

According to American Marketing Association; brand is defined as ‘a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination’ [2.164]. This brand is meant to identify products and services of one seller or a group of sellers. According to Kotler & Keller; (2016) [2.165], the brand’s function lies in differentiating those products and services from those of competitors.

According to Backhaus & Tikoo; (2004) [2.166], the branding notion was mainly employed in the marketing of products and services, this traditional function started to include other addressees like destination, people and organizations marketing. Organizations employ these processes to differentiate themselves and convey that they are an attractive and desirable place for work. According to Ambler and Barrow; (1996) [2.167], employer brand is a package of functional, economic and psychological benefits offered or provided by the employer. They also argue that the employer brand, is like other product brands, for it may offer; attractive monetary rewards, employees development plans and employees engagement plans, that are respectively economic, functional and psychological advantages.

In addition, Berthon, Ewing, and Hah (2005) [2.168] supported the fact that an attractive work environment differentiates itself by offering economic, development, social, application and interest values to employees; these offered values are keys for attracting high skills and competencies.

Backhaus & Tikoo,(2004); Heger, (2007); Rosethorn, (2009) [2.169] suggested that these offered values constitute an organization's value proposition. Susan Sochart's article entitled 'Employee Value Propositions' adopts this opinion too, as it states: 'EVP captures the essence of what a company wants to stand for in candidates' and employees' minds relative to competing employers' [2.170]. In other words, this Employee Value Proposition promotes the organization's reputation and identity; it equally stands as a corporate asset. Moreover, researchers like Backhaus & Tikoo, (2005); Edwards, (2010); Kissel & Büttgen, (2015); Lievens & Slaughter, (2016); Lievens, Van Hoye, & Anseel, (2007); Xie, Bagozzi, & Meland, (2015) [2.171], employed the Albert and Whetten's (1985) [2.172] concept of 'organizational identity' in order to visualize employer brand image. In fact, according to this vision, the Employer brand stands for distinctive, crucial and persisting characteristics. That makes the organization a desirable and target employer vis-a-vis available and current competing employers.

Schlager, Bodderas, Maas, and Luc Cachelin, (2011) [2.173] substituted employer brand framework. They alternated application and interest value respectively with diversity and reputation value. Furthermore, Lievens, (2007) [2.174] introduced the instrumental and symbolic brand notion in marketing for better grasping and visualizing of employer brand. According to him, employer brand consists of instrumental and symbolic assets; tangible and intangible assets. Lievens, Hoye, & Anseel, (2007) [2.175] illustrated that Instrumental assets stand for objective, physical and tangible attributes, whereas symbolic assets represent subjective, abstract and intangible attributes. In addition, Berthon et al. (2005) [2.176] stated that there are mainly five basic values concerning employer framework; Economic, application, social, development, and interest.

2.6.5: EMPLOYER BRAND ATTRACTIVENESS DIMENSIONS

As stated above and according to Ambler & Barrow, (1996); Berthon et al., (2005) [2.177]

2.6.5.a: Interest value

Interest value encompasses employers' eagerness to provide a positive work atmosphere by promoting and encouraging innovation and creativity in the organization

2.6.5.b: Social value

Social value includes work environment as well as the relationship with superiors and colleagues

2.6.5.c: Economic value

It hovers around providing job security and ensuring a fair compensation package.

2.6.5.d: Development value

Mainly covers efforts recognition and ensuring more growth opportunities

2.6.5.e: Application value

Encompasses the opportunity to communicate the information and teach others that is the flow and interchange of learning between employees categories

The below figure displays the five Employee brand dimensions



Figure 2.4: Employee brand dimensions

2.6.7: EXPECTENCY THEORY

Chen and Lou, (2002) [2.178] explained the mechanism of Expectancy theory. They stated that it provides standards of evaluating employees behavior during their learning and decision making processes. Earlier empirical works by Heneman and Schwab (1972) [2.179]; Campbell and Pritchard (1976) [2.180]; demonstrated the nature and processes upon which, expectancy theory is based. In fact, employees were proved to consciously select the entity, offering the most tempting motivational factors. Within the same framework; Vroom (1964) [2.181] studied the aspects upon which; employees' attraction, then choices are based. "VIE" was the fruit of this investigation. It was proven that employees behaviorally and consciously get attracted to entities providing three inciting elements; valence, instrumentality and expectancy (VIE). I.e. their performance should be recognized, valued and appreciated; the aftermath of their performance should achieve a certain result; and their spent efforts should result in a good performance level.

This theory's main purpose is to explain what causes specific behaviors in the workplace. There was a suggestion of intrinsic and extrinsic reasons or motivators that help categorize certain actions or behaviors. For instance, intrinsic motivation is generated by a feeling of pride and meaningfulness as regards to the job. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is generated by the amount of physical and monetary compensations.

2.6.8: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

- Employee engagement is a term intensely researched in the management field, namely in Human Resources Development (HRD).
- One of the earliest Employee Engagement overview is provided by, Kahn, (1990) [2.182]; he related employee engagement notion with perseverance, engagement, and absorption of employees into their jobs.
- Schaufeli et al. (2002) [2.183] established engagement dimensions; vigor, dedication, and absorption. That will be thoroughly covered in the coming sections.
- Schaufeli et al., (2002); Piehler et al., (2016); Nguyen et al., (2019) [2.184]; explained that employees may cooperate with employers, to enhance brand value proposition. They may even play the role of citizens of their own workplace; to better communicate with external customers and satisfy them.
- Saks, (2006); Conway et al., (2015) [2.185]; established two engagement types: job engagement and organizational engagement. Each one of the latter has a specific contribution on the organizational level.
- Saks (2006) [2.186] claimed that organizational engagement has a more outstanding impact on positive work behavior.
- Saks, (2006); Kang & Sung, (2017) [2.187]; claimed that employees exhibiting engagement, practice their tasks with a significant vigor and motivation. They further explained that they may exhibit extra efforts for organizational collective good.

- Within a critical framework, Macey & Schneider, (2008); Mary, (2011); Conway et al., (2015); Kang & Sung, (2017) [2.188]; argued that considerable researches and studies covering employee engagement, still did not provide a full comprehensive view; about the specific scope, where engagement is the most prerequisite.

- Lee & Ok, (2016) [2.189]; engaged employees should be immersed in their work, equally on three levels; physically, emotionally and cognitively. This may corresponds to the three dimensions established by Schaufeli et al. (2002) Feizi and Zolfaqari Moqadam (2008) [2.190]; Vigor, dedication and absorption.

2.6.9: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT APPLICATION

Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, (2004); Saks, (2006) [2.191] stated that employee engagement is one of the most famous terms in the management field and research. This term has been visualized in several ways mainly by researchers and academics like Saks, (2006) [2.192] and later Piyachat, Chanongkorn, & Panisa, (2015) [2.193]. Within a historical framework, Kahn (1990) [2.194] was from the pioneers in discussing this concept, he defines employee engagement as ‘the harnessing’ of employees to their jobs that is their full dedication for their jobs.

As Wong, (2014) [2.195] discusses, when it comes to engagement; employers should express and implement their efforts and existence cognitively, physically and emotionally while performing their job tasks. As Wong explains; the engagement concept hovers around these three levels: cognitive, physical and emotional [2.196]. Another important conceptualization of engagement is discussed by Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter; (2001) [2.197] they view engagement as the total opposite of burnout. Thereby, they strongly link engagement to efficacy, energy and involvement; the total opposite of burnout levels that are inefficacy, exhaustion and cynicism. Moreover, they illustrate the way engagement leads to extreme motivation, hand in hand with full dedication and immersion into the best performance version. Whereas, burnout leads to exhaustion and dullness, this opinion was also shared and illustrated by Piyachat et al., (2015) [2.198].

Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, (2002) [2.199] conceptualized engagement differently. They suggested that it is basically the involvement and satisfaction of individuals as well as their enthusiasm and motivation. Researchers and academics, classified employee engagement into two types:

- First; engaged employees: they are aware of their role in the organization, they work hard and endlessly aspire to enhance their performance level via exhibiting their skills and knowledge in order to achieve organizational goals.

- Second; non-engaged employees: they are near-sighted, their vision, dreams and ambitions are too limited to meet the notion of working with enthusiasm. They just work for a living, therefore; they perform their tasks superficially with zero passion, and no consideration for organizational goals.

Another engagement conceptualization is discussed by Saks (2006) [2.200], he claims that employee engagement is based on their organizational roles; he defines engagement as a unique and distinct cornerstone consisting behavioral, cognitive and emotional elements gathered with individual role performance. In addition, Saks categorizes engagement into two classes: job engagement and organizational engagement [2.201]. Job engagement mainly stands for employees' eagerness to accomplish their work tasks and meaningfully contribute to their job positions. Whereas, organizational engagement stands for employees involvement and immersion into the organization as Roberts & Davenport; (2002) [2.202] further support.

Furthermore, other researchers and academics like Rothbard (2001) [2.203] and Heger (2007) [2.204] supported the vision of engagement being strongly bonded to employees' organizational roles.

2.6.10: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT DIMENSIONS

According to Schaufeli et al. (2002); Feizi and Zolfaqari Moqadam (2008) [2.205], Employee Engagement may be characterized into three dimensions; vigor, dedication and absorption.

2.6.10.a: Vigor

The University of Rochester's Richard Ryan has defined vigor as the true meaning of engagement and willingness; it also states that is the vitality and energy spent by one self to perform his work tasks, having vigor results in feeling good, generating positive effect and propelling energy for handling tasks. Simply it can be defined as the total opposite of burnout or exhaustion.

2.6.10.B: Dedication

May be simply defined as the commitment aspect of employee engagement, it is also defined as the total opposite of cynicism that results from burnout. Dedication brings into the surface other emotional success catalysts like passion and loyalty towards the brand or employer. Dedicated employees generally feel satisfied, valued and fulfilled, as they sense their effectiveness, weight and contribution.

2.6.10.C: Absorption

Researchers generally define it as being profoundly immersed into a work task, this basically generates from strong intrinsic motivation, that in its turn derived from emotional attachment to work; the thing that is likely to happen when employees are convinced with what they are doing. Absorption may also be spotted when an employee is fully absorbed into a certain task and hardly detaches himself from it.

The below figure displays the three employee engagement dimensions;

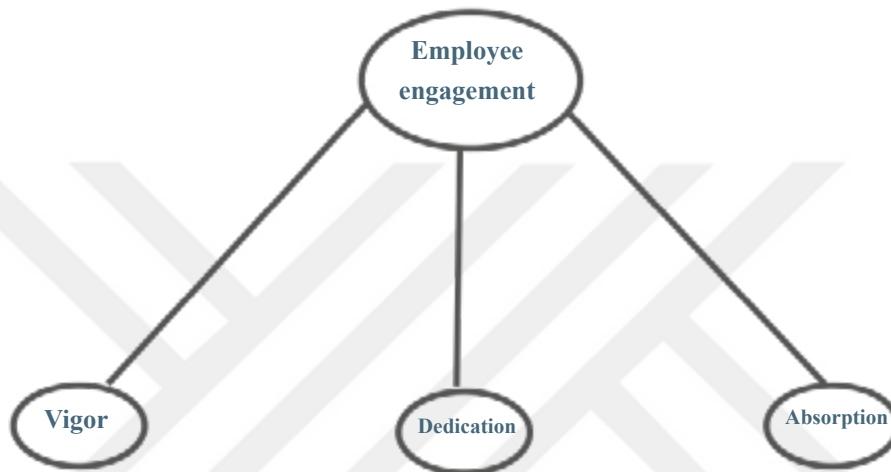


Figure 2.5: Employee engagement dimensions

2.6.11: EMPLOYER BRAND ATTRACTIVENESS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

- An earlier view by Blau, (1964) [2.206] is later sustained by Andrew & Sofian, (2012) [2.207] stated that organizational behavior is tightly related to the Social Exchange Theory; “SET”.
- Cole et al., (2002) [2.208]; affirmed that Social Exchange Theory enables employees to be more engaged and immersed into their work. It is also proved that a smooth and consistent employer-employee relationship; may lead to exhibiting a considerable loyalty level.
- Cole et al., (2002); Arasanmi & Krishna, (2019)[2.208], related employee engagement with organizational support. They further explained that this in its turn would definitely result in organizational commitment.
- Cropanzano & Mitchell, (2005) [2.209]; claimed that employee satisfaction is decisive, when it comes to employer-employee relationship. It is therefore decisive as well when it comes to employees’ behavior in the workplace.

- Cropanzano & Mitchell, (2005) [2.210]; suggested that employees may respond positively if they perceive the work conditions provided by their employer generous and respectful. Their reaction would result in organizational engagement and commitment.
- Within the same context, Saks, (2006) [2.211]; also affirms this view of employees exchanging a positive work behavior for positive employer attractiveness practices. He further explains that employees got boosted to repay their employer in the form of engagement; if attractive compensation, physical and psychological support are provided.
- Andrew & Sofian, (2012); Gruman & Saks, (2011) [2.212]; claimed that positive work behavior is a result of a healthy communication and connection with employers.
- Andrew and Sofian (2012) [2.213]; explained employee engagement within the “SET” framework. They claimed that positive work behavior development is related to the way employers are perceived. For, employees would be encouraged to be more involved and immersed into their jobs, if they are satisfied with the efforts made by their employers to support them. That would lead in its turn to organizational commitment and lessen the rate of turnover, hence increase the rate of employees’ retention.
- Andrew & Sofian, (2012); Ibrahim & Al Falasi, (2014) [2.214]; claimed that employees engagement is fiercely related to resources quality, originating from employers.
- Tsarenko et al., (2018) [2.215]; employers recognizing and valuing their employees’ efforts and performance, will get a payback by positive behavior in the workplace. This in its turn may strengthen employer-employee bond.

2.6.12: THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYER BRAND ATTRACTIVENESS ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

The review of pertinent literature reveals that studies on employee engagement includes research on its conceptualization, antecedents and consequences (Bailey, Madden, Alfes, & Fletcher, 2017; Rasheed et al., 2013; Saks, 2006) [2.216]. More recently, Chawla (2020) [2.217] suggests that a smooth and harmonious relationship with employees in any organization would automatically lead to a positive employee behavior. Moreover, many studies indicated that employee behavior is inevitably influenced by employer brand attractiveness (Angelopoulou, 2015) [2.217]. Sartain & Schumman (2008) [2.218], added that this later may boost employee engagement and therefore commitment. In the same context; Tsai & Wu, (2010) [2.219] claim that workers may display an uttermost dedication and immersion into accomplishing business goals, if they are provided with adequate amenities and resources to do so.

In addition, Kunerth & Mosley (2011) [2.220] highlight the paramount role of a favorable work environment in involving employees and boost their production; i.e. when employees found themselves in an organizational setting that is relatively for them dynamic and secure, this would result in a better contribution, devotion and investment from their part; for example, in the terms of extra time, additional efforts thus their energy and psychological health (Brown & Leigh, 1996) [2.221].

Within the same framework, Lee et al. (2014) [2.222] conducted a study that displayed the link between internal branding and employee-associated outcomes; their job satisfaction, namely through their engagement. Brunetto et al., (2013); Cole et al., (2002) [2.223] illustrate the way employer branding activities involve employees in their own employer vision and goals.

The following figure summarizes the processes leading from Brand Image to Employee Engagement.

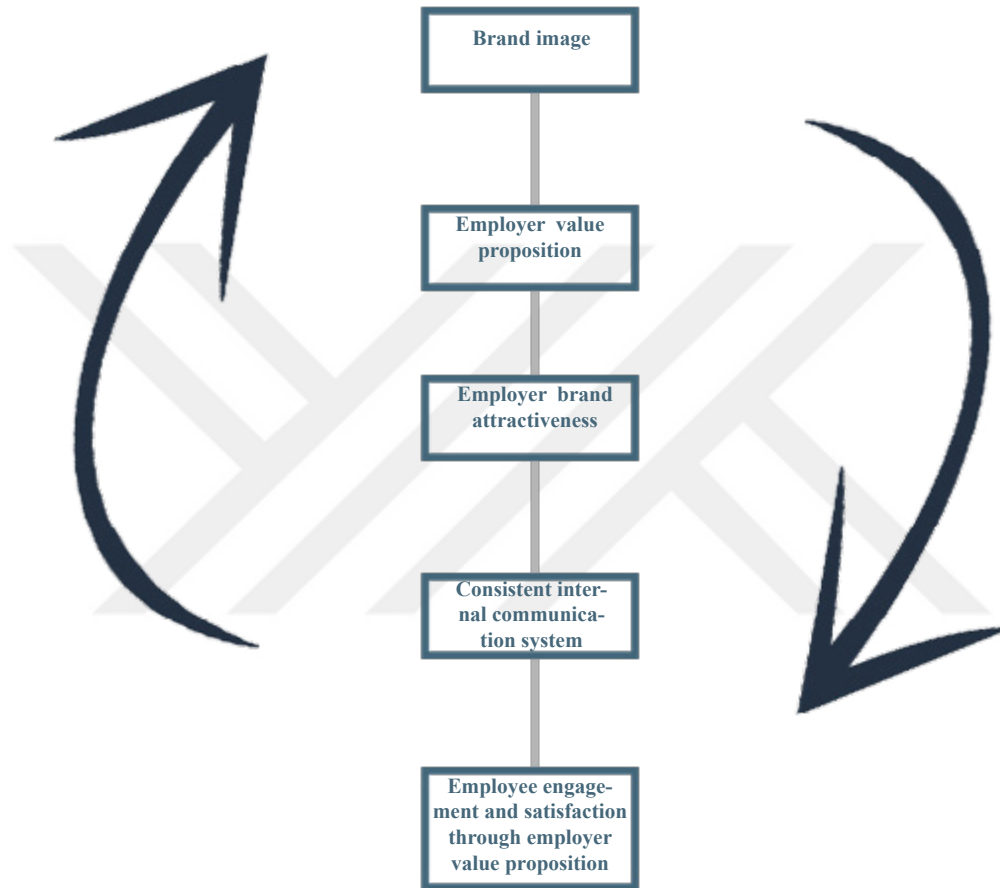


Figure 2.5: From brand image to employee engagement

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1: RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2008) [3.1] there are two major and general research methods or approaches, that are; deductive and inductive.

Saunders et al (2008) states that “For some research projects you will use the literature to help you to identify theories and ideas that you will test using data, this is known as a deductive approach in which you develop a theoretical or conceptual framework, which you subsequently test using data” (P 61) [3.2]. Within the same context, he further explains that an inductive approach is generally characterized by exploring data, establishing and developing theories from it, that are essentially related to literature. Here, the researcher will be accomplishing his research objectives by basically following the research questions. These questions will be testing an already existing theory, which is the impact on Employer Brand Attractiveness with its dimensions on Employee Engagement, including its dimensions too. Therefore the research approach in this case would be deductive. That is, hypotheses were extracted from literature models and will be tested with operational terms along with numeric data.

3.2: RESEARCH PURPOSE

Saunders et al., (2008) [3.3] suggests that answering research questions generally manifests into three types; that are explanatory, exploratory and descriptive. Nevertheless, in some cases, the research purpose may approach explanatory and descriptive or exploratory and descriptive types.

Exploratory research: Robson (2002) explains the notion of exploratory study as follows: “what is happening, to seek new insights, to ask questions and to assess phenomena in a new light” (Robson 2002, P: 56) [3.4].

As for descriptive research, Saunders et al. (2008) [3.5] illustrated that it is practical and useful when a researcher describes his or her own understanding of the problem in case there is uncertainty about the problem case. Robson (2002) further explains that descriptive research “portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations” (P: 59) [3.6].

As for Explanatory research; Saunders et al (2008) stated that “studies that establish causal relationships between variables may be termed explanatory research; the emphasis here is on studying a 46 situation or a problem in order to explain the relationships between variables” [3.7]. Therefore the most adequate method according to this research problem is descriptive.

This research aims at investigating internal marketing impact in the organization in the IT sector, in terms of how employer brand attractiveness may affect employee engagement.

From the onset of literature review, the intertwining of the Human Resources and Marketing department is stated to -later on- demonstrate the way internal marketing functions and on what parties its influence fall the most.

3.3: RESEARCH MODEL

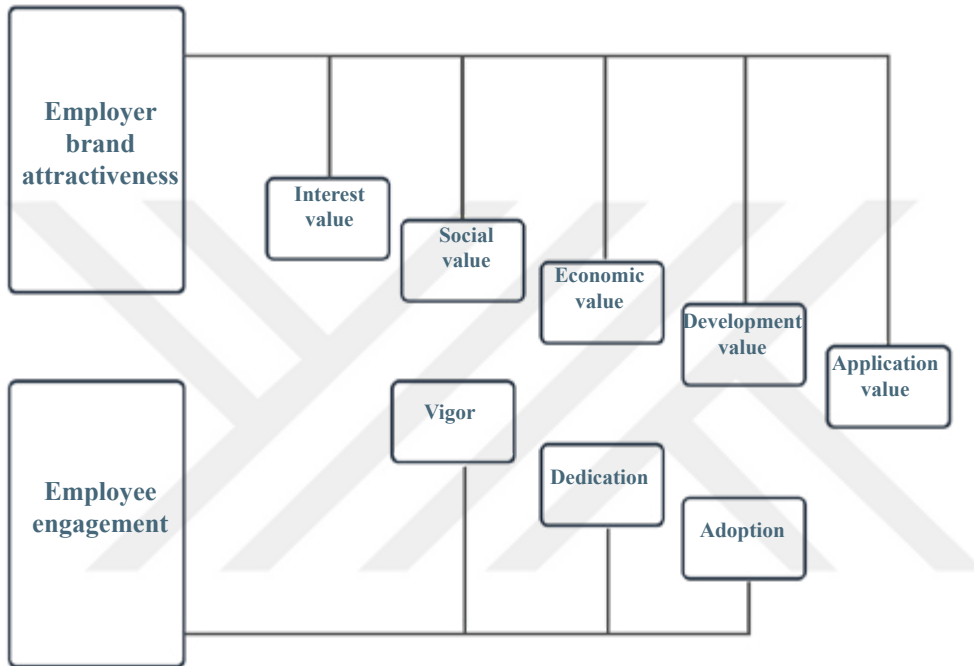


Figure 3.1: Research model

3.4: HYPOTHESIS

- 1- H1: There is a positive association between Employer brand attractiveness and employee engagement.
- 2- H2a: There is a positive association between interest value and employees vigor.
- 3- H2b: There is a positive association between interest value and employees dedication
- 4- H2c: There is a positive association between interest value and employees absorption
- 5- H3a: There is a positive association between social value and employees vigor
- 6- H3b: There is a positive association between social value and employees dedication
- 7- H3c: There is a positive association between social value and employees absorption
- 8- H4a: There is a positive association between economic value and employees vigor
- 9- H4b: There is a positive association between economic value and employees dedication
- 10- H4c: There is a positive association between economic value and employees absorption
- 11- H5a: There is a positive association between development value and employees vigor
- 12- H5b: There is a positive association between development value and employees dedication
- 13- H5c: There is a positive association between development value and employees absorption
- 14- H6a: There is a positive association between application value and employees vigor
- 15- H6b: There is a positive association between application value and employees dedication
- 16- H6c: There is a positive association between application value and employees absorption

3.5: RESEARCH STRATEGY

Saunders et al., (2008) [3.8] suggested seven strategies that may be employed in researches that are; survey, case study, experiment, grounded theory, archival research, action research and ethnography.

Yin (2003) [3.9] claims that all of them may be employed in the three research types mentioned above (exploratory, explanatory and descriptive). In addition, Saunders et al., (2008) [3.10] clarified that some of these strategies may be employed with inductive research, while others with deductive ones. As for this research; the survey strategy is employed to convey if there is an impact from employer brand attractiveness and dimensions on employee engagement, along with the direction and nature of this impact. For, according to Saunders et al., (2008) [3.11], a survey stands for being functional and practical, namely in business sector studies, approaching deductive analysis, as well as being an adequate strategy for descriptive and exploratory research. Hence, this would allow researchers to collect large amounts of quantitative data along with analyzing it with descriptive and inferential statistics.

3.6: DATA COLLECTION

3.6.1: DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

Saunders et al. (2008) [3.12] stated that there are two major techniques for data gathering and analyzing; that are qualitative and quantitative. He further explains that “Quantitative is predominantly used as a synonym for any data collection technique or data analysis procedure that generates or uses numerical data.” (P: 151) [3.13]. On the other hand, qualitative techniques are employed to produce non numerical data via other techniques.

In order to accomplish the study goal and measure EB dimensions impact on those of EE, numerical data is requested for statistical analysis. Hence, quantitative techniques will be employed.

3.6.2: SAMPLE SELECTION

The conceptual model is empirically tested on a sample of Information Technology sector employees, from different countries, all around the world, sent via social media platforms, namely; e-mail, linked-in, Facebook.

Data collection process extended from the end of February 2022 to the end of March 2022. Taking into consideration the confidentiality of their personal information, 258 respondents have participated in this study.

Data collection was via a well-constructed questionnaire, as its elements and questions were built on the exact measures; i.e. questions depicting variables (dependent and independent)

3.6.3: QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

According to Bourque and Clark (1994) [3.14]; there are three basic ways for questionnaire design. These ways are: developing one's proper questions, adapting questions from other questionnaires or employing other questionnaires as they are.

After extracting EB and EE dimensions from other literature, second and third section questions were adopted from related papers.

The questionnaire has three parts: In the first part of the questionnaire, four multiple choice questions were designed to gather respondents' demographic features. The second part of the questionnaire contains 16 questions covering EE dimensions, while the third section contains 23 questions covering EB dimensions. Five point Likert scale was chosen for answers as follows: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree.

3.7: DATA ANALYSIS

As data gathering and analyzing chosen techniques is quantitative, IBM SPSS along with Microsoft Excel were selected as data analysis tools. Answers were imported into excel sheets, then imported into SPSS for analysis.

Analysis will be conducted as follows:

- descriptive statistics will be conducted to investigate respondents' demographic features.
- Factor analysis will be conducted next to verify model equilibrium (Cronbach Alpha for measuring internal consistency) and whether it is feasible or not.
- Reliability Analysis to measure data reliability and adequacy.
- Deductive analysis; namely, regression tests will be conducted to measure the effect of independent variables on dependent ones and the direction of their relationship.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1: DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

4.1.1: SCALE VALUES

For a better conducting of quantitative analysis; the collected questionnaire data has to be detailed into specific labels and numeric symbols to facilitate the analysis process. A distribution of different numeric values for each point of Likert statements is performed as follows;

- “5” stands for “strongly agree”
- “4” stands for “agree”
- “3” stands for “neutral”
- “2” stands for “disagree”
- “1” stands for “strongly disagree”

4.1.2: VARIABLES DIMENSIONS AND SUB- FACTORS CODING

Along with distributing a numeric symbol for each likert scale, Bestowing a specific code on each variable and dimension along with each statement of the questionnaire; would be quite helpful in the analysis proceeding. I.e. more practicality and comprehension in tagging a variable, dimension or a specific item. Codes are distributed as follows;

- Independent variable; Employer Brand Attractiveness: EB.
- Independent variable dimensions;
 - Interest Value: INTV
 - Social Value: SOCV
 - Economic Value: ECOV
 - Development Value: DEVV
 - Application Value: APPV
- Dependent variable; Employer Brand Attractiveness: EE.
- Dependent variable dimensions;
 - Vigor: V
 - Dedication: D
 - Absorption: A

As for questionnaire statements; the below table indicates each variable, hence dimension related statements, and the code of each one of them.

Variable	Variable code	Correspondent questionnaire statement
Employee engagement: Vigor (V)	V1	At my work, I feel bursting with energy.
	V2	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
	V3	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.
	V4	I can continue working for very long periods at a time.
	V5	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.
Employee engagement: Dedication (D)	D1	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.
	D2	I am enthusiastic about my job.
	D3	My job inspires me.
	D4	I am proud of the work that I do.
	D5	To me, my job is challenging.
Employee engagement: Absorption (A)	A1	Time flies when I am working.
	A2	When I am working, I forget everything else around me..
	A3	I feel happy when I am working intensely.
	A4	I am immersed in my work.
	A5	I get carried away when I am working.
	A6	It is difficult to detach myself from my job.
Employee brand attractiveness interest value (INTV)	INTV 1	The company that I work in produces innovative products and services.
	INTV 2	My company is an Innovative employer – novel work practices/forward-thinking.
	INTV 3	The company that I work in both values and makes use of your creativity.
	INTV 4	The company that I work in produces high-quality products and services.
	INTV 5	I am working in an exciting environment.
Employer Brand Attractiveness: Social Value (SOCV)	SOCV1	At my job, I have a good relationship with my colleagues.
	SOCV2	At my job, I have a good relationship with my superiors.
	SOCV3	My colleagues are supportive and encouraging.
	SOCV4	My job is in a fun working environment.
	SOCV5	My job is in a happy work environment.

Variable	Variable code	Correspondent questionnaire statement
Employer Brand Attractiveness: Economic Value (ECOV)	ECOV1	My company offers good promotion opportunities.
	ECOV2	I am able to get a hands-on inter-departmental experience.
	ECOV3	My company offers an above average basic salary.
	ECOV4	My company offers an attractive overall compensation package.
	ECOV5	I feel that I have a job security within the organization.
Employer Brand Attractiveness: Development Value (DEVV)	DEVV1	I am feeling more self-confident as a result of working for my company
	DEVV2	I am feeling good about myself as a result of working for my company.
	DEVV3	I am able to gain a career-enhancing experience.
	DEVV4	My job is a springboard for future employment.
	DEVV5	I am able to get recognition/appreciation from management.
Employer Brand Attractiveness: Application Value (APPV)	APPV1	At my job, I have the opportunity to teach others what I have learned.
	APPV2	At my job, I have the opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution.
	APPV3	My company is customer-orientated.

Table 4.1: Variables Dimensions and Sub- factors Coding

4.1.3: DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

Variable	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Between 18 and 20	53	20,45
	Between 21 and 30	110	42,63
	Between 31 and 50	60	23,25
	Above 50	35	13,56
Job position	Specialist	45	17,44
	Support stuff	59	22,86
	Temporary stuff	43	16,66
	First line supervisor	21	8,13
	Managers	52	20,15
	Directors	29	11,24
	Others	9	3,4
Employer Brand Attractiveness: Application Value (APPV)	No more than a year	77	29,84
	Between 1 and 5 years	61	23,64
	Between 6 and 10 years	41	15,89
	Between 11 and 20 years	41	15,89
	Above 20 years	38	14,72
Current Employer working period	No more than a year	101	39,14
	Between 1 and 5 years	68	26,35
	Between 6 and 10 years	44	17,05
	Between 11 and 20 years	28	10,85
	Above 20 years	17	6,58

Table 4.2: Demographic statistics

The demographic features of 258 participant shows that 20,54% (53) are between 18 and 20 years old, 42,63% (110) between 21 and 30 years old, 23,25% (60) between 31 and 50 years old and 13,56% (35) above 50 years old.

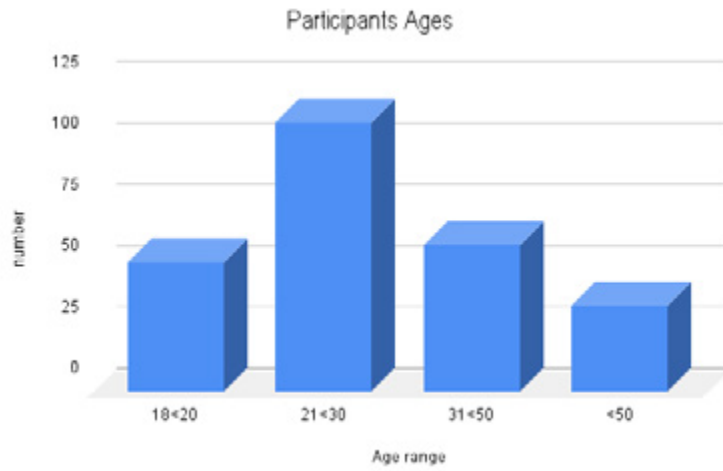


Figure 4.1: Age statistics

Furthermore, 17,44% (45) are classified as specialists, 22,86% (59) support stuff, 16,66% (43) temporary stuff, 8,13% (21) first line supervisors, 20,15% (52) managers, 11,24% (29) directors and 3,4% (9) identified themselves with “other” for job classification.

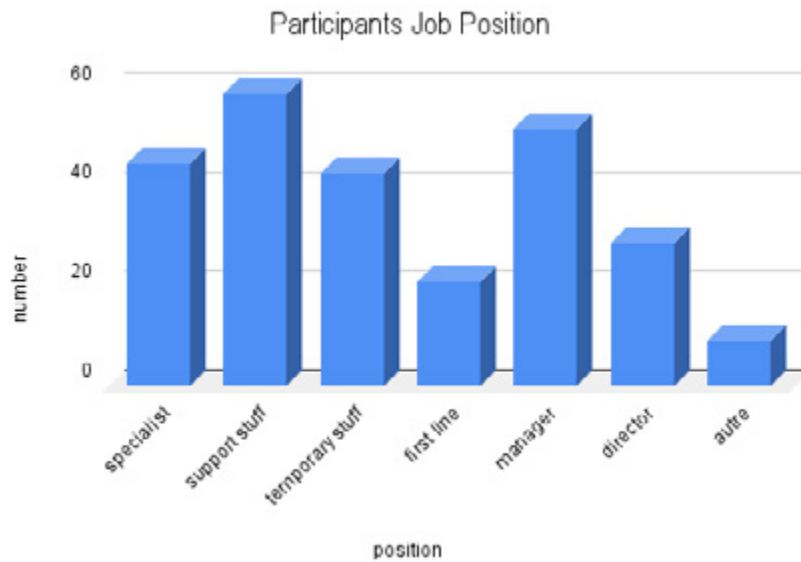


Figure 4.2: Job position statistics

In addition, 29,84% (77) have no more than one year work experience, 23,64% (61) between 1 and 5 years work experience, 15,89% (41) between 6 and 10 years work experience, also 15,89% (41) between 11 and 20 years' experience and 14,72 (38) above 20 years work experience.

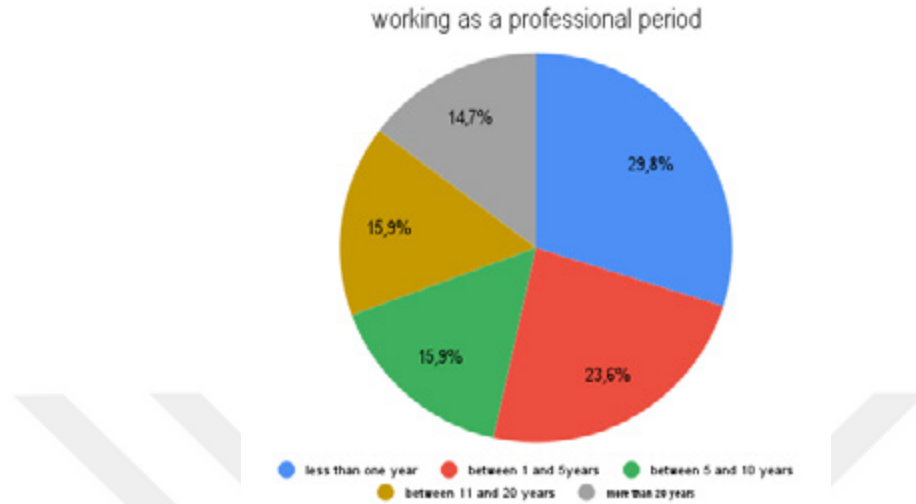


Figure 4.3: Working as a professional period statistics

Moreover, 39,14% (101) of respondents have no more than one year experience with their current employer, 26,35% (68) between 1 and 5 years' experience with their current employer, 17,05 % (44) between 6 and 10 years work experience with their current employer, 10,85% (28) between 11 and 20 years' experience with their current employer and 6,58 (17) have more than 20 years' experience with their current employer.

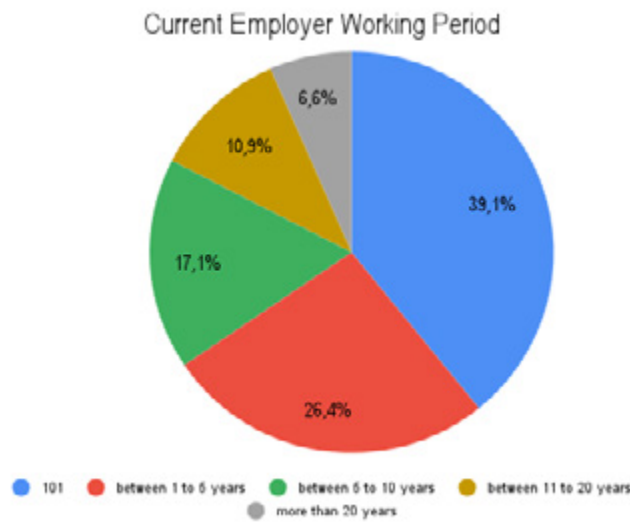


Figure 4.4: Current employer working period statistics

4.1.4: DESCRIPTIVE VARIABLES STATISTICS

4.1.4.a: Interest value

The table 4.3 Displays “INTV” descriptive details related to its different related items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean it ranges from 3.65 (lowest mean) and 3.75 (highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via- tion
INTV1	258	1	5	3,65	1,034
INTV2	258	1	5	3,65	1,004
INTV3	258	1	5	3,65	1,026
INTV4	258	1	5	3,75	1,049
INTV5	258	1	5	3,70	1,062
Valid N (list- wise)	258				

Table 4.3: Interest value

4.1.4.b: Social value

The table 4.4 Displays “SOCV” descriptive details, related to its different related items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean, it ranges from 3.75 (lowest mean) and 3.94 (highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via- tion
SOCV1	258	1	5	3,94	1,015
SOCV2	258	1	5	3,84	1,020
SOCV3	258	1	5	3,86	1,018
SOCV4	258	1	5	3,75	1,051
SOCV5	258	1	5	3,78	1,068
Valid N (list- wise)	258				

Table 4.4: Social value

4.1.4.c: Economic value

The table 4.5 Displays “ECOV” descriptive details, related to its different related items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean it ranges from 3.71 (lowest mean) and 3.78 (highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via- tion
ECOV1	258	1	5	3,71	1,108
ECOV2	258	1	5	3,78	,996
ECOV3	258	1	5	3,70	1,044
ECOV4	258	1	5	3,76	1,071
ECOV5	258	1	5	3,78	1,053
Valid N (listwise)	258				

Table 4.5: Economic value

4.1.4.d: Development value

The table 4.6 Displays “DEVV” descriptive details for its related different items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean it ranges from 3.82 (lowest mean) and 3.93(highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via- tion
DEVV1	258	1	5	3,82	1,013
DEVV2	258	1	5	3,82	1,013
DEVV3	258	1	5	3,95	,969
DEVV4	258	1	5	3,84	1,031
DEVV5	258	1	5	3,93	,978
Valid N (listwise)	258				

Table 4.6: Development value

4.1.4.e: Application value

The table 4.7 Displays “APPV” descriptive details related to its different items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean it ranges from 3.80 (lowest mean) and 3.94 (highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via- tion
APPV1	258	1	5	3,86	1,053
APPV2	258	1	5	3,80	1,057
APPV3	258	1	5	3,94	1,073
Valid N (listwise)	258				

Table 4.7: Application value

4.1.4.f: Vigor

The table 4.8 Displays “V” descriptive details for its related different items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean it ranges from 3.50 (lowest mean) and 3.65 (highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via- tion
V1	258	1	5	3,50	1,103
V2	258	1	5	3,53	1,059
V3	258	1	5	3,54	1,077
V4	258	1	5	3,55	1,091
V5	258	1	5	3,56	1,053
Valid N (listwise)	258				

Table 4.8: Vigor

4.1.4.g: Dedication

The table 4.9 Displays “D” descriptive details for its related different items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean it ranges from 3.65 (lowest mean) and 3.79 (highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via- tion
D1	258	1	5	3,65	1,089
D2	258	1	5	3,67	1,039
D3	258	1	5	3,70	1,066
D4	258	1	5	3,79	1,021
D5	258	1	5	3,67	1,086
Valid N (listwise)	258				

Table 4.9: Dedication

4.1.4.h: Absorption

The table 4.10 Displays “A” descriptive details for its related different items.

In terms of scale degrees; the maximum answered degree of scale is 5 that is strongly agree, whereas the minimum answered degree of scale is 1 that is strongly disagree. As for the mean it ranges from 3.46 (lowest mean) and 3.60 (highest mean) that is greater than 3 (neutral). Therefore, in terms of frequency of answers; the number of ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ exceeds the number of ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree’.

Variable	N	Mini- mum	Maxi- mum	Mean	Std. De- via-tion
A1	258	1	5	3,55	1,143
A2	258	1	5	3,52	1,103
A3	258	1	5	3,55	1,187
A4	258	1	5	3,60	1,094
A5	258	1	5	3,62	1,111
A6	258	1	5	3,46	1,170
Valid N (listwise)	258				

Table 4.10: Absorption

4.2: FACTOR ANALYSIS

Factor analysis stands for validity and reliability assessment. This test’s obtained statistical results are utilized for measuring links between different sub-factors and variables. It also leads to extracting the components that factors and sub-factors may load in, along with measuring their reliability. Moreover, coefficient scores observed in this test may be employed in deductive analysis like regression. Nevertheless, one of factor analysis limitations; is assessing variables by providing correlation matrix and alpha coefficient, without investigating whether they are dependent or independent.

In this factor analysis; factors are loaded on the basis of their component factoring model.

The model basically displays the two principle dependent and independent variables with their eight dimensions (five for independent variables: INTV, SOCV, ECOV, DEVV, APPV under their parent variable EB, and three dependent variables V,D and A under their parent variable EE.)

4.2.1: KMO AND BARTLETT TEST

In order to assure the adequacy of variables, and whether or not they are suitable and fit for the analysis; Bartlett test of sphericity and Kaiser Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is employed. In addition, this test also displays the identity matrix where correlation values shall be equal to zero.

Sharma (1996) [3.15] illustrates that KMO values of and above 0.90- 0.80 indicate an excellent sample adequacy, 0.70- 0.60 values are deemed to indicate average adequacy and values of 0.50 and below convey the weakness of data adequacy.

As displayed in the table 4.11 KMO and Bartlett Test of Sphericity indicate a value of 0.912, therefore factors are highly significant and variables are adequate for the analysis.

As to the identity matrix, observing P value is crucial for determining its significance.

To test this hypothesis, P-value in the below table is important, for it is highly significant at 0.05 and 0.001.

Therefore, data is suitable and excellent for factor analysis.

KMO and Bartlett's test	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	,912
Approx. Chi-Square	3276,257
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity df	45
Sig.	,000

Table 4.11: KMO & Bartlett's test

4.2.2: COMMUNALITIES

The table below 4.12 displays communalities; that is the proportion of the variance for each variable explained by the concerned factors. Since a principal component analysis is conducted, initial values would be equal to 1; as it is assumed that variance is common. Whereas, after extraction; the obtained values indicate a common variance in the data structure.

Higher numbers in communalities prove that data indicators are fit and suitable for the study. Hence in the table below, exhibiting communalities; values are quite acceptable. Therefore, items are adequate and appropriate for conducting this study.

Communalities	Initial	Extraction
INTVQ1	1,000	,727
INTVQ2	1,000	,716
INTVQ3	1,000	,786
INTVQ4	1,000	,731
INTVQ5	1,000	,743
SOCVQ1	1,000	,674
SOCVQ2	1,000	,696
SOCVQ3	1,000	,755
SOCVQ4	1,000	,770
SOCVQ5	1,000	,778
ECOVQ1	1,000	,725
ECOVQ2	1,000	,718
ECOVQ3	1,000	,568
ECOVQ4	1,000	,654
ECOVQ5	1,000	,668
DEVVQ1	1,000	,741
DEVVQ2	1,000	,776
DEVVQ3	1,000	,759
DEVVQ4	1,000	,750
DEVVQ5	1,000	,795
APPVQ1	1,000	,709
APPVQ2	1,000	,734
APPVQ3	1,000	,621
VQ1	1,000	,724
VQ2	1,000	,717
VQ3	1,000	,755
VQ4	1,000	,709
VQ5	1,000	,678
DQ1	1,000	,708
DQ2	1,000	,768
DQ3	1,000	,773
DQ4	1,000	,714
DQ5	1,000	,698
AQ1	1,000	,691
AQ2	1,000	,711
AQ3	1,000	,722
AQ4	1,000	,800
AQ5	1,000	,734
AQ6	1,000	,625

Table 4.12: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

4.2.3: EIGEN VALUES

The below scree plot displays the eigen values of factors; presented in descending order according to their weight from the plot left to the plot right. It serves at identifying the number of factors that have to be retained as they are the most relevant for the attainment of the study objectives.

Eigen values are generally utilized in the analysis of linear transformations. They reflect data characteristics, indicating its communality and different components.

To determine the number of relevant factors, an observation of the inflection point in the plot curve is needed. The number of factors displayed before the curve starts flattening, stands for factors indispensable for the study. The already existent initial Eigen values is the number of indicators and questions (39 items at factor analysis). In addition, according to Kaiser Criterion; acceptable and adequate Eigen values have at least variance equal to 1. This criterion can be applicable on a 250 sample size or more.

The below figure 4.5 displays the scree plot for 39 initial Eigen values.

As there are five dimensions for Employer Brand 'EB' and taking into consideration that the five first components have values greater than 1, it can be concluded that these first five are selected for factor loading.

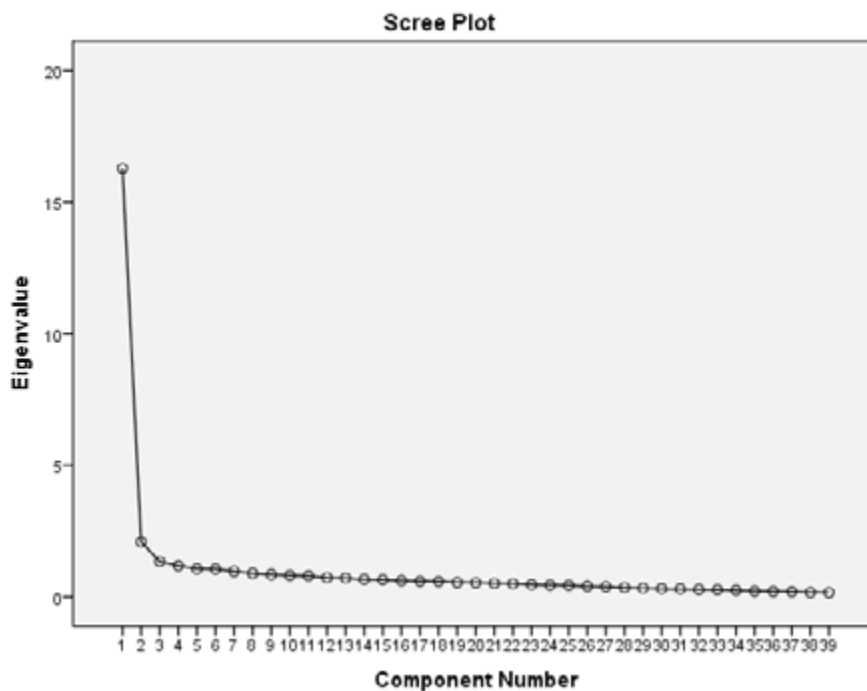


Figure 4.5: Eigen values of factors

4.2.4: EXTRACTED AND ROTATED EIGEN VALUES

Based on Kaiser Eigen values' normalization, the extracted 5 values that have Eigen values greater than 1, do not indicate the same amount of variance.

The table below, displays the rotating sum of squares for extracted variance. According to norms, data should be more suitable and fit with the addition of each component. Hence; variance percentages should be close to one another. In this part with a rotating sum of squares for extracted variance, data would be fit to each component more so variance percentages will be closer to one another.

For social sciences, extracted factors usually explain from 50 to 60 percent of components, that is the case here. From observing the first component, it can be concluded that each component's subsequent; results from dividing the previous one on their total number; in this case 5, that equally stand for the five Employer brand attractiveness dimensions.

Therefore the first component explains the highest variance; 16.282, whereas the last one explains the lowest variance; 1.056, which is quite acceptable and normal.

Components	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% Variance	Cumulative %
1	16,282	41,749	41,749	16,282	41,749	41,749
2	2,080	5,333	47,082	2,080	5,333	47,082
3	1,337	3,429	50,511	1,337	3,429	50,511
4	1,177	3,017	53,528	1,177	3,017	53,528
5	1,056	2,707	56,234	1,056	2,707	56,234

Table 4.13: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

4.3: RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Alpha Coefficient stands for measuring data internal consistency as well as reliability. In this case, Cronbach's alpha related to the whole data details; including all variables with their items (Employer Brand Attractiveness with its five dimensions, and Employee Engagement with its three dimensions) is equal to 0.987, that is the exact value for Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items too.

A Cronbach' α value between 0.6-0.7 designates an acceptable reliability level, an Alpha value of 0.8 or even greater indicates a very good reliability level. The more the value gets closer to 1 the more it reflects excellent data reliability as Kayış, (2009) (248) explains. Therefore, according to the below table 4.14 Cronbach's Alpha displays excellent reliability and data consistency.

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,987	,987	41

Table 4.14: Reliability statistics

The below table 4.15 indicates each variable's reliability, along with their Cronbach's alphas based on standardized items. According to the below table, α Coefficients are ranging between 0.867 and 0.945, that is quite excellent values according to norms.

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items
INTV	0.939	0.939
SOCV	0.945	0.945
ECOV	0.923	0.923
DEVV	0.941	0.941
APPV	0.866	0.867
V	0.940	0.940
D	0.939	0.939
A	0.945	0.946

Table 4.15: Variable's reliability

4.4: DEDUCTIVE ANALYSIS

4.4.1: REGRESSION ANALYSIS

This part will cover the strength and direction of correlation between employer brand attractiveness dimensions and employee engagement dimensions (if existed). Each dimension of the three employee engagement dimensions will be tested separately. But before this step; a simple linear regression test will be performed, to test the first hypothesis, thus, proving the positive impact of employer brand attractiveness as a whole on employee engagement as a whole. Therefore, correlation direction between variables; should be estimated, along with testing each hypothesis to validate the model accuracy. This may be accomplished; via running regression tests, employing variables that were validated by the previous factor analysis.

Concerning multiple linear regressions; three regression tests will be performed. The first will take ‘Vigor’ as the first dimension of the parent dependent variable, the second test will take ‘dedication’ as the second dimension of the same parent dependent variable, and the third test will take ‘adoption’ as the third dimension of the parent dependent variable. On the other hand, the five dimensions of employee brand attractiveness (Interest, Social, economic, development and application values) will stand as independent variables in each test of the three.

Results will determine inter-variables correlation nature and type, on one hand. Regression weights will serve in illustrating the impact of Employer brand attractiveness dimensions on those of employee engagement, on the other hand.

Furthermore, multiple regression techniques are employed in order to determine whether the model in question is adequate or not. This method aims at entering variables that are said (according to the model), to have a degree of correlation and impact with and on the dependent variable. At the end, with observing results model adequacy and significance would be deducted.

**4.4.1.a: First Regression Test: Simple Linear Regression
Independent Variable: EB, Dependent Variable: EE**

Table 4.16 displays coefficient determinants of R, R² and R² – Adj.

After entering the independent variable EB and dependent variable EE; R is equal to 0.752. Therefore it can be concluded that there is a consistent link between Employer Brand Attractiveness as independent variable and Employee Engagement as dependent variable. R square is equal to 0.566; that is to say 57 percent of changes affecting employee engagement is explained by employer brand attractiveness.

The Adjusted R square conveys the reliability of data for the regression test in particular. Here R² – Adj is 0.564 therefore 56 % of data is fit for regression analysis; that is a quite acceptable and adequate percentage.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,752A	,566	,564	,575

A. Predictors: (Constant), EB

B. Dependent Variable: EE

Table 4.16: Model summaryB

Table 4.17. displays ANOVA test for Employer Brand Attractiveness and Employee Engagement; according to these results, F = 334.067 is statistically significant at (p < 0.05). Therefore, the Independent Variable is effective in predicting the dependent variable that is employees Engagement in this case.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression ¹	110,555	1	110,555	334,0647	,000B
Residual	84,720	256	,331		
Total	195,275	257			

A. Dependent Variable: EE

B. Predictors: (Constant), EB

Table 4.17: ANOVA

According to the table below 4.18 EB is significant (P value equals 0.000), and its related t value is greater than 1.95.

B weights are utilized to predict changes in significant independent variables, while Beta weights indicate the amount of impact that a change in the independent variable applies on the dependent variable.

Thereby, an increase with 75 percent in Employer Brand Attractiveness is followed by 75 percent of increase in Employer Engagement as well.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	,967	,163		5,919	,000
EB	,750	,041	,752	18,277	,000

A. Dependent Variable: EE

Table 4.18: Coefficients

Histograms are utilized to convey whether there is a normal distribution of data, it is in fact a quantitative measure characterized by a set of values ranging between a set of numbers.

The following histogram indicates that data is normally distributed and its variance is standard

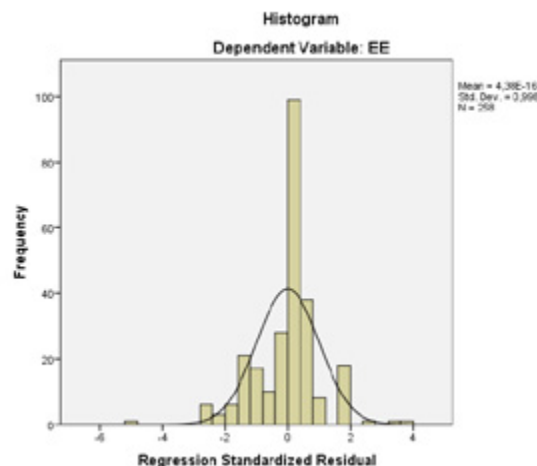


Figure 4.6: Histogram 1

4.4.1.b: Multiple linear regression

4.4.1.b.a: Vigor "V" as dependant variable

Table 4.19 displays coefficient determinants of R, R² and R² – Adj.

after entering the 5 dimensions of independent variable, and Vigor as dependent variable; R is equal to 0.852. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a strong link between independent variables and dependent variable 'V'. R square is equal to 0.725. That is to say; 73 percent of changes affecting the dependent variable (vigor) is explained by at least one of these independent variables (EB dimensions).

The Adjusted R square conveys the reliability of data for the regression test in particular. Here R² – Adj is 0.720 therefore 72 percent of data is fit for regression analysis, that is a quite adequate percentage.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,852A	,725	,720	,0714898

A. Predictors: (Constant), APPV, ECOV, INTV, SOCV, DEVV

B. Dependent Variable: V

Table 4.19: Model summaryB

Table 4.20 displays ANOVA test for the independent variables (EB dimensions) tested on Vigor as the dependent variable. According to these results; F = 133.193 is statistically significant (p < 0.05). Therefore, at least one of the independent variables is effective in predicting the dependent variable that is employees' vigor in this case

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression ¹	3,404	5	,681	133,193	,000B
Residual	1,288	252	,005		
Total	4,692	257			

A. Dependent Variable: V

B. Predictors: (Constant), APPV, ECOV, INTV, SOCV, DEVV

Table 4.20: ANOVA A

According to the below table 4.21 INTV, SOCV and ECOV are significant in 0.05. In addition; their related t-values are greater than 1.95, in their turn significant in 0.05.

B weights are utilized to predict changes in significant independent variables whereas Beta weights convey the amount of impact that change in independent variables exert on the dependent variable.

Therefore it can be concluded that a 28% increase in INTV results in 25% increase in employees vigor, a 49% increase in SOCV results in 46% increase in employees vigor, a 19% increase in ECOV results in 17% increase in employees vigor. On the other hand, there is no significance noted with DEVV and APPV, the fact that impacted the constant significance as well; as their P values are greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that DEVV and APPV do not have a significant effect on employees ‘vigor.

Hence, with these regression weights, the regression equation on dependent variable (vigor) is the sum of significant independent variables (EB dimensions) multiplied by their regression weights added to the constant value.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand-ardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-,036	,024		-1,523	,129
INTV	,279	,054	,254	5,174	,000
SOCV	,494	,058	,463	8,539	,000
ECOV	,192	,055	,174	3,506	,001
DEVV	-,008	,060	-,008	-,136	,892
APPV	,087	,054	,090	1,613	,108

A. Dependent Variable: V

Table 4.21: CoefficientsA

The following histogram related to independent variable “V” indicates that data is normally distributed and its variance is standard as well.

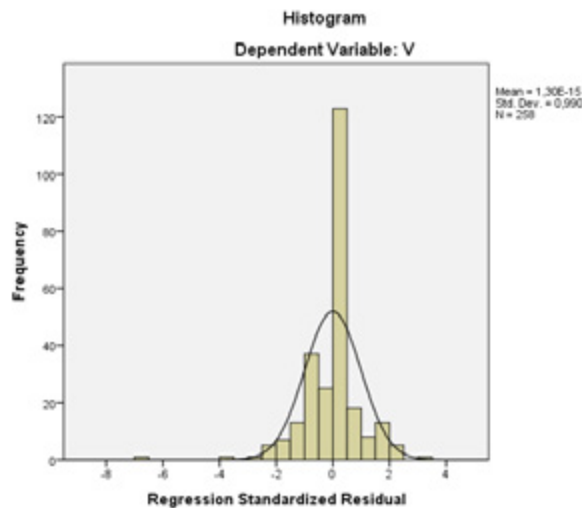


Figure 4.7: Histogram 2

4.4.1.b.b: Dedication "D" as dependant variable

Table 4.22 displays coefficient determinants of R, R² and R² – Adj.

After entering the 5 dimensions of the independent variable, R is equal to 0.817. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a strong link between independent variables and dependent variable 'D'. R square is equal to 0.667; that is to say 68 percent of changes affecting the dependent variable (Dedication) is explained by at least one of these independent variables (EB dimensions).

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,817A	,667	,661	,0815359

A. Predictors: (Constant), APPV, ECOV, INTV, SOCV, DEVV

B. Dependent Variable: D

Table 4.22: Model summaryB

Table 4.23 displays ANOVA test for the independent variables (EB dimensions), tested on Dedication as dependent variable. According to these results, the statistic F = 101.015 is statistically significant (p < 0.05). Therefore, at least one of the independent variables is effective in predicting the dependent variable that is employees' dedication in this case.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression ¹	3,358	5	,672	101,015	,000B
Residual	1,675	252	,007		
Total	5,033	257			

A. Dependent Variable: D

B. Predictors: (Constant), APPV, ECOV, INTV, SOCV, DEVV

Table 4.23: ANOVA A

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand-ardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	,017	,027		,632	,528
INTV	-,068	,061	-,060	-1,102	,272
SOCV	,395	,066	,358	5,994	,000
ECOV	,153	,062	,134	2,455	,015
DEVV	,273	,068	,262	4,020	,000
APPV	,226	,062	,224	3,661	,000

A. Dependent Variable: D

Table 4.24: CoefficientsA

The below figure represents the histogram related to variable “D”, indicating that data is normally distributed and its variance is standard

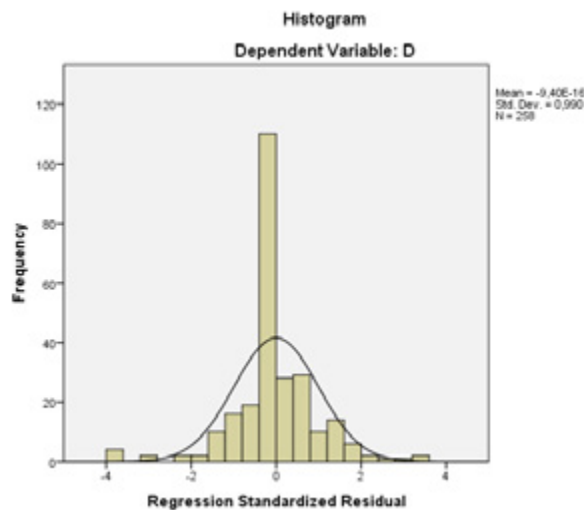


Figure 4.8: Histogram 3

4.4.1.b.c: Regression for dedication dependent variable "A"

Table 4.25 displays coefficient determinants of R, R² and R² – Adj.

After entering the 5 dimensions of the independent variables, along with Absorption as dependent variable, R is equal to 0.929. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a strong link between independent variables and dependent variable ‘A’. R square is equal to 0.864; that is to say 86 percent of changes affecting dependent variables (Absorption) is explained by at least one of these independent variables (EB dimensions).

The Adjusted R square conveys data reliability for the regression test in particular. Here R² – Adj is 0.861. Therefore, 86 % of data is fit for regression analysis, that is a quite strong and adequate percentage.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,929A	,864	,861	,0497792

A. Predictors: (Constant), APPV, ECOV, INTV, SOCV, DEVV

B. Dependent Variable: A

Table 4.25: Model summary^B

Table 4.26 displays ANOVA test for the independent variables (EB dimensions) and dependent variable Adoption; according to these results, the statistic $F = 320.056$ is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, at least one of the independent variables is effective in predicting the dependent variable that is employees' Adoption in this case.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression ¹	3,965	5	,793	320,056	,000B
Residual	,624	252	,002		
Total	4,590	257			

A. Dependent Variable: A

B. Predictors: (Constant), APPV, ECOV, INTV, SOCV, DEVV

Table 4.26: ANOVA^A

According to the table below, 4.27, INTV, ECOV, DEVV and APPV are significant in 0.05. In addition; their related t-values are greater than 1.95, in their turn significant in 0.05.

B weights are utilized to predict changes in significant independent variables, while, Beta weights convey the amount of impact that a change in independent variables may exert on the dependent variable.

Therefore, it can be concluded that a 14% increase in INTV results in 13% increase in employees' Absorption, a 14% increase in ECOV results in 13% increase in employees' Absorption, a 76% increase in DEVV results in 76% increase in employees' Absorption, and a 19% increase in APPV results in 19% increase in employee's Absorption.

On the other hand, there is no significance noted with SOCV, the fact that impacted the constant significance as well; as their P values are greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that SOCV does not have a significant effect on employees' Absorption.

Hence, with these regression weights, the regression equation on dependent variable (Absorption), is the sum of significant independent variables (EB dimensions) multiplied by their regression weights added to the constant value.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Stand-ardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	,024	,017		1,422	,156
INTV	,136	,038	,125	3,617	,000
SOCV	,017	,040	,016	,415	,678
ECOV	,140	,038	,129	3,680	,000
DEVV	,759	,041	,764	18,303	,000
APPV	,185	,038	,192	4,912	,000

A. Dependent Variable: A

Table 4.27: CoefficientsA

The following histogram related to dependent variable “A” indicates that data is normally distributed and its variance is standard.

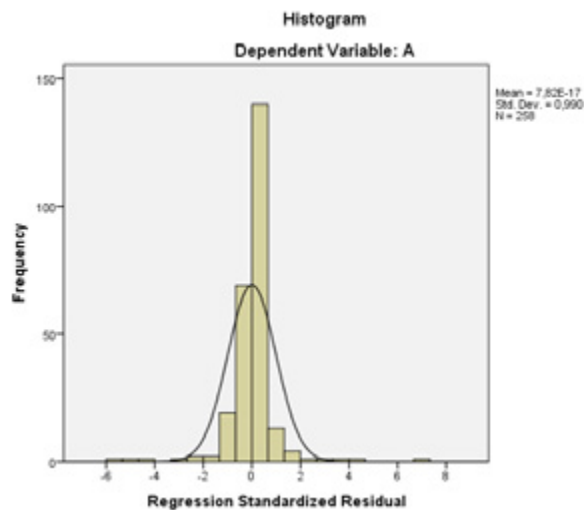


Figure 4.9: Histogram 4

4.5: HYPOTHESIS TESTING

According to regression coefficient tables that indicate regression B weights for each independent variable as well as Beta weights for each of dependent variables; the 16 hypotheses are tested as follows;

First hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive association between Employer Brand Attractiveness (EB) and employees Engagement (EE)

According to the first regression test, table, 4.18; displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is significance between EB and EE (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.750 and 0.752, the thing that proves that EB has a positive impact on EE.

Therefore, H1 hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Second hypothesis:

H2a: There is a positive association between interest value and employees vigor.

According to the first multiple regression test, table 4.21, displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is significance between INTV and V (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.279 and 0.254, the thing that proves that INTV has a positive impact on V.

Therefore, H2a hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Third Hypothesis:

H2b: There is a positive association between interest value and employees dedication.

According to the second multiple regression test, table 4.24, displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is no significance between INTV and D (P value equals 0.272) the thing that proves that INTV has no significant impact on V.

Therefore, H2b hypothesis is rejected.

Fourth Hypothesis:

H2c: There is a positive association between interest value and employees' absorption.

According to the third multiple regression test, table 4.27, displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is significance between INTV and A (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.136 and 0.125, the thing that proves that INTV has a positive impact on A.

Therefore, H2c hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Fifth Hypothesis:

H3a: There is a positive association between social value and employees vigor

According to the first multiple regression test, table 4.21, displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is significance between SOCV and V (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.494 and 0.463, the thing that proves that SOCV has a positive impact on V.

Therefore, H3a hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Sixth Hypothesis:

H3b: There is a positive association between social value and employees dedication

According to the second multiple regression test, table 4.24 displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is a significance between SOCV and D (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.395 and 0.358. Hence, SOCV positively impacts D. Therefore, H3b hypothesis is accepted.

Seventh Hypothesis:

H3c: There is a positive association between social value and employees absorption

According to the third multiple regression test, table 4.27, displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is no noted significance between SOCV and A (P value equals 0.678). Hence, SOCV has no significant impact on A.

Therefore, H3c hypothesis is rejected.

Eighth Hypothesis:

H4a: There is a positive association between economic value and employees vigor

According to the first multiple regression test, table 4.21, displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is significance between ECOV and V (P value equals 0.001) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.192 and 0.174, the thing that proves that ECOV has a positive impact on V.

Therefore, H3a hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Ninth Hypothesis:

H4b: There is a positive association between economic value and employees dedication

According to the second multiple regression test, table 4.24, displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is significance between ECOV and D (P value equals 0.015) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.153 and 0.134 , the thing that proves that ECOV has a positive impact on D.

Therefore, H4b hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Tenth Hypothesis:

H4c: There is a positive association between economic value and employees absorption.

According to the third multiple regression test, table 4.27 displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is significance between ECOV and A (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.140 and 0.129, Hence ECOV has a positive impact on A.

Therefore, H4c hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Eleventh Hypothesis:

H5a: There is a positive association between development value and employees vigor

According to the first multiple regression test, table 4.21 displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is no significance between DEVV and V (P value equals 0.892) thereby there is no significant relationship between DEVV and V, hence H5a hypothesis is rejected .

Twelfth Hypothesis:

H5b: There is a positive association between development value and employees dedication

According to the second multiple regression test, namely the table 4.24, displaying coefficients ; there is significance between DEVV and D (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.273 and 0.262 ,hence ; it can be concluded that DEVV has a positive impact on D.

Therefore, H5b hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Thirteenth Hypothesis:

H5c: There is a positive association between development value and employees absorption

According to the third multiple regression test, namely the table 4.27, displaying coefficients ; there is significance between DEVV and A (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.759 and 0.764 ,hence ; it can be concluded that DEVV has a positive impact on A.

Therefore, H5c hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Fourteenth Hypothesis:

H6a: There is a positive association between application value and employees vigor

According to the first multiple regression test, table 4.21 displaying coefficients ; indicates that there is no significance between APPV and V (P value equals 0.108) thereby there is no significant relationship between APPV and V, hence H6a hypothesis is rejected .

Fifteenth Hypothesis:

H6b: There is a positive association between application value and employees dedication

Based on the second multiple regression test results, namely the table 4.24, displaying coefficients; there is significance between APPV and D (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.226 and 0.224 , consequently, APPV has a positive impact on D.

Therefore, H6b hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

Sixteenth Hypothesis:

H6c: There is a positive association between application value and employees absorption

According to the third multiple regression test, namely the table 4.27, displaying coefficients; there is significance between APPV and A (P value equals 0.000) with B and Beta weights consecutively 0.185 and 0.192 ,hence ; it can be concluded that APPV has a positive impact on A.

Therefore, H6c hypothesis is accepted and positively confirmed.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND PROPOSALS

5.1: OVERVIEW

The major research question that this thesis hovers around is the impact of employer brand attractiveness on employee engagement.

The first tackled aspect is Internal marketing notion, or as many researchers call it “Internal Advertising”. As discussed in chapter 2, the elements constructing its notion, as well as the intertwining interdepartmental functions and concepts. For the major two roles of IM are equally embodied in the major HR and Marketing departments’ functions.

Then, the scope was more straightened to shed-light a particular aspect of IM (also strongly related to the function of these two above-mentioned departments). I.e. the influence exerted by the brand attractiveness on the engagement of employees.

The scope is further narrowed to section the components of Employer branding that were elaborated in the literature part by Berthon et al., (2005) [5.1]. And to test the impact of each one of components (EB dimensions) on each component of employee engagement (EE dimensions) as developed by Schaufeli’s definition of engagement in the UWES [5.2].

5.2: FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Findings portray that there is a positive impact on employee engagement by employer brand attractiveness. As it is proved by Copenhagen Business School, (2009); Dell, Ainspan, & Bodenber, (2001) [5.3]; Employers are requested to provide decent factors (can be recapitulated in EB values), that may ‘attract and retain the best talent’.

According to Verma and Verma (2014) [5.4]; employer brand plays the role of a bed-rock in providing the perfect package that may attract and retain employees. Sullivan (2004) also, found out that EB was a technique employed by organizations during economic slow-downs to attract and retain the best employees, indispensable for hardship overcoming.

Lievens et al., (2007) [5.5] proved that Social value, Development value, and Economic value boost employees and attract them towards organizations. They ensured as well that development and application values encourage workers to employ their expertise to achieve effectiveness; the same theory that was proven by this research. In fact, according to the table 4.27, a 76% increase in DEVV results in 76% increase in employees’ Absorption, that is a quite high percentage.

Further research findings like Dawn & Biswas, (2010) [5.6] prove that Economic, development and application values enhance the rate of employee satisfaction and return on investment at professional and personal levels. Moreover, results indicate that all EB five dimensions are indispensable and vital at predicting at least one of EE dimensions. Hence they are comparable with previous study results like the one held by Bhasin et al., (2019) [5.7] investigating the same association between EB and EE.

Research findings like those of Rameshkumar, (2020) and Schaufeli & Salanova, (2007) [5.8] ensure that employees' work behavior when provided with retaining factors and values like interest, social, economic, development and application; will be enhanced, leading to engagement. A study conducted on the banking sector resulted in finding out that social value exerts the most vital impact on employee engagement, followed consecutively by economic, interest, application and development values. These interesting results may be related to the fact that the banking sector generally has a stressful and delicate work environment, the thing that makes employees prioritize social value on the head of other values. The influence of social value is also proven to be outstanding in this study, as; the uttermost increase in employees' vigor and dedication is attributed to a decent social value. For, a 49% increase in SOCV results in 46% increase in employees' vigor and a 40% increase in SOCV results in 36% increase in employees' dedication. Hence two important features of employee engagement, out of the three are attributed to the highest share of Employer value proposition that is social.

Within the same framework, a study conducted by Rameshkumar, (2020); Schaufeli & Salanova, (2007) [5.9] resulted in concluding that employee engagement in its turn leads to organizational commitment. Thereby; employer brands usher in organizational commitment via employee engagement.

It is also important to base the findings on respondents 'demographic features; as their age, status and experience may directly impact their response to employer brand, correspondingly influences their engagement. Findings indicate that the majority of respondents are between the age of 21 and 30. Being young and career directed may stand as an explanation; as to why Economic feature in employer brand has the most significant impact in this study. Equally, the majority of respondents have a less than one year job experience, and been working for their current employer for almost the same amount of time. This equally elucidates the impact of economic value on the three engagement dimensions. For, the financial side at career beginnings may stand for one of the most motivating benefits.

On the other hand, considering the fact that the study is hovering around IT sector employees serves in better interpretation of the obtained results. For, it is indicated that interest value did not exert a significant impact on employees dedication while it positively affected their vigor and absorption. This may be attributed to the nature and characteristics of the studied sector. As the most motivating factor in, I.T may be the existence of creativity and innovation, standing as two important assets in technology domains, This equally may go back to being the most requested characteristic in order to meet outstanding results and achieve an effective competitive advantage.

Kochanski and Ledford (2001) [5.11] stated that high technology employees are attracted by interesting and challenging opportunities (interest value characteristics). They may equally get bored and repulse shallow and repetitive tasks. An earlier view by Amabile et al., (1996) stated that work content (I.e. Interest value) affects high technology workers stability and retention.

This may stand as an explanation to the fact that interest value embodied quite an attractive factor after economic value.

The fact that it did not have a significant impact on dedication within the context of this sample can be explained that it mostly triggered vigor (for it is the most appropriate and direct response to exciting and challenging factors). It also triggered absorption, that may be entailed from vigor. As they complement one another (being committed and absorbed is a huge part of being vigorous). Nevertheless, This does not mean that dedication is not a significant engagement aspect in the I.T sector.

In addition, social value did not impact absorption in a significant way. This may equally go back to the fact that absorption in the I.T sector is more triggered by other factors, of a more priority than the social one.

Also, development and Application values did not affect vigor in a significant way. As mentioned above, this may be interpreted, that for I.T workers, other values have a more priority, therefore; impact their engagement the most. Namely here, the aspect of vigor, as it the most requested in such a challenging and exciting sector. Therefore, the results of this study are clearly relevant and reliable. For, they are similar to previous study outputs, and usher to the same major termination.

5.3: THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

-Few studies have undertaken this subject in a detailed way. I.e. disjointing employer brand and employee engagement into different components, and test each of these components from both groups on one another in a full comprehensive way.

-Within the context of the previous point, this study may serve at exactly knowing which EB dimension has the most influence on each dimension of EE. This correspondingly may supply firms with information as to what EB value should be enhanced to upgrade a certain aspect of employee engagement; that may be namely indispensable for fostering and strengthening the brand attractiveness and employee engagement, for a better organizational performance.

-Employer branding is becoming more and more critical and vital in a wide realm of research and studies; especially the ones hovering around HR. for the valuable insights that it may provide concerning employees learning, development and formation. This will be a cornerstone for organizational success as Alshathry et al., (2017) [5.10] elaborated. Therefore, this study may contribute to a more comprehensive vision as to how HR is related to employer branding, hence internal marketing, and what further tactics may be employed to gather and retain a solid employee base through internal advertising.

5.4: LIMITATIONS

- In the empirical study, results indicated that there are some EB dimensions that do not impact some of EE dimensions. For example, interest value did not have a significant impact on employees' dedication. In addition, social value did not have a significant influence on employees' absorption. Equally, development and application values did not show a notable effect on employees' vigor. I.e. from a total number of 16 hypotheses, 4 are rejected and 14 are accepted. This may be explained by the general opinion of questionnaire participants and their demographic features. Especially that the survey may have been distributed on a wide range of workers from the same IT organization or firm, where employees do not really relate being vigorous, dedicated or absorbed in their work to one of employer brand values.

- Gender and Geographic details were absent from respondents Demographic features, as they were thought to be of a less importance from other demographic features; that are of a paramount priority in determining employees' engagement factors.

Nevertheless, this did not hinder the accomplishment of the research major goal that is proving the validity of the main hypothesis H1.

5.5: SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Fewer researches have undertaken the opposite case; that is the impact of EE on EB. And whether an effective management plays a significant role in employees engagement, leading -in its turn- to enhancing the brand attractiveness.

- A profound study level should be performed. That is investigating each aspect of employee engagement on employer brand aspects.

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Appendix

Section 1

1. What is your age? 18 to 20 21 to 30 31 to 40 41 and older

2. How long have you been working as as professional?

Less than 1 year

Between 1 and 5 years

Between 6 and 10 years

Between 11 and 20 years

More than 20 years

3. How long have you been working for your current employer?

Less than 1 year

Between 1 and 5 years

Between 6 and 10 years

Between 11 and 20 years

More than 20 years

4. What is your job classification?

Specialist

Support Staff

Temporary Staff

First Line Supervisor

Manager

Director

Other _____

Section 2

Please respond to following questions by considering your current job/employer...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
(1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral, (4) Agree (5) Strongly Agree	1	2	3	4	5
At my work, I feel bursting with energy.					
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.					
When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.					
I can continue working for very long periods at a time.					
At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.					
At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.					
I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.					
I am enthusiastic about my job.					
My job inspires me.					
I am proud of the work that I do.					
To me, my job is challenging.					
Time flies when I am working.					
When I am working, I forget everything else around me.					
I feel happy when I am working intensely.					
I am immersed in my work.					
I get carried away when I am working.					
It is difficult to detach myself from my job.					

Section 3

Please respond to following questions by considering your current job/employer...					
(1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral, (4) Agree (5) Strongly Agree	1	2	3	4	5
The company that I work in produces innovative products and services					
My company is an Innovative employer – novel work practices/forward-thinking					
The company that I work in both values and makes use of your creativity					
The company that I work in produces high-quality products and services					
I am working in an exciting environment					
At my job, I have a good relationship with my colleagues					
At my job, I have a good relationship with my superiors					
My colleagues are supportive and encouraging					
My job is in a fun working environment					
My job is in a happy work environment					
My company offers good promotion opportunities					
I am able to get a hands-on inter-departmental experience					
My company offers an above average basic salary					
My company offers an attractive overall compensation package					
I feel that I have a job security within the organisation					
I am feeling more self-confident as a result of working for my company					
I am feeling good about myself as a result of working for my company					
I am able to gain a career-enhancing experience					
My job is a springboard for future employment					
I am able to get recognition/appreciation from management					
At my job, I have the opportunity to teach others what I have learned					
At my job, I have the opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution					
My company is customer-orientated					
My company is a humanitarian organisation – gives back to society					
I feel that I have acceptance and belonging at my company.					

