AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

EMPLOYER BRANDING AND ITS BENEFITS:

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SOUTH KOREAN MULTINATIONAL

CORPORATIONS THAT OPERATE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

by

INSU BAEK

A project

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of Master of Human Resource Management

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

Insu Baek   for   **Master of Human Resources Management**

Major: Human Resource Management

Title: Employer Branding and Its Benefits:

An Empirical Study of S. Korean MNCs that operate in ME

Employer branding's benefits were examined by verifying two hypotheses: The perception of employer branding leads to higher level of job engagement, and the perception of employer branding leads to a higher level of individual corporate social responsibility attitude. The South Korean MNCs operating in the Middle East region as a hundred employees participated in the examination. This research supported valuable insights to understand the competitive advantage of employer branding, enabling organizations working in the Middle East to manage their employee engagement effectively and favorable CSR attitudes.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND EMPLOYER BRANDING

The roles of human resources activities in many organizations in the business world, both small- and medium-sized enterprises and multi-national corporations, continually grow in importance. Aurand, Gorchels, & Bishop (2005) mentioned in their research that while the need for enlarging the human resources department's role has been met with little to no adversarial rebuttal, research supports the huge impact that human resources management can have on the growth and implementation of strategic corporate initiatives. In the 21st century, the human resource management field has advanced its strategic activities more steadily, associating with employer branding, which can be explained as a long-term commitment that not only targets existing employees and finds ways to retain them, but appeals to the promising talent in the pool of new recruits (Herman & Gioia, 2001; Sarabdeen, El-Rakhawy, & Khan, 2011). Ready & Conger (2007) points out that Multinational Corporations (MNCs) such as P&G pay close attention to the effectiveness of their recruiting processes by implementing strategic Human Resources Management activity. In this manner, Edwards (2010) sees employer branding as an activity where the principles of marketing are applied to Human Resources activities in relation to current and potential employees.

Ambler & Barrow (1996) defines employer branding as, "the package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment," and introduced the term "employer branding" for the first time in the second half of the 1990s. They provided the

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relationship between a company and its employees that forms a series of exchanges for mutual benefit. Without taking the certain practical resistance to introducing marketing vocabularies and practices to the Human Resources Management discipline into account, Ambler and Barrow determined that the employer brand concept is potentially valuable for companies, and that applying brand management to the Human Resources Management function reinforces the strength (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Aggerholm, Andersen, & Thomsen, 2011). As a consequence of this, the core objective of the employer branding concept is to have a positive influence on both current and prospective employees to entice higher-potential employees (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005; Bodderas, Cachelin, Maas, & Schlager, 2011)

Aurand , Gorchels, & Bishop (2005) observe how the brand may require incorporation into the work in more subtle ways, and human resources policies and employment practices will also influence brand delivery. In their current investigation, the relationship between the involvement of human resources in employer branding and the incorporation of a brand into work activity identifies tremendous opportunities for HR managers to work in conjunction with marketing managers to deliver agreed-on brand messages to employees who are not only incumbents or future staff in the company. At the same time, the authors point out "the role of Human Resources in influencing branding (i.e., both externally and internally) has been recognized in isolated ways, ways that are certainly intuitive—the need for Human Resources to be more comprehensive in its role to support branding efforts has not been recognized a great deal in the literature, nor has it been revealed in the actions of most Human Resources professionals" (2005, p.164)

Some scholars argue that employer branding is becoming a requisite for power companies, whose ability to use it can differentiate themselves from their competitors, helping them recruit top talent more easily (Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Liikkanen, 2013). According to Aggerholm, Andersen, & Thomsen (2011), employer branding can even facilitate sustainable organizational development through the creation and nurturing of long-term employer–employee relationships; and can finally affect economic profits, human development, and growth. By increasing the roles of human resource management, particularly in areas that include employer branding, many corporations working at diverse sites around the globe could better utilize effective communication between management and basic employees. This will provide a good understanding of what the brand is and how it works for the company, and the role that the whole workforce at the organization can perform to contribute to augmenting the brand promise, which potentially can give them added value (e.g. better financial terms by increasing corporate revenues or securing top talented employees).

Bodderas, Cachelin, Maas, & Schlager (2011) demonstrated in their current study that strong employer branding results in employee satisfaction, and then satisfied employees influence customers' experiences positively, which indirectly pays off by leveraging company profits. The long-term creation of a consistent service brand, which is developed by various customers, is therefore assured by also considering potential employees. From the existing literature, it is clear that employer branding affects many of the same stakeholder groups, ranging from staff and clients to shareholders (Moroko & Uncles, 2008). Moroko et al. (2008) proposed that organizations could assess their employer brand success using a number of metrics of

practical and theoretical interest. The authors mentioned that consistently developing the strategic benefits of employer branding outcomes would assist in the richness of both practical and theoretical knowledge for emerging areas of marketing theory.

Booth & Matic (2011) apparently mention in the current research that, through social networks and videos, customers are entrenched in the dissemination of information via the Internet. According to the authors, customers are now the individuals broadcasting individual or second-hand stories to their social networks and the world, which means they are the new brand ambassadors and brand storytellers. In terms of the Human Resources Management perspective, these customers can be new or experienced applicants to the organization, who seek suitable positions or make an effort to choose their professions. Therefore, it can be a core matter to practitioners in various organizations around the world that identifying and practicing employer branding and its roles are substantial values, providing them greater opportunity with the attraction of A-level potential employees. In connection with what Booth et al. introduced above, employer attractiveness can be defined as "the envisioned benefits that a potential employees see in working for a specific organization" (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005, p. 154–155). In accordance with Berthon et al. (2005, p.156), "the more attractive an employer is perceived to be by potential employees, the stronger that particular organization's employer brand equity." They concluded that companies that understand the factors of employer attractiveness can successfully compete globally at attracting new employees.

Although much has been made of employer branding in the current decade, its perception of characteristics, both successful and unsuccessful; however, has not been empirically examined

numerically. The aim of this study mainly focuses on the relationship between employer

branding and its benefit to organizations, in the way that employer branding can be a main driver

of company's mid–long-term business strategies. For the examination, I introduce MNCs that

successfully operate their worksites in the Middle East and their employer branding, exploring

the connection between such organizations' success and employer branding. After that, we verify

the hypothesis that includes the positive effectiveness of employer branding on employee

engagement, and potential financial results such as individual corporate social responsibility

attitudes through empirical investigation.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Brand management plays an increasingly important role in the business-to-business (B2B) market, yielding substantial benefits (Kalafatis, Remizova, Riley, & Singh 2011). The construction industry is in the center of the B2B market, and has been referred to as the engine that drives the overall economy. The industry, as such, consists of large and small firms, which work both domestically and in the international market (Halpin et al., 2012). According to the Top 250 International Contractors list in 2013 as published by ENR as the construction industry periodical, five South Korean companies acting in the B2B international market ranked in the Top 10 for the Middle East. It is estimated that Korean design firms occupy approximately one-third of revenue sharing as the considerable amount of 26 billion US dollars in this region (Renia, 2013).

In this study, we examined the success factors of these organizations, derived possibly from their corporate branding tools. From an employer branding perspective, we researched the potential relevance of its role in creating employee loyalty and their engagement, and assumed that a positive relationship exists between the employer branding the sampling companies implemented and the economic values influenced by current employee engagement.

Few studies exist that involve employer branding and MNCs, because it is a relatively new concept that has gained increasing attention worldwide. Sarabdeen et al. (2011) introduced employer branding implemented by multinational companies operating in the Gulf region such as

Nestle and the Emirates Airlines Group. Heilmann et al. (2013) and analyzed employer branding as a significant part of a company's business and a considerable investment element through their current case study.

Heilmann et al (2013) also introduced in their current research that the benefits of employer branding can be achieved through both external and internal branding practices such as effective recruitment and retention, as presented in their theoretical framework of Employer Branding (EB) in the power industry below (Figure 1). The box on top consists of basic concept of employer branding and its benefits, which mainly include engagement and lower personal turnover; the issues related to cost saving overall. Strong employer branding or EB can reduce a company's costs when acquiring employees by enhancing the favorable attitudes among current employees, and decrease compensation for equally qualified and skilled employees compared to firms with a comparably weaker EB (Ritson, 2002; Bodderas, Maas, & Shlager, 2011). The box below it shows the internal and external marketing or branding that applies to the practice of employer branding; (1) the idea of branding in itself can be described as an activity of creating value and influence through symbolizing both tangible and intangible attributes (Swystun 2007; Edwards 2010). (2) External branding or marketing can be defined as "promoting the company, product or service to potential employees or customers" (Kotler & Keller, 2009; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Liikkanen, 2013). External branding in employer brands establishes organization as an employer of choice, and makes it possible to tempt top talent and support the product or corporate brands (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Liikkanen, 2013). Thus, a good example of external branding could be producing high-quality services/products, or

showing good business performance by creating a true picture of the company. It can help the company attract employees with superior skills and knowledge. (3) On the other hand, in the internal branding or marketing concept, a firm's employees are the company's market, because they are internal clients and their jobs are internal products. Job products should appeal, develop, and inspire personnel, while addressing the final objectives of the organization (Berthon et al, 2005; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Liikkanen, 2013). According to Heilmann et al. (2013), this branding can help build a workforce that other firms find difficult to imitate, and enhance employee retention in using the brand to strengthen the concept of quality employment, consequently increasing their willingness to stay at the firm. That is, internal branding would include offering a package of financial and intrinsic rewards such as charity work to the employees, as a differentiated offering against competitors. This can lead to increasing employee's loyalty, and to improving their productivity. The box at the bottom displays the employer branding process. Two of the essential features related to its process are research and communication (Van Mossevelde, 2010; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Liikkanen, 2013). According to Van Mossevelde (2010), research is the first step in the employer branding process, and is a key part in understanding employer's position in the employment market and defining the applicable action plan. He mentions (2010) that the development of a communication strategy, which is another stage of the process, is an effective and efficient channel for reaching the audience in the company. This channel through employee value proposition (EVP) can give employers opportunities to increase their talent pool, personnel's commitments, and possibly decrease wage costs. Minchington (2010) defines employee value proposition or EVP as "a set

of associations and offerings provided by your organization in return for the skills, capabilities and experiences an employee brings to your organization".

Figure 1. The theoretical framework of EB in the power industry (Heilmann et al., 2013)
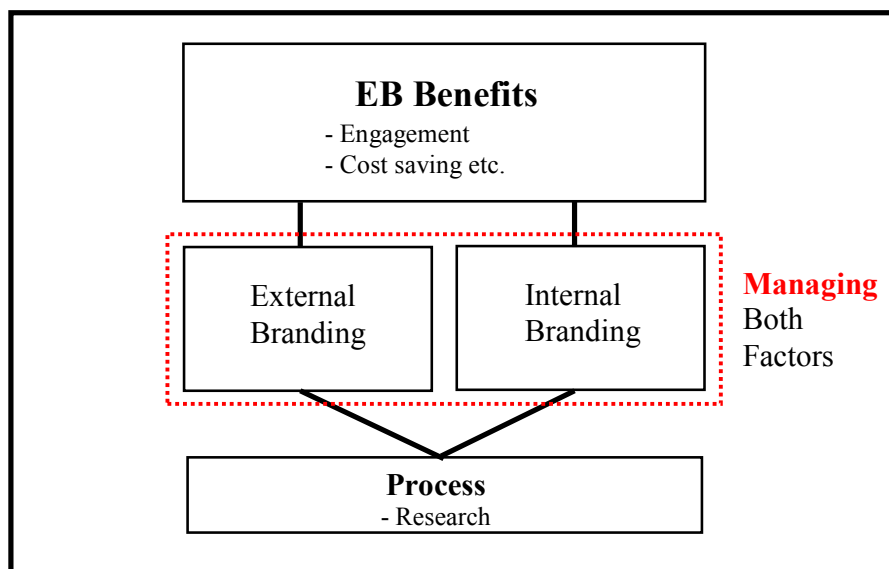
Work engagement examinations focus on how to involve employees in their work more actively so that they contribute additional input, given the interchange relationship that employees have with their employers and the tenets of distributive justice (Adams, 1965; Colquitt, 2001; George 2011). Highly engaged staff and managers at firms are likely to have diminished time and energy available for pursuits outside of work, and may make sacrifices in other areas of their lives to sustain their engagement over time (George, 2010; George 2011). From the perspective of employer branding as the enactment of sustainability between an

employer and employee relations with the purpose of creating sustainable values for the individual, Aggerholm et al. (2011) argue in their current research that engaged employees at firms play a large role in companies' sustainable development.

The previous empirical results confirm that employer branding supported favorable employee attitudes and enhanced the level of employee satisfaction (Bodderas et al., 2011). The substantial benefits of employer branding are enhanced recruitment, retention, and employee engagement (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Barrow & Mosley, 2005; Minchington & Thorne, 2007; Edwards, 2010; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Katja Liikkanen, 2013). Organizations with strong employer brands not only have higher employee retention (Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Berthon et al., 2005; Love and Singh, 2011; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Katja Liikkanen, 2013), but offer remarkable advantages, mainly including higher work engagement, which contributes to providing higher overall performance and reduced costs (Barrow & Mosley, 2005; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Katja Liikkanen, 2013). Heilmann et al., (2013) mentions that a common internal benefit of employer branding is a higher quality of recruit retention and engagement. On Davies's perspective of employer branding (2007), the most prominent dimension of its influencing outcome is positive employee attitudes. Thus, I attempt to demonstrate employer branding (i.e. the two factors as internal/branding)'s impact in a specific circumstance, applying it in Middle East region to be reaffirmed as a categorical proposition of the modern world's trend, and state the following two hypotheses:

H1. The perception of internal branding in employer brands leads to a higher level of job engagement.

H2. The perception of external branding in employer brand leads to higher level of job engagement.

Brock (2005,) mentions that although corporate management has a fiduciary duty to maximize shareholder value and high-profile philanthropy may create short-term financial damage, responsible business investment can lead to innovation, wealth creation, and improved quality-of-life for communities in which business operates. She argues that new levels of societal discernment and activism that include strong corporate social responsibility strategies as a good business practices can reduce the organizations' risks in the long-term. Edwards (2010) argues in his current study that, "organizations with strong symbolic personality characteristics will have employees who are less focused on economic and financial reward." Keinert (2008, p. 61) reintroduces the term of corporate citizenship in her book, "it refers to a company's role as a big citizen who exercises rights and carries responsibilities, at best building partnerships with the larger society surrounding it. Good corporate citizenship can be summarized by active community involvement." Bussy et al. (2011) offered a new scale to measure the extent to which companies implement CSR in an authentic manner as a key component of their brand strategy (i.e. the four factors of its construct such as (1) employee concern relative to employer branding, (2) community commitment, (3) environmental awareness, (4) and financial fairness). In their paper, employee concern, which means an issue connected to employer brand, is closely related to an important subject of CSR.

Keiner (2008) introduces cause related marketing as a marketing practice, defining it as a way of combining the advantages of charity work, building a stronger brand and the firm's

reputation. According to her perspective, socially responsible or philanthropic marketing practices can help firms' brands in business the world and take advantage of opportunities concerning differentiation. She (2008) consistently argues that CSR is a major source of competitive advantage for various reasons. One of which, in accordance with her perspective, is the favorable influence exercised on key stakeholder attitudes (i.e. staff and managers' attitudes in organizations) towards corporations outstanding in their engagement for society or the environment. In the same vein of the linkage between employer branding as the two factors of internal/external branding and favorable employee attitudes (i.e., individual corporate social responsibility attitude or CSR attitude), the following the following hypotheses can be presented:

H3. The perception of internal branding in an employer brand leads to a higher level of individual Corporate Social Responsibility attitude.

H4. The perception of external branding in an employer brand leads to a higher level of individual Corporate Social Responsibility attitude.

In summary, the purpose of this study is to connect employer branding with both non-financial and potential financial terms, which are considered positive influences for an organization's success as a core driver of South Korean MNCs operating in the Middle East. In parallel with Keinert' view (2008), in which it is pointed out that "corporate social strategy" helps take advantage of opportunities concerning differentiation with enhanced financial firm performance, high levels of job engagement and individual CSR attitudes also can contribute to businesses' economic success, possibly called MNC's mid/long-term driver for financial goals.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the protocol of this research as the type of initial

and expedited review from September 16, 2014 to September 15, 2015, inclusive.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sampling participants are homogeneous with South Korean nationality, and were in a ratio of ten to zero for the proportion of males to females as an absolute percentage to males, because of the peculiarities of the work environment in the construction field. The total number of employees at the two organizations company 1 and 2 as sample companies in this study was 13,624 persons (i.e 6,238 and 7,386 respectively). To understand the relationship between employer branding and the constituent elements of the MNCs' successes in the Middle East better, 126 e-mail addresses were drawn from the two South Korean construction companies operating in the MENA region. Among the 126 contacted employees, the final sample size is 100, which was collected in the examination. The sampling participants were contacted by e-mail and asked to answer the questionnaire via online survey while maintaining confidentiality, it was then returned via e-mail. This examination utilized two big-sized global corporations in the construction field, and the number of participants was limited to two per corporation. The two case companies from the construction field, headquartered in Seoul, South Korea and working in various regions in the Middle East and North Africa are designated company 1 and 2.

Survey participants of these companies are expected to represent the MNCs successfully operating in the Middle East, with people from the upper-middle management to lower management level. The targeted population are current employees working at branch offices and

worksites in the MENA region and repatriates working at the Seoul Headquarters Building with precedent work experiences in the region.

Their contact information was obtained from the HR personnel of each company by giving them the benefits of participation in the research as voluntary work. The benefit is clear that this can contribute to finding Employer Branding's positive impact for the two case companies, which have been implemented in their work sites as MNCs' business activities. On the top of this, it is an opportunity to gain insights into the factors that might have helped shape the companies' roles for using Employer Branding effectively.

Measures

The 21survey questions were from three categories such as (1) the perception of employer branding, (2) job engagement, and (3) individual CSR attitude, respectively. The three sections of the categorized questions (i.e. Perception of employer branding or PEB, Engagement, and Individual CSR attitude) were measured: Multi-item measures and a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1: Strongly agree, to 5: Strongly disagree, were developed. The seven items of PEB were collected from "25-item Employer Attractiveness or EmpAt scale" which is developed and validated by Berthon et al. (2005, p. 158). Schaufeli et al. newly developed an engagement questionnaire as the three-factor engagement model (2001). In total, six items were chosen from the 17-item questionnaire they validated. On the other hand, Bussy & Suprawan (2011) dedicated their current research paper, which describes the development and validation of a measurement scale for CSR branding. They provided this scale as a method of more directly

indicating corporate practices with four main constructs, which include employee concern, community commitment, environmental awareness, and financial fairness. Based on the 16-item CSR branding scale they validated, the eight items were provided for the individual CSR attitude part in the questionnaire. On the other hand, the survey questionnaire, especially for Korean nationals, was originally prepared in English, then translated into Korean languages for the targeted two case companies.

To measure the relationship between (1) PEB as two factors of internal/external branding and engagement as the hypothesized by *H1* and *H2* (2) PEB as two factors of internal/external branding and individual CSR attitude (*H3* and *H4*), factor analysis was conducted. Factor analysis is a multivariate statistical procedure that has many uses for not only establishing the underlying dimensions between measured variables and latent constructs, but also reducing the large number of variables into a smaller set and providing the construct validity evidence of self-reporting scales (Gorsuch, 1983; Williams & Brown, 2012). Nunnally (1987), cited by Thompson (1996) and recited by Williams et al. (2012), adds, "…factor analysis is intimately involved with questions of validity … Factor analysis is at the heart of the measurement of psychological constructs." An adequate standardized factor loading is considered a minimum of .50, although .70 or higher is preferable (Hair et al., 2010, Bussy et al., 2011). In addition, the correlations and regression analysis were also conducted.

Churchill (1979) recommends that Cronbach's alpha be the primary measure of reliability when assessing the quality of a scale. To assess the quality of a scale, Cronbach's alpha will be

utilized as a reliability measure. The alpha was calculated for multi-item scales. This

investigation expected all scales to offer satisfactory results of $\alpha > 0.60$.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

To begin quantitative research, factor analysis was utilized to reduce the number of variables and probe the relationship between variables. Williams et al. (2012) mentioned in their research that factor analysis is a multivariate statistical method used in diverse fields of academia, and can be used in the development, refinement, and evaluation of tests.

In total, four variables were created in this study through factor analysis: Internal branding, external branding, engagement, and CSR attitude (Table 1). In the data presented in Table 2, four factors have been produced as an interpretation of rotation that maximized high item loadings. These factors were descriptively labelled as the reflection of the conceptual intent of this study. In total, 13 values exceeded the accepted standard (Hair et al., 2010) as an adequate standardized factor loading, which is considered a minimum of .50. The variance extracted score falls somewhat below the accepted minimum standard of .50, and the next, the measure of reliability, is assessed as presented in Table 3. All four factors were satisfied with Cronbach's alpha figure for reliability, which resulted above 0.60.

Table 1. The four variables (Internal/External brand, Engagement, and CSR)

Statement	Order of Questions	N of items
Internal branding		4
I have a good relationship with my team-workers	PEB 2	
I am given an above average basic salary compared with companies in construction industry	PEB 3	
I have good promotion opportunities within the organization	PEB 4	
I have an opportunity to teach others what I have learned	PEB 5	
External branding		2
My organization is client-orientated	PEB 6	
My organization produces high-quality services	PEB 7	
Engagement		4
At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	E2	
I find my work full of meaning and purpose	E4	
Time flies when I am working	E5	
It is difficult to detach myself from my job	E6	
CSR Attitude		3
I believe that management concern about the environment leads to employee positive attitudes towards the organization	CSR2	
I see shareholders are inclined to pay attention to services produced in a socially manner	CSR4	
I think CSR is creating new business opportunities through value-added to services	CSR7	

Table 2. Data of Factor Analysis

	PEB			Engagement			CSR	
PEB5	.802		E2	.931		CSR4	.872	
PEB3	.786		E4	.862		CSR7	.815	
PEB2	.765		E6	.802		CSR2	.694	
PEB4	.759		E5	.630				
PEB6		.865						
PEB7		.803						

Rotated Component Matrix (Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization)

Table 3. Data of Reliability Statistics

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Internal branding	0.78	4
External branding	0.69	2
Engagement	0.85	4
CSR	0.80	3

The correlation coefficients between the four variables are displayed in Table 4. The table shows that the independent variable as internal branding is strongly positively related to both Engagement and CSR Attitude. It is apparent that the correlation coefficient between internal branding and CSR Attitude is relatively higher than between that and Engagement. However, there was no observation of correlation coefficient between external branding and Engagement. The table shows that the independent variable of external branding is negatively related to Engagement without significance. This means that there is no connection between these measured variables, and there is little possibility of them having any impact on each other. However, the coefficients of external branding which are linked with CSR Attitude show slightly positive correlation.

Table 4. Data of Pearson Correlations

	Internal branding	External branding	Engagement	CSR
Internal branding	1			
External branding	-.106	1		
Engagement	.490**	-.103	1	
CSR	.753**	.105	.378**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As the regression analyses are presented in Table 5 and 6, the first table of two shows one of the independent variables as internal branding just had a big impact on engagement; in other words, sampling respondents who perceived employer branding (i.e. internal branding), were more likely to engage their own tasks. We hypothesized at *H1* that the perception of internal branding in an employer brand leads to a higher level of job engagement. Therefore, it supports a strongly positive result. On the other hand, *H2* was not supported with a negative figure between external branding and engagement according to the result. An examination of the benefits in Table 6 shows that internal branding as an independent variable has a strong positive impact on CSR Attitude, which supports *H3*. This result reveals the existence of significance between them, which has satisfied figures above 0.05. However, despite the positive relationship between external branding and CSR, which slightly supports *H4*, external branding is relatively less

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related to CSR Attitude than internal branding, according to the lower result of beta's figure in

Table 6.

Table 5. Regression result (1/2): Internal/External Branding and Engagement

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Adjusted R2	F-prob	Standardized Coefficients	Significance
Engagement	Internal Branding	0.224	10.553	0.491	0.000
	External Branding			-0.049	0.583

Notes: p < 0.05

Table 6. Regression result (2/2): Internal/External Branding and CSR Attitude

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Adjusted R2	F-prob	Standardized Coefficients	Significance
CSR Attitude	Internal Branding	0.590	48.433	0.775	0.000
	External Branding			0.188	0.005

Notes: p < 0.05

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study's objective is to enhance the understanding of employer branding further by examining the connection between employee engagement and potential financial results through individual CSR attitude. The results not only support employees who have a clear perception of internal branding in employer branding can be a person with a high level of engagement for work, but also the perception of employer branding, as both factors of internal/external branding lead to a higher level of individual Corporate Social Responsibility attitude. However, there is one exception, as external branding did not actually impact job engagement in this study. Figures 2 and 3 summarize the results that link EB and Engagement, and CSR attitude.

Figure 2. Impact for employer branding (i.e. the two factors of internal/external branding) on Engagement and CSR
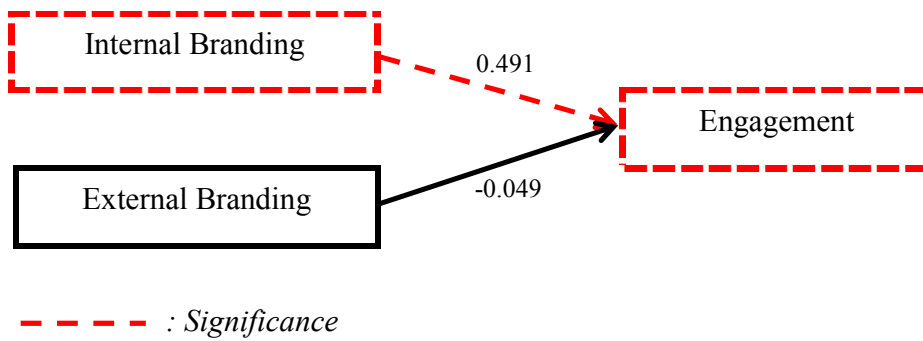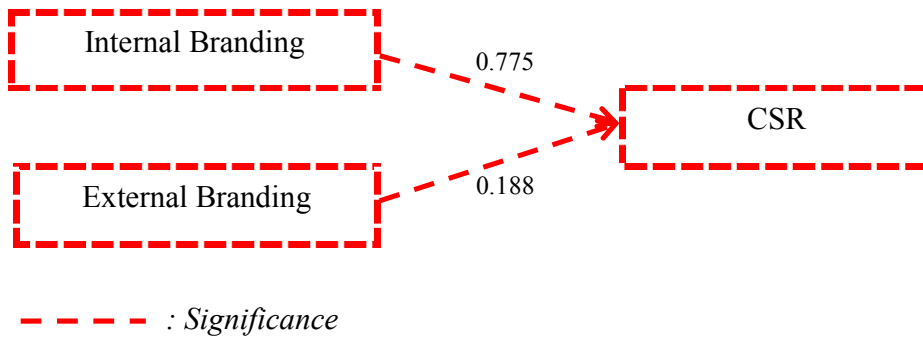
| Internal Branding | | Engagement |
| External Branding | | |

Internal Branding → Engagement: 0.491

External Branding → Engagement: -0.049

- - - - : Significance

Figure 3. Impact for employer branding (i.e. the two factors of internal/external branding) on CSR Attitude

| Internal Branding | | CSR |
| External Branding | | |

Internal Branding → CSR: 0.775

External Branding → CSR: 0.188

- - - - : Significance

Fruitful benefits would be accomplished by examining successful and unsuccessful employer brands to establish connections between the underlying brand processes (Moroko et al., 2008). Despite the numerous limitations of this research, this provides valuable insights for understanding the competitive advantage of employer branding, enabling organizations currently

working in the Middle East to manage their employee engagement and favorable attitudes. It suggests that the broader significant influence of employer branding can be shown for both current and potential employees' behavior, which could consequently influence potential financial outcomes.

In organizations, by taking the lead from practitioners (i.e., HR mangers), a specific checklist on the subject of enhancing a company's employer brand can be applied in a variety of industries and sectors, targeting the audience of existing employees (e.g. various functions, regardless of the employment position) who need to develop individual engagement behaviors for their job. The employer attractiveness (EmpAt) scale validated by Berthon et al. (2005) is a good example of a checklist for current employees, which can be applied in various contexts and environments. This can track changes in employees' perception of employer branding and be a barometer for enhancing EB. In addition, Berthon described how EmpAt can be utilized as a part of an EB template by both marketing and HR functions as a firsthand formulation and execution of recruitment strategy. Engagement is normally defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Hall, 1970; Kanungo, 1982; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2001). Without doubt, it is possible that engaged employees perform tasks better to present their work in a productive way than others who are not engaged.

Meanwhile, psychological reorientation is required on a corporate management level. Changing its way of thinking towards employers branding as an approach of new business strategy is essential for disseminating the perception of employer branding and its benefit in the

whole organization. Company-wide training and development regarding employer brands might be necessary to help organizations identify gaps in performance requirements and needs for improving employees' perception. HR functions can play a major role in the implementation of training and development programs in relation to this issue, and in its evaluation of the program with the full support of executive managers. Heilmann et al. suggested (2013) that the training and development (T&D) programs for supervisors should be seen as an essential for employee development, because supervisors convey messages to subordinates. Employers or executive managers should determine the importance of training and development, because they make employees more valuable to firms, and are a influential incentive for retention (Woodruffe, 2006; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Katja Liikkanen, 2013).

Learning and development are key parts of the employer brand offer, which may have a centripetal force on an organization's general attractiveness to most sought-after applicants, and its ongoing ability to sustain high employee engagement (Barrow & Mosley, 2005; Heilmann, Saarenketo, & Katja Liikkanen, 2013). At the first step in the establishment of the training program, we suggest that the HR function practice needs assessing for the design of instructional programs, as a pronouncement of a correct diagnosis, through a company-wide survey with a reliable scale for the measurement of the perception of the employer brand. Otherwise, employing external professionals who are involved in its procedure, on a contract basis, is another option for this.

When we discuss advocating employer brands, better employer branding can also be achieved via effective communication channels in firms such as social networks. Booth et al.

(2011) argued that practitioners or managers in firms are transforming the methods to communicate with their target audiences. Employers or managers can listen and act strategically and immediately to continue employee conversations via the company blog, all possible social media, or the organization's external web, by commenting on relevant posts. Through these efforts to manage EB, the corporate management level could establish determinate goals that are visibly related to the initial, defined parameters of an employee's activities, and determine the strategic approach for how a desired employer image can be achieved. According to Heilmann et al. (2013), the case companies that they examined realized that the internal culture can be transferred outward and used as a part of the EB. They mentioned (2013) that personnel spread word of their work experiences via social network. Organizations need to consider the wide range of communication methods as a main driver for establishing higher-level employer brands. Maintaining regular communication channels between employer and employee is fundamental for building trust and engagement.

CHAPTER VI

LIMITATION AND SUGGESTION

Despite the fine results that demonstrated strong relations between employer branding, engagement and CSR attitude in this study, this study shows that there are a few limitations to bringing generalizability. This means that we have additional opportunities for further research. First, the number of sample participants is limited to 100. The stability of the results in the future research should be retested with sufficient numbers and the scenarios should be expanded such as by utilizing questionnaires that are more specific with the sample. In addition, the sampling participants in the research were expatriates or repatriates who have experience of working in MENA regions, mainly including commercial managers in marketing or business development divisions. These people usually have responsibilities to carry out contract work with exterior clients and are negotiators per se, who represent the company, and use business acumen and favorable CSR attitudes as a marketing strategies. Therefore, the strong relationship shown between PEB and CSR in the study might not be unusual for considering the sample. The point in extending the sample of other functions in firms is to open further discussion in future studies.

Second, these findings restricted and spoke for only one industry: Construction. In general, companies that work in this industry have business-to-business rather than business-to-customer (B2C) roles, which directly deal with household economies. The B2C sector that includes electric home appliances and mobile phone industries also has considerable scope for examination regarding employer branding and benefits. Meanwhile, the further development of

measuring EB effectiveness with other dependent variables can also be utilized. Job satisfaction, sustainable management, and other longer-term benefits can be a set of criteria for broadened research factors to be tested for metrics, which could be aligned to corporate business strategies and their reputation. Finally, this study only defined HR management functions in organizations, supporting the significant impact of employer branding in engagement and individual CSR attitudes as a HRM perspective. Due to the potential synergy for the maximal benefits of EB, the rest of business sectors (i.e. marketing) are reasonably required to involve a branding program to boost organizations' sustainability. That sort of study could contribute to the affluent evidence of an employer brand's fruitful activities in the near future and build good indications for adopting a competitive edge for practitioners.

APPENDIX

Survey Questions Frame

Perception of employer branding

1. Do you feel self-confident about yourself as a result of working for the organization?

2. Do you have a good relationship with your team-workers?

3. Are you given an above average basic salary compared with companies in construction industry?

4. Do you have good promotion opportunities within the organization?

5. Do you have opportunities to teach others what you have learned?

6. Is your organization client-oriented?

7. Does your organization produce high-quality services?

Engagement

Vigor (VI)

8. At your work, do you feel bustling with energy?

9. At your job, do you feel strong and vigorous?

Dedication (DE)

10.　Do you think your work is challenging and inspires you?

11.　Do you find your work full of meaning and purpose?

Absorption (AB)

12.　Does time fly when you are working?

13.　Is it difficult to detach yourself from your job?

Individual CSR attitude

Employee Concern

14.　Do you believe corporate social responsibility can attract prospective employees?

15.　Do you believe that management concern about the environment leads to positive attitudes among employees towards the organization?

Community Commitment

16.　Do you think making an effort at community commitment is an important matter?

17.	Do you consider shareholders to be inclined to pay attention to services produced in a socially manner?

Environmental Awareness

18.	Do you think the organization in which you work needs to present itself as environmentally responsible?

19.	Do you see think the environment should be the first priority for your organization?

Financial Fairness

20.	Do you think corporate social responsibility is creating new business opportunities through value-added to services?

21.	Do you believe corporate social responsibility can give potential benefits in terms of innovation and progress?

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