Antecedents and Outcomes of Employee-Based Brand Equity

Muhammad Waseem Bari, Muhammad Abrar, and Emilia Alaverdov

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    Muhammad Waseem Bari, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
    Irum Shahzadi, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Employee-based brand equity (EBBE) is a gauge for an organization's brand equity as employees provide valued brands to external customers through their skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Employees are equally important in brand-based equity as their consistent behavior and positive attitudes support the brand requirements and customer brand perception. EBBE is vital for any organization's long-term survival. Therefore, it is important to unfold the factors that influence employees' behaviors in building brand association. In this chapter, the authors enlisted several factors that could possibly boost employees' involvement in making the organization's products successful and building a positive brand image. Brand-related information generation, knowledge dissemination, human factor, openness, role clarity, brand commitment and knowledge, brand orientation, brand quality, brand experience, brand awareness and image, brand association, and brand loyalty are those key factors that can fortify EBBE. Organizations can upsurge their profitability graph by investing in these factors.

Chapter 2

    Muhammad Abrar, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
    Ahmad Sohail Khan, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
    Li Xiang, Huanggang Normal University, China

The chapter describes brand equity and its types. Moreover, it brings unique pieces of work representing the phenomenon of internal brand management (IBM) along with the impact of employee-based brand equity (EBBE) on customer-based brand equity (CBBE). There are mainly three types of brand equity: financial brand equity, CBBE, and EBBE. The author has referred to the literature on EBBE and CBBE in chronological order. The prominent models of CBBE and EBBE are briefly discussed. The impact of EBBE on CBBE is highlighted; moreover, the combined effect of both EBBE and CBBE on the market performance of the organization is described through a framework. The application of EBBE across various industries is also discussed in the chapter. The author has cited the most significant work on brand equity in a descriptive way highlighting the importance of brand equity in general and the impact

of EBBE on CBBE in particular. The importance, integration, and combined effect of EBBE and CBBE on market performance have been discussed.

Chapter 3
Ginu George, CHRIST University (Deemed), India

Employee engagement is an evolving concept in human resources (HR). Most organizations strive to attain employee engagement because of the various organization-related outcomes. It is important for employees to feel engaged emotionally, socially, and intellectually with the work and organization. Various antecedents affect employee engagement and, in turn, result in an organization-related positive outcome. This chapter discusses in-depth PsyCap as an antecedent of employee engagement and how it relates to intent to stay regarding employees working in travel organizations in India and aims to build relevant theoretical frameworks based on the findings. The chapter also discusses some strategies organizations can implement to achieve employee engagement based on the findings.

Chapter 4
Asif Ali Safeer, Huanggang Normal University, China
Saima Khuhro, Mohammad Ali Jinnah University, Pakistan

Employee-based brand equity (EBBE) is a term that has recently emerged in the business world. Many organizations are placing a strong emphasis on the development of their personnel to efficiently deliver brand promises and acquire a competitive advantage over their competitors. Therefore, this chapter examines the EBBE from various perspectives to improve the firms' competitive advantages and long-term profitability. As a result, prior literature identified some critical factors as the dimensions of the EBBE, such as the employee brand knowledge effects, internal brand management, and benefits of EBBE that help the organizations in increasing their competitive advantages to sustain their businesses in competitive markets. Similarly, some critical factors help the firms in improving their employee's satisfaction. Thus, organizations should concentrate their efforts and resources on developing internal brand strategies (EBBE) in order to boost their external branding strategies (CBBE). As a result, they can develop sustainable competitive advantages in order to flourish in markets.

Chapter 5
Bashir Ahmad, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
Kubilayhan Göç, Aksaray University, Turkey
Xiaohong Yin, Huanggang Normal University, China

The notion of employee-based brand equity has gained in popularity during the last two decades. The concept of employee-based brand equity has become a key management and marketing concept because of its role in the branding and brand management process. This perspective reflects two intangible resources such as employees and brand, which are critical for a long-term competitive advantage. This chapter provides an updated literature review on the concept of employee-based brand equity that covers background, significance, objectives, conceptualization, antecedents, and outcomes/benefits of employee brand equity. The past literature is critically reviewed, and a potential research gap is identified for future researchers.

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*   Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan*
Azha Rubab, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
Chatchai Pitsaphol, Institiute of Social Technology, Suranaree University of Technology,
*   Thailand*

This chapter begins with the simple operative definition of brand equity, previously studied in the context of consumers only, and then extends the notion to employee-based brand equity. This reading suggests that once marketers were challenged to build positive brand equity amongst their customer base to gain a competitive advantage. In contrast, the dynamic world has triggered researchers toward other aspects to gain competitive advantage, such as employee-based brand equity (EBBE), because human capital can add value to the organizations. The second part of this chapter illustrates the role of knowledge hiding as a phenomenon in shattering the EBBE. The debate concludes by providing a framework and recommending that future researchers explore the EBBE due to knowledge hiding practices.

Afsheen Fatima, UIMS, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan
Hafsa Nasir, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan
Azeema Azeema Noor, UIMS, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi,
*   Pakistan*
Shahrukh Zia, UIMS, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan
Mohsin Ali, UIMS, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

The main objective of this study is to test the impact of leader-member exchange on innovative work behavior while examining the moderating role of employee-based brand equity within the financial industry including banking and insurance companies in the Rawalpindi and Islamabad regions. Two hundred thirty responses have been collected through questionnaires. The results indicate that supervisory humor and humble leadership mediate the relationship between leader-member exchange and innovative work behavior. Also, the results demonstrate that employee-based brand equity moderates the relationship between leader-member exchange and innovative work behavior.

Sadia Shaheen, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
Seemab Chaman, University of Kotli, Pakistan
Sehar Zulfiqar, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan

The purpose of this study is to explore essential factors affecting brand association that ultimately help in achieving brand equity. Based on the available literature, the authors explored several studies in which the researchers highlight the importance of brand equity and how the brand association could boost brand equity. They explored several factors such as brand awareness, brand experience, brand image, brand citizenship behavior, and brand identity. They also suggest how these factors can enhance brand association and brand equity in production as well as services organizations.

in this chapter, the knowledge-sharing culture and employee-based brand equity have been discussed. It's an organizational culture that promotes and allows employees to freely share their expertise, thoughts, and experiences. There are several advantages to fostering a knowledge-sharing culture in your organization. It's also worth mentioning that, while information sharing appears to be straightforward, there's a lot more to it than meets the eye. You should be aware that developing a knowledge-sharing culture in your company comes with several hurdles. It must be able to overcome these obstacles in order to design an effective one. EBBE is less concerned with the establishment of a brand identity, which is something that corporations do as a matter of course in their quest of competitive advantage. Rather, EBBE involves the translation of the brand identity in a form that is relevant to the employee in the context of their tasks and responsibilities, which may be described as the differential influence that brand knowledge has on an employee's attitude to their work environment.

All people have the right to conduct their activities without equal development and discrimination, but social inequality and job subordination put the employer and the employee in an unequal situation for years. Many women have been silent for decades/centuries due to fear of losing their jobs/income and have not provided law enforcement with information about sexual acts against them. It has been about 40 years since these illegal actions were identified and fought against. These discriminatory facts remain a problem to this day and are a very topical issue not in one country but the whole world. Unlike its concept, discrimination is not a new phenomenon; it exists from the very beginning of the formation of society, and people with different signs were persecuted. Initially, there was persecution on the grounds of wealth, rank, skin color, race, and religion, but unfortunately, the number of signs of unequal treatment is increasing even in the modern era.

Given the Great Silk Road and other megaprojects, China's position on the world stage in general is expanding. An area where the Sino-US confrontation could create a deplorable situation in the Middle East is China's attempts to introduce new global digital infrastructure and communication standards. The pandemic has affected global consumption and demand volumes. Presumably, China and its partners primarily want to assess the situation, how trade and tourism are changing on the planet in the face of a global pandemic. It is also interesting to see how the countries participating in the One Belt One Road initiative will continue to jointly invest directly in ongoing projects beyond their borders. The aim of the chapter is to assess China's influence based on analysis its policies in the Middle East region and its implemented and planned trade and business projects as well as an assessment of the results we might expect in the long run amid increased competition between global actors in the oil region.

    Rizwan Shabbir, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
    Muhammad Awais Gulzar, University of Waikato, New Zealand
    Tanzila Samin, NFC Institute of Engineering and Fertilizer Research, Pakistan

Brands are more challenging to capture, sustain market share, and keep their customers loyal in a highly competitive marketplace. One of the evident approaches that a brand considers is the employee branding process that highlights, establishes, and handles long-term competitive advantage. The employee branding process model recognizes numerous foundations through which messages are conveyed and defines the sources of elements that translate the employee branding process. This chapter reviews a theoretical model of the employee branding process, which posits employee brand image that has been compelled through the posts an employee receives and the structure inside employees' personality that empowers and creates logic regarding messages. The model postulates the concerns of the employee branding process and designates a feedback hoop by which managers can observe this process. Moreover, some unexplored areas of the employee branding process are proposed, including job crafting, workplace civility, motivation, and the behavioral aspect of innovation during a pandemic.

    Seemab Chaman, University of Kotli, Pakistan
    Sadia Shaheen, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

For understanding the employment relationship, the attention has been paid by researchers to psychological contract. This chapter provides an overview about the development of psychological contracts highlighting the definition and contribution of different authors. The authors further reviewed antecedents and consequences of psychological contracts. Using social exchange theory, undetermined obligations make the social relationships which create psychological contracts. Psychological contract results in high work engagement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the authors reviewed employee-based brand equity, its antecedents and consequences, and how psychological contracts result in enhanced employee-based brand equity.

    Umair Manzoor, University of Jhang, Pakistan
    Sajjad Ahmad Baig, National Textile University, Faisalabad, Pakistan
    Abdul Sami, University of Jhang, Pakistan
    Ifrah Sajjad, Riphah International University, Pakistan

This study proposed and tested a design model that integrates brand experience (BE), service quality (SQ), the perceived value (PV) on repurchase intentions (RI), and word-of-mouth (WOM) recommendations from retail-banking customers in an emerging market. The primary objective was to examine empirically the linkage between these concepts, which resulted in 12 hypotheses being postulated. The study also examines the mediating effect of loyalty on WOM and repurchase intention, with respect to the above-mentioned antecedents. A questionnaire was created using a structured survey of 180 retail-banking customers in Pakistan, and data was collected from those customers. The appropriate tests were employed

to ensure the study constructs' validity and reliability. Hypotheses were tested using SmartPLS 3.0. The study findings support the proposed conceptual model, showing that BE, SQ, and PV have a significant effect on the RI and WOM recommendations of retail banking customers. Furthermore, loyalty mediates the relationships between the aforementioned antecedents, WOM, and RI.

Chapter 15
A Conceptual Action Plan for Reducing Environmental Pollution Through Sustainable Clothing
Zahoor Ur Rehman, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia
*Muhammad Saeeed Shahbaz, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and
        Technology, Pakistan*
Noor Aslinda Abu Seman, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Malaysia
Muhammad Shujaat Mubarik, Institute of Business Management, Karachi, Pakistan

Environmental pollution caused by apparel production and consumption is rapidly capturing public attention and has formed positive intentions towards sustainable apparel purchasing; however, this increase in interest and positive intentions has not resulted in the increase of actual purchase behaviors towards sustainable apparel. The purpose of this review is to identify and explain all of the major drivers and barriers of sustainable apparel consumption. This study systematically reviewed 33 empirical studies on sustainable apparel purchase intention and behavior from 2016 to 2020. The review found and described a variety of prevalent motivations, facilitators, and barriers influencing purchasing decisions about sustainable clothing and suggesting potential reasons for documented inconsistencies in purchase behavior. All these factors are grouped and discussed in two categories that are product-related attributes and individual-related attributes.

Preface

Human resource management and marketing may be two separate fields. However, in today's digital world, the lines between the two have become gradually hazy. Brands and human capital are considered the important assets of the firm. The development of these intangible assets is a very challenging and important management task for human resource managers and marketers. A high value that a firm produce from a product with an identifiable name when compared to a generic equivalent is known as brand equity. Firms create brand equity for their products/services by developing them as extraordinary, easily identifiable, and greater in quality and reliability. Employee-based brand equity refers to a value that a brand offers to a firm through its effects on the attitudes and behaviors of its employees. The competent employees meet the deadlines, achieve sales targets, and develop the brand with positive interaction with consumers. When employees fail to perform effectively, consumers realize that the company is not competent to fulfill their needs, and look for another option. To develop an effective and strong employee-based brand equity, firms need to focus on the perceptions of employees and promote positive attitudes about affiliation with the firm.

Several scholars confirm the significance of employee-based brand equity as a key source of possible advantages for the organization and an important part of the brand-based evaluation. The scholars from the marketing and management domains have not complete agreement on the conceptualization of employee-based brand equity. For instance, 'the value that a brand provides to a firm through its effects on the attitudes and behaviors of its employees. Another school of thought defines employee-based brand equity as the differential impact that the brand has on employees.

Some common antecedents of employee-based brand equity are brand commitment, brand knowledge, brand role relevance, brand importance, employee assets, brand orientation, internal brand commitment, internal brand knowledge, and internal brand involvement, brand image, brand awareness, perceived quality, role clarity, brand commitment, CSR, organizational trust, perceived organizational prestige, psychological contract obligation, perceived environmental uncertainty, brand image. Similarly, some common outcomes of employee-based brand equity are executive rewards, firm performance, customer-based brand equity, and financial/non-financial performance. Several scholars have examined customer and consumer-based brand equity. However, very limited studies are available from the perspective of employee-based brand equity. The objective of this book is to explore the antecedents and consequences of employee-based brand equity from different perspectives, and different artifacts of employee-based brand equity. The chapters of this book on different perspectives of employees based brand equity are equally important and helpful to all business and social concerns across the world. This book is also very helpful to the students of different fields of knowledge. Specifically, this book is very supportive to the students of business administration, business management, and its sub-discipline such as human

resource management, marketing, supply chain management, finance, etc. The following paragraphs explain the brief introduction of each chapter included in this book.

Chapter 1 explains that employee-based brand equity (EBBE) is a gauge for an organization's brand equity as employees provide valued brands to external customers through their skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. Employees are equally important in brand-based equity as their consistent behavior and positive attitudes support the brand requirements and customer brand perception. EBBE is vital for any organization's long-term survival. Therefore, it is important to unfold the factors that influence employees' behaviors in building brand association. In this chapter, the authors enlisted several factors that could boost employees' involvement in making the organization's products successful and building a positive brand image. Brand-related information generation, knowledge dissemination, human factor, openness, role clarity, brand commitment and knowledge, brand orientation, brand quality, brand experience, brand awareness and image, brand association and brand loyalty are those key factors that can fortify EBBE. Organizations can upsurge their profitability graph by investing in these factors.

Chapter 2 describes brand equity and its types. Moreover, it brings unique pieces of work representing the phenomenon of Internal Brand Management (IBM) along with the impact of EBBE on Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). There are mainly three types of brand equity; financial brand equity, CBBE, and EBBE. The author has referred to the literature on EBBE and CBBE in chronological order. The prominent models of CBBE and EBBE are briefly discussed. The impact of EBBE on CBBE is highlighted, moreover, the combined effect of both EBBE and CBBE on the market performance of the organization is described through a framework. The application of EBBE across various industries is also discussed in the chapter. The author has cited the most significant work on brand equity in a descriptive way highlighting the importance of brand equity in general and the impact of EBBE on CBBE in particular. The importance, integration, and combined effect of EBBE and CBBE on market performance have been discussed.

Chapter 3 describes that employee engagement is an evolving concept in human resources management. Most organizations strive to attain employee engagement because of the various organization-related outcomes. It is important for employees to feel engaged emotionally, socially, and intellectually with the work and organization. Various antecedents affect employee engagement and, in turn, result in an organization-related positive outcome. This chapter discusses in-depth PsyCap as an antecedent of employee engagement and how it relates to intent to stay regarding employees working in travel organizations in India and aims to build relevant theoretical frameworks based on the findings. The chapter also discusses some strategies organizations can implement to achieve employee engagement based on the findings.

Chapter 4 discusses that EBBE is a term that has recently emerged in the business world. Many organizations are placing a strong emphasis on the development of their personnel to efficiently deliver brand promises and acquire a competitive advantage over their competitors. Therefore, this chapter examines the EBBE from various perspectives to improve the firms' competitive advantages and long-term profitability. As a result, prior literature identified some critical factors as the dimensions of the EBBE, such as the employee brand knowledge effects, internal brand management, and benefits of EBBE that help the organizations in increasing their competitive advantages to sustain their businesses in competitive markets. Similarly, some critical factors help the firms in improving their employee's satisfaction. Thus, organizations should concentrate their efforts and resources on developing internal brand strategies to boost their external branding strategies. As a result, they can develop sustainable competitive advantages to flourish in markets.

Chapter 5 explains that the notion of EBBE has gained popularity during the last two decades. The concept of EBBE has become key management and marketing concept because of its role in the branding and brand management process. This perspective reflects two intangible resources such as employees and brand, which are critical for a long-term competitive advantage. This chapter provides an updated literature review on the concept of EBBE that covers the background, significance, objectives, conceptualization, antecedents, and outcomes/benefits of EBBE. The past literature is critically reviewed, and a potential research gap is identified for future researchers.

Chapter 6 begins with the simple operative definition of brand equity, previously studied in the context of consumers only, and then extends the notion to employee-based brand equity. This reading suggests that once marketers were challenged to build positive brand equity amongst their customer base to gain a competitive advantage. In contrast, the dynamic world has triggered researchers toward other aspects to gain competitive advantage, such as (EBBE), because human capital can add value to the organizations. The second part of this chapter illustrates the role of knowledge hiding as a phenomenon in shattering the EBBE. The debate concludes by providing a framework and recommending that future researchers explore the EBBE due to knowledge hiding practices.

Chapter 7 explores the impact of Leader-Member Exchange on Innovative Work Behavior while examining the moderating role of EBBE within the financial industry including banking and insurance companies in the Rawalpindi and Islamabad regions. 230 responses have been collected through questionnaires. The results indicate that supervisory humor and humble leadership mediate the relationship between Leader-Member Exchange and innovative work behavior. Also, the results demonstrate that EBBE moderates the relationship between Leader-Member Exchange and Innovative Work Behavior.

Chapter 8 explores essential factors affecting brand association that ultimately help in achieving brand equity. Based on the available literature, we explored several studies in which the researchers highlight the importance of brand equity and how the brand association could boost brand equity. We explored several factors such as brand awareness, brand experience, brand image, brand citizenship behavior, and brand identity. We also suggest how these factors can enhance brand association and brand equity in production as well as services organizations.

Chapter 9 discusses the knowledge-sharing culture and EBBE. An organizational culture that promotes and allows employees to freely share their expertise, thoughts, and experiences. There are several advantages to fostering a knowledge-sharing culture in your organization. It's also worth mentioning that, while information sharing appears to be straightforward, there's a lot more to it than meets the eye. You should be aware that developing a knowledge-sharing culture in your company comes with several hurdles.it must be able to overcome these obstacles to design an effective one. EBBE is less concerned with the establishment of a brand identity, which is something that corporations do as a matter of course in their quest for competitive advantage. Rather, EBBE involves the translation of the brand identity in a form that is relevant to the employee in the context of their tasks and responsibilities, which may be described as the differential influence that brand knowledge has on an employee's attitude to their work environment.

Chapter 10 explains that all people have the right to conduct their activities without equal development and discrimination, but social inequality and job subordination put the employer and the employee in an unequal situation for years. Many women have been silent for decades/centuries due to fear of losing their jobs/income, and have not provided law enforcement with information about sexual acts against them. It has been about forty years since these illegal actions were identified and fought against. These discriminatory facts remain a problem to this day and are a very topical issue not in one country but the

whole world. Unlike its concept discrimination is not a new phenomenon, it exists from the very beginning of the formation of society, and people with different signs were persecuted. Initially, there was persecution on the grounds of wealth, rank, skin color, race, and religion, but unfortunately, the number of signs of unequal treatment is increasing even in the modern era.

Chapter 11 describes that China's position on the world stage, in general, is expanding an area where the Sino-US confrontation could create a deplorable situation in the Middle East is China's attempts to introduce new global digital infrastructure and communication standards. The pandemic has affected global consumption and demand volumes. Presumably, China and its partners primarily want to assess the situation, how trade and tourism are changing on the planet in the face of a global pandemic. It is also interesting to see how the countries participating in the One Belt One Road initiative will continue to jointly invest directly in ongoing projects beyond their borders. The chapter aims to assess China's influence based on an analysis of its policies in the Middle East region and its implemented and planned trade and business projects. As well as an assessment of the results we might expect in the long run amid increased competition between global actors in the oil region.

Chapter 12 explains that brands are more challenging to capture, sustain market share, and keep their customers loyal in a highly competitive marketplace. One of the evident approaches that a brand considers is the employee branding process that highlights, establishes, and handles long-term competitive advantage. The employee branding process model recognizes numerous foundations through which messages are conveyed and defines the sources of elements that translate the employee branding process. This chapter reviews a theoretical model of the employee branding process, which posits employee brand image that has been compelled through the posts an employee receives and the structure inside employees' personality that empowers and creates logic regarding messages. The model postulates the concerns of the employee branding process and designates a feedback hoop by which managers can observe this process. Moreover, some unexplored areas of the employee branding process are proposed, including job crafting, workplace civility, motivation, and the behavioral aspect of innovation during a pandemic.

Chapter 13 provides an overview of the development of psychological contracts highlighting the definition and contribution of different authors. We further reviewed the antecedents and consequences of psychological contracts. Using social exchange theory, undetermined obligations make the social relationships that create psychological contracts. Psychological contract results in high work engagement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, we reviewed employee-based brand equity, its antecedents and consequences, and how psychological contracts result in enhanced EBBE.

Chapter 14 has proposed and tested a design model that integrates brand experience (BE), service quality (SQ), the perceived value (PV) on repurchase intentions (RI), and word-of-mouth (WOM) recommendations from retail-banking customers in an emerging market. The primary objective was to examine empirically the linkage between these concepts, which resulted in twelve hypotheses being postulated. The study also examines the mediating effect of loyalty on WOM and repurchase intention, concerning the above-mentioned antecedents. A questionnaire was created using a structured survey of 180 retail-banking customers in Pakistan, and data was collected from those customers. The appropriate tests were employed to ensure the study constructs' validity and reliability. Hypotheses were tested using SmartPls 3.0. The study findings support the proposed conceptual model, showing that BE, SQ, and PV have a significant effect on the RI and WOM recommendations of retail banking customers. Furthermore, loyalty mediates the relationships between the aforementioned antecedents, WOM and RI.

Chapter 15 explains that environmental pollution caused by apparel production and consumption is rapidly capturing public attention and has formed positive intentions toward sustainable apparel

purchasing. However, this increase in interest and positive intentions has not increased actual purchase behaviors towards sustainable apparel. The purpose of this review is to identify and explain all of the major drivers and barriers to sustainable apparel consumption. This study systematically reviewed 33 empirical studies on sustainable apparel purchase intention and behavior from 2016 to 2020. The review found and described a variety of prevalent motivations, facilitators, and barriers influencing purchasing decisions about sustainable clothing and suggest potential reasons for documented inconsistencies in purchase behavior. All these factors are grouped and discussed into two categories that are product-related attributes and individual-related attributes.

We hope, this book will be very helpful to the students, professionals, and business consultants. Besides, the selective chapters of this book are very supportive to the students of MS and Ph.D. (Business Administration) and other research scholars.

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This is the first attempt to cover the different antecedents and outcomes of employee-based brand equity in a book. It was a really a challenge to engage the authors from different institutes and countries on a single topic. Therefore, I acknowledge and appreciate the true efforts of my co-editors Dr. Muhammad Abrar and Dr. Emilia Alaverdov, all the authors, and the staff of IGI Global for their unconditional support and in time help. I am also thankful to my Dean (Prof. Dr. Sofia Anwar) and Vice Chancellor (Prof. Dr. Shahid Kamal) for encouraging and giving us time to complete this book with other academic activities. Especially, I acknowledge the moral support of Dr. Mohsin Bashir.

Muhammad Waseem Bari

Chapter 1
Employee-Based Brand Equity and Factors of Employee-Brand Association

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ABSTRACT

Employee-based brand equity (EBBE) is a gauge for an organization's brand equity as employees provide valued brands to external customers through their skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Employees are equally important in brand-based equity as their consistent behavior and positive attitudes support the brand requirements and customer brand perception. EBBE is vital for any organization's long-term survival. Therefore, it is important to unfold the factors that influence employees' behaviors in building brand association. In this chapter, the authors enlisted several factors that could possibly boost employees' involvement in making the organization's products successful and building a positive brand image. Brand-related information generation, knowledge dissemination, human factor, openness, role clarity, brand commitment and knowledge, brand orientation, brand quality, brand experience, brand awareness and image, brand association, and brand loyalty are those key factors that can fortify EBBE. Organizations can upsurge their profitability graph by investing in these factors.

BACKGROUND

Equity is elucidated in terms of fairness and impartiality for all in dealing. It is best achieved when individuals are treated differently, supporting what they lack, which leads to equal outcomes. The literature explains equity subjectively. It varies from subject to subject and has different contextual meanings. In the financial context, it is considered an asset's ownership in the business after paying associated liabilities. In

the human resources context, it embodies a working environment having access and opportunity in equal proportion for all, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, cultural, racial, and religious differences. Marketing experts view it as a component of customer satisfaction (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2005). A company's brands are its important assets and have equity that is derived from customer responses. Marketing experts use a term named brand equity, which signifies the value of a brand. It is believed that brands are more successful when they are widely recognized in the market. Few researchers viewed brands as living entities and a point of competitive differentiation (Beig & Nika, 2022).

Brand names make identification in similar products. A brand is a critical success factor and creates differentiation among firms' offerings (Uford & Duh, 2017; Wood & Wood, 2011) along with an identity (Miles & Mangold, 2004). The brand promises a certain level of quality with trust to its customers (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Baalbaki & Guzmán (2016) defined a brand as "a collection of many meanings", relating it to a different perception of different people for the same brand. Sometimes, brands are represented by symbols, words, signs, designs (Miles & Mangold, 2004) thoughts, feelings, beliefs attitudes, and perceptions (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). According to Papasolomou & Vrontis (2010), every brand has unique characteristics in its domain that holds a competitive advantage for firm over others. The competitive advantage may be in the form of revenue, profit, and market share (Wood & Wood, 2011). Jacobs (2003) asserted that a brand is "more than a company logo or tagline, but it is the company's promise". Van Thuy et al. (2022) viewed a brand as a strategy by which "consumers can recognize and experience a brand and choose their products rather than competitors".

An organization's brand is inevitable for its sustainability as successful brands offer strong brand equity (King & Grace, 2010). Firms exert their efforts on building their brands and associated equity. Brand equity has remained a lucrative construct for marketing researches. Since the 1980s, the concept of brand equity has gained much recognition in research. Positive brand equity is established when customers perceived the brand with a high reputation. Conversely, if a brand could not deliver as per the expectation of the customer, it acquires low brand equity.

Aaker David (1991) defined brand equity as "A set of assets or liabilities in the form of brand visibility, brand associations and customer loyalty that add or subtract from the value of a current or potential product or service driven by the brand". Maleki Minbashrazgah et al. (2021) concluded brand equity as a combination of previous marketing efforts, current brand positioning, and prediction of future performance of the brand. The brand with high equity not only retain its customer in adverse situations but also proves it as a trusted brand (Gelb & Rangarajan, 2014). Such brands often adhere to their promises and deliver to the customer as per their expectation. Brand equity designates a brand's value in the eye of a customer. It grows when customers place their confidence in the products of a brand as compared to its rivals. That confidence makes the customer loyal to the brand. Brand equity generates enduring benefits for firms and is an important factor in customer buying behavior (Kucherov & Zavyalova, 2012).

Before King & Grace (2009), literature supported brand equity from two perspectives i.e. financial perspective of brand equity and customer perspective of brand equity. Few researchers added another perspective in the realm of brand equity that is employee-based brand equity. Lassar et al. (1995) iterated the fact that brand equity has an impact on financial performance. Simon & Sullivan (1993) defined brand equity from a financial perspective as "the incremental cash flows which accrue to branded products over and above the cash flows which would result from the sale of unbranded products". And Atilgan et al. (2005) explained financial brand equity as "the total value of the brand which is a separable asset when it is sold or includes in the balance sheet". Keeping marketing discipline in consideration, brand equity is measured based on customers as well as employees.

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CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY (CBBE)

The brand embodies customer feelings, perceptions, beliefs, and experiences about the product's attributes. The name of the brand is valued to its customers that yields more brand awareness and association. The success of a brand is based on the right assessment of customers' perceptions about the products. It becomes crucial and central to any organization as it engages all its resources to maximize customer equity. Keller (1993) coined the term CBBE considering customer familiarity with the brand. He defined customer brand equity as "the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (Keller, 1993, 2002).

According to Christodoulides & De Chernatony (2010) "CBBE is a set of perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors on the part of consumers that results in increased utility and allows a brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name". (Wood & Wood, 2011) believes that the marketing perspective of brand equity can help marketers to understand the brand in the minds of customers and to design effective marketing programs to build the brand. Lassar et al. (1995) proposed five dimensions of BE that enhance CBBE including performance, value, social image, trustworthiness, and commitment. In particular, if a company understands what its customers feel and think about the brand, then the company can be able to direct all its efforts and resources to meet the needs and wants of customers.

AAKER VS KELLER CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY MODEL

Aaker CBBE Model

David Aaker's CBBE model is well-known among marketing professionals and academicians. He concluded five key components of brand equity including brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand perceived quality, brand association, and other proprietary assets.

Brand Awareness: It is the main ingredient for building brand equity as the brand needs to be visible to get the attention of the public. Aaker David (1991) defined it as "the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category". Recognition and recall of the brand significantly influence brand equity.

Brand Loyalty: Customer readiness to have repeat experiences with the brand's products positively affects brand equity. Customers' repetitive purchasing behavior leads to brand loyalty. This brand loyalty keeps the organization in the competition. Loyal customers discourage competitors' marketing efforts as they don't switch their choice for a little.

Perceived Quality: It is the customer expectation about product performance to be delivered. According to Aaker (1992); Aaker David (1991), perceived quality is a point of difference among brands and the motive behind the customer buying decision. Perceived brand quality is strategically important in enhancing brand equity.

Brand Association: It is customers' relationship with the brand. How does the customer feel about the brand? A brand needs a strong element of associations with the brand (Keller, 1993). This gives impetus to customers to choose the brand to buy considering all differential attributes. A higher level of brand association makes the extension or introduction of new products easy.

Other Proprietary Brand Assets: Patents, intellectual properties, or other assets also provide competitive advantages to the brand over others.

Keller CBBE Model

Keller proposed the CBBE model based on four sources or level pyramids including building brand identity, creating brand meanings, building brand responses, and building brand resonance.

Brand Identity: It advocates the placement of the brand in the mind of the customer. Who are you? How a brand is different from others? What comes to mind with one think about its name? Brand salience is attained when the customer recalls the brand name, identifies it among other options, and feels satisfaction by using it.

Brand Meaning: It carries metaphorical characteristics of the brand along with performance attributes for the customers. Brand imagery includes a brand appearance to the customers (what message is coming out of the brand image). It is the extent to which a brand fulfills customers' social and psychological requirements. Performance includes features and functions that make the customers satisfied their needs, for example, basic product features, style, design, reliability, durability, service effectiveness, money value (Uford & Duh, 2017).

Brand Response: It entails customer brand-based feelings and judgment criteria. Brand judgment is customers' responses towards the brand evaluation on its performance and imaginary associations and brand-based feelings are subject to customer response to a brand on the emotional ground (Uford & Duh, 2017).

Brand Resonance: Brand resonance demonstrates customer connection with the brand. It is often presumed that a strong association develops over time. I. Uford & Duh (2017) considered brand resonance as the most desirable level for a brand to have as it is a psychological association of customers with the brand. This psychological state is based on strong commitment and loyalty towards a brand. Figure 1, explains the Keller consumer-based Brand Equity Model.

EMPLOYEE BASED BRAND EQUITY (EBBE)

Most of the studies explore brand equity from the perspective of the customers or the organization's value. However, this value of the brand is equally important to other stakeholders of the organization. For example, the employees, who are considered internal customers of the organization, are the main agent of providing the brand value to the external customers (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). Employees formed their attitudes, behaviors, and personal perception of the brand based on information they obtained from their interaction with the employer, collectively delivered as the brand promises to the customers (King & Grace, 2009; Lee et al., 2020).

Initially, King & Grace (2009, 2010) presented this inside-out approach of employee brand behavior and coined the term as EBBE. Purposefully, internal branding efforts generate employee-based brand equity as internal customers are a key determinant to brand success (De Chernatony & Cottam, 2006). At this point, the employee-based perspective of brand equity captured the attention of scholars and academicians. King & Grace (2010) presented an EBBE Model to make emphasize on brand equity from an employee perspective following internal brand management practices, brand knowledge effects, and internal brand management benefits. Moreover, King & Grace (2010) established multiple factors

Figure 1. Keller CBBE model
Source: *(Keller, 2001)*
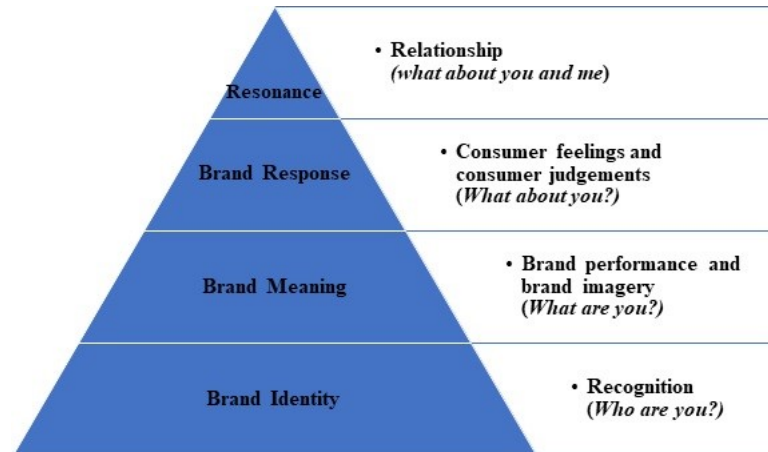
affecting EBBE including information generation, knowledge dissemination, human factors, openness, role clarity, and brand commitment.

King & Grace (2010) defined the term EBBE as "the differential effect that brand knowledge has on an employee's response to internal brand management".

From an employee perspective, understanding the importance of the brand is essential as they are the key agent in managing the brand internally. Employees must know what sort of skills and knowledge they must have to realize the brand targets and which employee behaviors positively support the brand. Effective internal brand management influence employees' behavior and attitudes (King & Grace, 2010).

Lee et al. (2020) conceived EBBE as a product of employees' spontaneous brand endorsement, brand loyalty, and brand value congruence. It begins when employees understand and internalize brands' core values and conform to those values spontaneously. Poulis & Wisker (2016) argued that internal brand management is one of the organization's dominating intangible equity that differentiates it from other organizations and creates its competitive advantage. Moreover, employees have an equal share towards the achievement of this direction. The role of an organization's employees is indisputable. According to Poulis & Wisker (2016) specifying internal branding, an organization's employees are imperative as they are its first market. The researchers stated that a firm's brand equity is dependent on its internal brand management (King & Grace, 2009; Poulis & Wisker, 2016). How employees interpreted the brand from their behaviors influences the brand image externally. Lee et al. (2020) categorized EBBE concerted factors into the perception and cognitive level. Perception level resulted from the employee emotional connection to the brand and cognitive level engendered brand association and brand knowledge and brand-related beliefs from the work experience in the organization.

EBBE has substantial effects on CBBE and ultimately generates competitive advantage (King & Grace, 2005; Kucherov & Zavyalova, 2012; Mangold & Miles, 2007; Uford & Duh, 2017). An organization's employees are also a source of competitive advantage (Tavassoli et al., 2014). Since service organizations heavily depend on employees to deliver the brand promise, there is an increasing concern over managing their brand-related attitudes and behaviors (Erkmen, 2018; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Recent literature is evident for the significance of internal branding. Employees are equally important in

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brand-based equity as they utilize their skills and knowledge in the different stages of product development that capture positive customers' responses. EBBE is one of the marketing tenets that have a role in organizational overall distinctiveness. Internally, employees' positive organizational attitudes and behaviors support the brand requirements and customer brand perception. EBBE involves employees' participation in delivering value and creating a positive customer perception of the brand.

Employees' brand knowledge engenders incremental effects on their work activities. Their role in internalizing the brand values cannot be overlooked. They are more likely to understand customer needs and able to deliver a more promising brand image according to the customer perception. In recent researches, Marketing scholars have asserted the role of employees' perception in organization value creation. Kucherov & Zavyalova (2012) suggested employees better understand the customers' needs and brands 'obligations. Maleki Minbashrazgah et al. (2021) established three employee brand-building behavior including participation (active contribution in enhancing brand performance), in-role brand-building behavior (written and unwritten codes of conduct for employees to be followed to deliver brand promise), and retention (employee involvement in organizational strategic issues).

King & Grace (2008, 2009, 2010) initially asserted the importance of EBBE and tagged the employees as "ambassadors" affirming EBBE as underpinning critical success factor of CBBE. Moreover, King & Grace (2010) established that EBBE is the result of brand knowledge effects, derived from role clarity and brand commitment. Lemon et al. (2001) proposed a model of customer equity, having three customer equity drivers i.e., value equity (VE), brand equity (BE), and relationship equity (RE).

Gelb & Rangarajan (2014) considered employees as brand elements and brand ambassadors. Burmann & Zeplin (2005) argued that decisions and actions of employees help in brand building, particularly in services as there is high customer contact. King et al. (2006) claimed that employees have impacts on consumers' perception of the brand, therefore, for employees, there is a need to get the essence of the brand message that directs their behaviors accordingly. Employees' consistent behavior fortifies the real benefits of a brand's marketing efforts. Moreover, employees fulfill customers' expectations by delivering quality products and projecting a positive image of the brand (King & Grace, 2008; Miles & Mangold, 2004). Miles & Mangold (2004) argued that employees are more involved in delivering brand promise when they are trusted in for their roles and responsibilities. Mangold & Miles (2007) defined EBBE as "the image presented to an organization's customers and other stakeholders through its employees". Keller (1993, 2002) further stressed the alignment of employees' positive brand behaviors with the brand identity. Kwon (2013) iterated the EBBE model based on brand knowledge, role clarity, and brand commitment.

Factors of Employee Based Brand Equity

Employee satisfaction has always been the main issue for decision-makers. Since EBBE is one of those elements that may enhance employee satisfaction (King & Grace, 2010; Uford & Duh, 2017), it is aimed to line up factors of EBBE in detail. Different researchers have explained multiple factors affecting EBBE. King & Grace (2010) highlighted six factors affecting EBBE including generation of brand-related information, knowledge dissemination, human factors, openness, role clarity, and brand commitment. Altaf et al. (2017) investigated the important components of brand equity in their study, including brand experience, perceived quality, brand image, brand loyalty, and brand awareness. The researchers established the positive influence of those factors on brand equity.

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Information Generation

Employees need the information to understand the market and customer requirements. Relevant information is essential to perform job-related responsibilities (King & Grace, 2005) and to fulfill customer expectations (Awan et al., 2017). Employees' involvement in the information generation process yields self-confidence and role clarity. This gives them a sense of association with the brand (Awan et al., 2017).

Organizations have to direct the behaviors and attitudes of an employee to make them fit in internal brand management (King et al., 2006; King & Grace, 2010). While making efforts to realize employees' capabilities, organizations are involved in generating information. In line with this, organizations attempt to develop employee understanding regarding the organization's brand. The generation of information is vital at the beginning of the process. It helps in understanding the need of external customers and developing desired values for the job-related activities to deliver what the external customers want. It empowers organizational brand identity. Employee-based information is generated through formal and informal channels (Uford & Duh, 2017) that direct the employee's thoughts and perception towards the organization and its brands (Erkmen, 2018). Organizational employees are the main building block of EBBE. Employees' attitudes and behaviors are shaped by organizational brand values and these values are essential to share with the employees.

Knowledge Dissemination

As employees are the most important element in internal brand management, they need to be well informed about the brand values that are most likely to create customer brand perception. Dissemination of information to an employee is central to creating EBBE (Erkmen, 2018). King & Grace (2010) defined knowledge dissemination as a process of transferring employee perceives brand knowledge from organization to the employee. Transformation of organizational values into employees' behaviors requires communication and is core in enabling them to have high brand equity (King & Grace, 2009). Knowledge dissemination along with knowledge generation eventually influences the behavior of employees and drives them to attain relevant brand targets (King & Grace, 2009). Information about customer needs and wants helps in aligning employee behaviors and attitudes to the organizational brand attributes (King & Grace, 2010; Kwon, 2013). I. Uford & Duh (2017) noted that dissemination of Information creates a bridge between externally promoted brand promise and employee role and responsibilities in delivering the aforementioned promise.

Human Factor

King & Grace (2010) introduced the "Human" factor in the EBBE model. It is the degree of employee self-perception about how the organization is treating his/her basic rights e.g. being honest, respectful, well informed, and motivated. Employees are more enthusiastic when they are valued in the organization. King & Grace (2010) stated that information responsive environment also yields a social relationship between employee and employer that warrants positive outcomes and fosters the process of transferring employee brand knowledge. Moreover, the Exchange of brand-related information between employer and employees engender positive outcomes i.e. positive and productive behavior of employees.

Human factor acts behind the employee-employer strong relationship. Mutual beneficial relationship leads to the effective information exchange process. In realizing the mutually beneficial relationship

internal market information must be consistent with external marketing practices. Information regarding the internal market guide the organization's decision-making to appreciate customer satisfaction. (King & Grace, 2010). In line with mutual beneficial relationship, employee exhibits the organization's perceived behaviors (King & Grace, 2010). Moreover, King & Grace (2010) attributed employee engagement to the economic and socio-emotional benefits.

The involvement of frontline employees in internal branding generates customers' trust, emotional attachment, and enduring relationship with the brand. Retention of such employees who involve in the internal branding process is essential for competitive advantage (Maleki Minbashrazgah et al., 2021; Morhart et al., 2009). I. Uford & Duh (2017) referred it to as a success factor of the internal branding process and channel for effective employee-employer affiliation. In this view, King & Grace (2010) proposed the development of a mutually beneficial relationship to achieve the benefits of EBBE.

Openness

King & Grace (2010) introduced openness in the model. Employees can respond to discussions amenably. Researchers defined the term as "the extent to which an employee is receptive to organizational dialogue". Organizational support, socialization, employee involvement, and attitudes towards the job reveal the degree of openness that positively affects the process of information generation and brand-related information dissemination (King & Grace, 2010). In an open environment, employees are more open to exchange and respond. Openness is one of the desired employee attitudes that reflect the brand's promises (Uford & Duh, 2017). Exchange of brand-related information between employer and employees improves internal brand management practices that develop an information responsive environment. Such an environment is said to be the "openness" factor of EBBE. Employees are persuaded to adopt this attitude at work when they are supported by management and have a sense of association and acceptance at large (Uford & Duh, 2017).

Role Clarity

King & Grace (2010) defined role clarity as the degree of clarity about the role an employee has in the line of having brand knowledge. It is also the role of the organization to disseminate the brand knowledge among employees to align their behavior to meet the external stakeholders' expectations. More involvement in the job brings more targets and role clarity (Awan et al., 2017). Employees' role clarity progresses as they receive more information about customer expectations from the brand. It makes it easy to internalize the values into the job roles and deliver product attributes. While managing the brand internally, the brand knowledge of employees improves. Knowledge dissemination enables them to understand external customer needs and wants from the products of the brand. Internalizing the brand strategy reduces the role ambiguity and increases the employee commitments towards the brand and organization. (Kwon, 2013) iterated the fact that employees having high role clarity are committed to their firms and organizational goals.

I. Uford & Duh (2017) reiterated that employees with a high level of brand knowledge are clearer to their brand roles and more committed to delivering the brand's promise. On the other hand, unclear brand knowledge leads to ambiguous job roles that depreciate brand equity (Kwon, 2013). Kwon (2013) iterated role clarity into two perspectives, objective role clarity and subjective role clarity. Objective role clarity is subjected to the availability of adequate information for performing job roles. Whereas,

subjective role clarity is subjected to the availability of plentiful role-relevant information for performing job roles likely to have. Increased role clarity results in high-performance outcomes i.e. organizational performance, satisfaction, commitment, and turnover (Kwon, 2013).

Brand Commitment

Brand commitment is another key determinant in building EBBE. Employees are high in brand commitment when they are more involved, attached, and valued in the organization. They increase organizational profits and goodwill as well (Awan et al., 2017). King & Grace (2010) defined brand commitment as "psychological attachment or the feeling of belonging an employee has towards an organization". Kimpakorn & Tocquer (2009) defined brand commitment as "the degree to which employees identify and are involved with their service brand, are willing to exert additional efforts to achieve the goals of the brand and are interested in remaining with the service organization". Burmann & Zeplin (2005) defined brand commitment as "the extent of psychological attachment of employees to the brand, which influences their willingness to exert extra effort towards reaching the brand goals". Employees tend to experience more brand commitment, when they are equipped with brand knowledge and clear about the execution of the role and responsibility, and internalize top ordered values of the organization (King & Grace, 2010). Affective, continuance and normative are three types of brand commitment. Bloemer & Odekerken-Schröder (2006) established effective commitment as the main ingredient of employee loyalty towards the organization.

Brand Knowledge

Employees need to have a proper understanding of desired brand image (Mangold & Miles, 2007). Through different information resources, when an employee acquires brand knowledge, it eventually raises employee brand equity that provokes positive behavior towards a brand. Good understanding of brand among employees enables them to perform their roles and responsibilities to deliver brand promise (King & Grace, 2009). Keller (1993) argued that brand knowledge is posited in terms of brand awareness and brand image. Veloutsou et al. (2013) viewed brand awareness and brand image as two types of brand knowledge. Keller (2002) related brand knowledge to the customer's cognitive ability to process brand-related information. Moreover, the researcher itemized multiple dimensions of brand knowledge including an awareness (identification of brand), attributes (main internal or external characteristics of the brand), benefits (product's utilization outcomes), images (visual display), thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and experiences. These dimensions are affected by marketing activities that ultimately instigate customer response. Thus Keller (2002) claimed that these dimensions of brand knowledge have collaborative effects.

Brand Orientation

Miles & Mangold (2004) identified a thorough process of employee branding that entails how a positive brand image is cultivated to the internal and external stakeholders. The successful image of the brand largely depends on information generation and exchange mechanisms. Kucherov & Zavyalova (2012) stated brand orientation causes value addition and creates customer loyalty to the brands. In creating internal branding, brand orientation plays a significant role in transferring the information of brands' obligations into a certain product.

Brand Perceived Quality

The researchers acknowledged the importance of quality for customer satisfaction and considered perceived quality as a vital component of brand equity (Aaker, 1996; Altaf et al., 2017; Kwon, 2013). Zeithaml (1988) conceived perceived quality as "the consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority". Customers have their quality judgments. High-perceived quality products can attract customers, extend the brand products, and enjoy a competitive advantage. Brand perceived quality is undeniably a sheer justification for its distinctiveness (Beig & Nika, 2022).

Brand Experience

Brakus et al. (2009) perceived brand experience as "subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related, stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments". The researchers further divided it into product experience, shopping experience, and consumption experience.

Brand Awareness

Researchers advocated brand awareness as a factor in developing brand equity and as guiding principle for the strategy formulation of brand equity (Su & Chang, 2017). Altaf et al. (2017) perceived brand awareness as the "ability to recall and recognize the brand under different circumstances and relate it to the logo, jingle, brand name, and other linked measures". Kwon (2013) defined brand awareness as "the strength of a brand's presence in the mind of the consumer"

Aaker (1992); Altaf et al. (2017); Keller (1993) categorized brand awareness into brand recall and brand recognition. More brand awareness results in brand recognition among other offerings and recalls intentions increase. Brand recognition is defined as "consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as a cue", whereas brand recall is defined as "consumers' ability to retrieve the brand when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category, or some other type of probe as a cue" (Keller, 1993). Kwon (2013) stated that brand recognition is less challenging than brand recall as brands already achieved consumer recognition can be recalled. Brand awareness is a vital element in the consumer decision-making process as it increases the chances of buying choice, even in case of consumer low motivation, and, it also yields influence in the formation of brand association (Keller, 1993).

Brand Image and Brand Association

Other important determinants of brand equity are brand image and brand association. Brand image is based on consumers' experience with the product (Altaf et al., 2017) and brand association is based on consumer psychological connection with the brand (Kwon, 2013). Aaker David (1991) defined brand association as "anything 'linked' in memory to a brand". Keller (1993) delineated brand image as "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory". He also categorized brand associations into attributes, benefits, and attitudes. Attributes are the main features of the product. Benefits entail the actual performance of the product and attitudes are consumer behavior to a brand. According to Biswas & Suar (2014) brand image is supported by brand associations.

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Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is considered a vital intangible asset of the organization (Aaker, 1992). Altaf et al. (2017) defined brand loyalty as "the commitment of an individual towards the organization and its brands". Aaker David (1991) described brand loyalty as "the attachment that a consumer has towards a brand". According to Oliver (1999), brand loyalty is "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or re-patronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having potential to cause switching behaviour". Brand loyalty comes into being when a customer is ready to experience the brand again. It enhances the product market share and is a potential barrier for competitors to enter the market (Kwon, 2013). Employees are the main force behind the development of brand loyalty and high customer satisfaction.

(Nam et al., 2011) iterated brand Loyalty as the result of behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. Former signifies repetitive actions of purchasing same brand and latter implies customer's psychological commitment towards brand in form of actions and words as well.

Benefits of EBBE

Internal brand management strategies improve employees' behaviors and attitude towards brand. The researchers enlisted certain benefits of EBBE including employee satisfaction, brand citizenship behavior, employee intention to stay in an organization, and positive employee word-of-mouth (King & Grace, 2010; Uford & Duh, 2017).

Brand Citizenship Behavior; one of the chief outcomes of EBBE is the consistent behavior of employees with the organization. (Kwon, 2013) described it as "discretionary behavior". *Employee* Satisfaction; the ultimate benefit of EBBE is employee satisfaction from the job. Employee Intention to Stay in The Company; the presence of EBBE factors develop a supportive internal environment that direct employees' future intention. Positive Employee Word-Of-Mouth; a satisfied employee with consistent behaviors and positive intention utters positive words for the organization and its brand.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The authors highlighted several factors of EBBE based on extant literature. However, there is enough space to enlarge the volume of literature. Most of the literature discussed EBBE from the lens of internal branding strategies. However, it can be investigated from the employee's work-related outcomes. Future researches need to examine which factors are more effective in connection with employee performance and organizational performance. Moreover, future studies may use quantitative or mixed research method to ascertain the most effective EBBE factor on employee related outcomes. In a broader spectrum, future studies can examine, how these factors yield outcomes in different cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

EBBE is one of the marketing tenets that is achieved through employee's positive attitudes and behaviors. Recent literature exposed how employees are equally helpful in creating positive brand image through

their emotional attachment with brand, work meaningfulness, professional pride and congruence of brand values (Berger-Remy & Michel, 2015). Employees are more involved in delivering brand promise when they are trusted in for their roles and responsibilities (Miles & Mangold (2004).

The authors attempted to identify several inducing factors that could possibly boost employee's involvement in making organization's products successful and building positive brand image. Brand related information generation, knowledge dissemination, human factor, openness, role clarity, brand commitment, brand knowledge, brand orientation, brand perceive quality, brand experience, brand awareness, brand image, brand association, and brand loyalty are those key factors that can fortify EBBE. Since, these factors have evolved from previous researches, collectively, contribute in shaping internal brand management (Altaf et al., 2017; Awan et al., 2017; King & Grace, 2010). Organizations can upsurge their profitability graph by investing in these EBBE factors.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Brand Awareness: Brand awareness is the existence of a brand name in the memory of customers.

Brand Commitment: It is an emotional association of employees with the brand that regulates their behaviors and attitudes towards the achievements of organizational goals.

Brand Equity: Brand equity is the value of a brand in the eye of a customer that grows with brand experience.

Brand Knowledge: It is based on information on brand identification and attributes that are required.

Brand Loyalty: It is sheer confidence of customers on brands' products as compared to its rivals. It acts as a driver of customer enthusiasm for a repeat buying experience.

Employee-Based Brand Equity: Employee-based brand equity refers to employee contribution in realizing the value of a brand and creating a positive customer perception of the brand.

Chapter 2
Impact of Employee–Based Brand Equity on Customer–Based Brand Equity

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ABSTRACT

The chapter describes brand equity and its types. Moreover, it brings unique pieces of work representing the phenomenon of internal brand management (IBM) along with the impact of employee-based brand equity (EBBE) on customer-based brand equity (CBBE). There are mainly three types of brand equity: financial brand equity, CBBE, and EBBE. The author has referred to the literature on EBBE and CBBE in chronological order. The prominent models of CBBE and EBBE are briefly discussed. The impact of EBBE on CBBE is highlighted; moreover, the combined effect of both EBBE and CBBE on the market performance of the organization is described through a framework. The application of EBBE across various industries is also discussed in the chapter. The author has cited the most significant work on brand equity in a descriptive way highlighting the importance of brand equity in general and the impact of EBBE on CBBE in particular. The importance, integration, and combined effect of EBBE and CBBE on market performance have been discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The firms had constantly been in the war against their competing brands to create and sustain competi-

tive advantages over each other. As the phenomenon of competitive advantage (CA) has emerged as a global, unpredictable and hostile, thus conventional sources of creating competitive advantage are now misaligned in explanation of how firms create competitive advantage and sustain it over the years (D'Aveni & Gunther, 1994) Thus, the process of strategic management of firms shifts itself from conventional foundations of competitive advantage (Sirmon et al., 2010). Organizations are strategically involved in Brand management. It has long been a significant area of concern for the practitioner, however, it compels them to substantiate the role of employees in the creation of brand equity (De Chernatony & Cottam, 2006). This is the contribution of knowledge, expertise, and proficiency of employees for the firm to stay ahead and all the employees need to understand.

It is required for employees to understand and align their roles and responsibilities with the brand's expectations for the successful delivery of brand promise (Gapp & Merrilees, 2006). Employees are always required to demonstrate positive organizational behavior for effective organizational performance (Griffin et al., 2007). This is executable through the practice of internal brand management that employees are equipped with obligatory skills and knowledge to go a long way together with organizational vision.

Therefore, this chapter focuses on that how big brands can be created with the influence of positive employee behaviors. Such an area of internal branding has been found research wanting. Calling on to suffice the knowledge, multiple pieces of evidence of research are required in the area of Employee-Based Brand Equity (EBBE) in general and its impact on Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) particularly.

1.1 Origin of Brand Equity

The impression of brand equity can be traced back to the concept of creating brands by different organizations. The firms have been building the brands to differentiate their market offerings from the rest of the firms in the industry. One of the most important roles of the brands is to simplify the decision-making process of a customer mitigating most of the risks (Chieng & Goi, 2011). The value that originates from a brand is brand equity. Aaker & Joachimsthaler (2000) narrate it as a soft asset attached to the name, logo, slogan, and other brand elements.

Consequently, brand equity has emerged as a strategic instrument that symbolizes strong brands. It carries pivotal significance in the planning of the brands. It has attracted both scholars and practitioners. How can brand equity be developed, measured, enhanced, and sustained overtimes? This has been proven a challenge for modern-day brand managers (Keller, 2013).

1.2 Types of Brand Equity

Although the prime focus of the chapter is to discuss the impact of EBBE on CBBE, however, it is relevant to discuss multiple types of brand equity. Brand equity has achieved three distinct formats. It can be valued, monitored, and discussed from these perspectives given below (Farjam & Hongyi, 2015);

Financial-Based Brand Equity (FBBE)
Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)
Employee-Based Brand Equity (EBBE)

1.2.1 Financial-Based Brand Equity

This type of brand equity is related to additional cash inflows to the company as an outcome of the brand's worth. Such brand equity is contributing to stock prices and incremental sales revenue. The brands with higher FBBE are more likely to earn more than those relatively with lower FBBE. Such additional finance could be a vital sign for the success of any organization. Most organizations are expecting to earn higher FBBE in the market. According to Wood (2000), this was further specified to be measured and recorded separately in the balance sheet after receiving a certain monetary value. Such value is better utilized at the time of mergers, acquisitions, and divestitures.

1.2.2 Customer-Based Brand Equity

The focus of such a perspective is the customer, not the investor (Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995). Most academics and practitioners value the approach of CBBE as very dominant, as it entices the customer to pick up a particular brand and to pay more for it. Moreover, it forces them to have a positive word of mouth about the brand. This is because the customers have positive repeat experiences with the brand. The brands start to occupy a distinct place in the minds of their customers (Keller, 2013).

CBBE has been defined in numerous ways by many scholars in the past. There are notable ways where the concept of CBBE has been operationalized. The work of renowned authors on CBBE is summarized here. According to Ambler (1992)**,** CBBE can be defined as the sum of all characteristics, features, and benefits that the buyer purchases for the attainment of satisfaction. However, such attributes can be both tangible and intangible. CBBE is comprised of two main dimensions, one is brand strength and the other is brand value. Brand strength is about associations of the brand held by the customers while brand values are about the benefits and financial gains a brand receives from its customers (Lassar et al., 1995).

The concept of CBBE is further defined as, the added value of a brand to the consumer, or the value created by marketing activities, as perceived by the customers (Podsakoff et al., 1997). The domain of CBBE had widely attracted the attention of scholars, it has been conceptualized in many ways, and it has been briefly discussed as the worth of the brand provided to it by its customers (Erdem & Swait, 1998). One of the most popular ways CBBE has been operationalized by Keller (2003) has been gradually updated in 2013. CBBE develops two perspectives. First is that brand awareness playing important role in developing the brand image and brand associations are further developed in the mind of consumers. This is how the concept of CBBE works for a particular brand.

Another concept of CBBE has been presented. This is the favoritism of consumers towards a specific brand. Favoritism can further be translated into purchase intentions, preferences and the sum of benefits the consumers expect (Yasin et al., 2007). CBBE has been an area of tremendous scholarly attention. This is generally described as the set of associations or attitudes that consumers carry in their minds for a particular brand and such a mindset of consumers towards a brand contributes to the value of the brand (Karadeniz, 2010). The concept of CBBE was broadened. It was extended as the set of associations and behaviors of customers, channel members, and the parent corporation. Such associations may result in better financial returns for the brand (Kapferer, 2012).

Keller (2013) has comprehensively defined CBBE, and such operationalization of the concept received academic and practical popularity. When brands are promoted, consumers respond to marketing efforts. Their response depends on their knowledge of their brands. Thus the differential effect in the responses is based on the equity of the brand in the mind of consumers which is ultimately based on their knowl-

edge about the brands. Here is another different perspective regarding CBBE that has appeared in the literature. It has been a diagnostic tool for managers to evaluate the perceptions of the consumers of a brand. The more positive the perception is the more authentic the brand can be considered (Szöcs, 2014).

1.2.3 Employee-Based Brand Equity

Now, the perspective of brand equity here is the employee, neither customer nor manufacturer. Thus, it can be defined as the impact of brand understanding on employee performance compatible with the organization's policies, culture, and environment (King &Grace, 2009). CBBE and EBBE both are contributing to the brand's value as they function similarly (Kwon, 2013). Nonetheless, EBBE serves as a ground for developing CBBE. These are the employees who understand the organizational objectives and what it promises to deliver to the customer and can serve better. They are more likely to endorse the ultimate brand value and promise to the customer if they are knowledgeable, clear in their roles, and compatible with the culture of the organization. Thus, employees are the most precious capital dedicated to organizational success (De Chernatony & Riley, 1999).

Hence, the employees of any organization are the most contributing factor in delivering brand value to the customers. They understand both organizational culture and customer requirements to design and deliver the brand promise to the customers.

2.0 INTERNAL BRAND MANAGEMENT

The chapter narrates the process of internal brand management (IBM) of an organization sparingly. As the process of IBM is strongly connected with EBBE. CBBE is one of the reliable tools to measure the power of the brand, likewise, EBBE is helpful to evaluate the powers of the employee of the brand. Both approaches are widely used by practitioners to check the market performance of a brand (Vomberg et al., 2015). EBBE can safely be placed within the concept of Internal Brand Management (IBM). King & Grace (2009) have widely discussed the components of internal brand management (IBM) that can briefly be explained here;

2.1 Information Generation

According to them, when an organization tries to fully understand their employees in terms of their attitudes, work ethics, and competencies to deliver the ultimate brand promise. The overall aim is to enhance organizational performance. Such information can be gathered through informal and formal ways utilizing internal market research (King & Grace, 2010)

2.2 Knowledge Dissemination

Once the information about employees of an organization is generated, the next phase comes to disseminate the desirable knowledge to them, such knowledge would be incorporated into their work beliefs subsequently contributing to the brand promise (Lings & Greenley, 2005). King and Grace (2009), such effort surely enables employees to demonstrate a desirable attitude and a better sense of responsibility

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in delivering the expected brand promise. This is how the brand equity is developed both internally and externally.

Figure 1.
Source: (King & Grace, 2009)
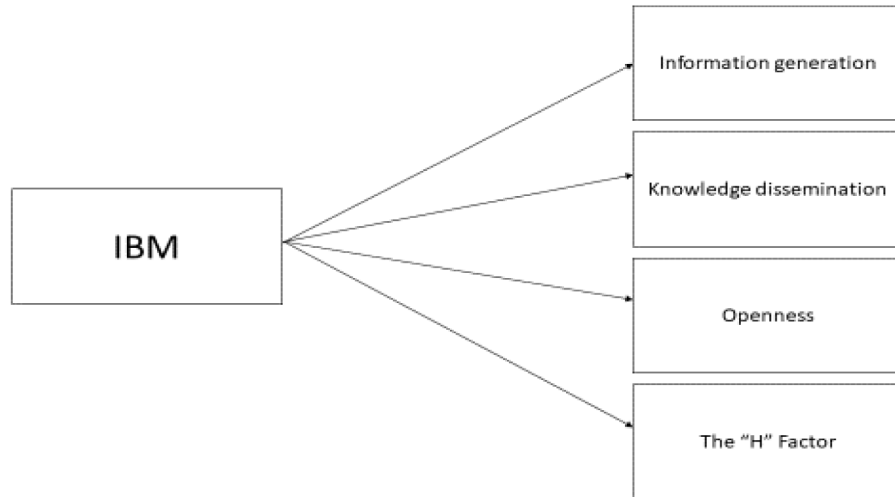
2.3 Openness

Reflection of brand promise in the attitudes of the employees is hindered in many ways, employees may feel that they are no longer active players in the organization. They are neither taken care of nor involved in the decision-making process. This could be a leading factor in job dissatisfaction. Here, openness bridges such undesirable feelings of the employees (Naudé et al., 2003).

2.4 The H-Factor

The H-factor signifies the human factor here when employees think that organization is taking them like humans in every respect. They are taken care of thoroughly by their organization, they enjoy a sense of comfort and protection. Thus, H-factor entices employees to perform up to the mark in the delivery of brand promise. Moreover, H-factor shows a nicer relationship between employee and employer. The H-factor impacts positively EBBE. The firms must focus on the H-factor to better fit their employees in employee-based brand equity to capitalize on their optimum potential in the delivery of brand promise (King & Grace, 2009)

Figure 2.
Source: (King & Grace, 2010)
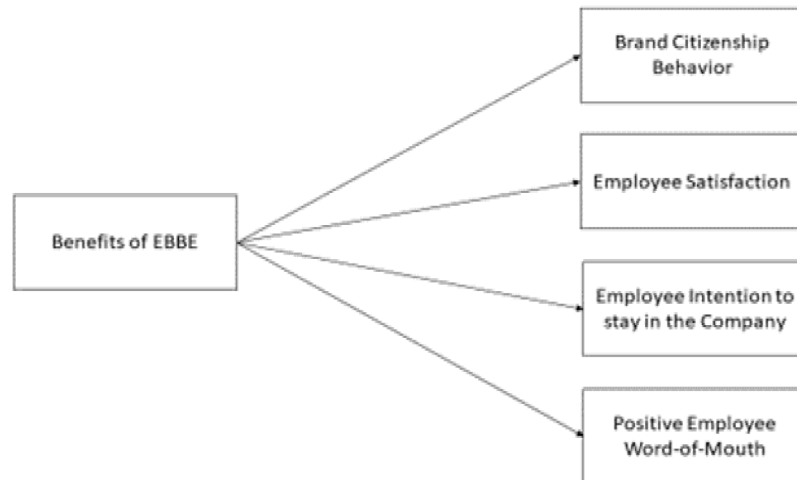
3.0 BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE-BASED BRAND EQUITY

EBBE can benefit the organization in many ways. Organizations are always looking for employees who must understand brand essence, making their efforts to contribute to the delivery of brand promise. Thus, EBBE is a differential outcome that brand understanding has on the response of employees towards their core work responsibilities. This leads to enhanced CBBE that in turn inflates financial-based brand equity (King and Grace2009). The benefits of EBBE are diagrammed below. The leading benefits of EBBE are as follows; brand citizenship behavior, employee satisfaction, employee intention to stay in the company, and positive employee word of mouth. Here are the concise definitions and concepts along with their references given below proceeding the framework;

3.1 Brand Citizen Behavior

Employee-based brand equity results in many organizational benefits few of them are discussed as, Brand citizen behavior is the behavior of any employee which is usually undocumented and beyond the norms hitherto compatible with the organizational behavior (King & Grace, 2010).

3.2 Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is the feeling that an employee extracts after realizing that his or her services are valued and paid accordingly (King & Grace, 2010).

3.3 Employee Intention to Stay in the Company

Employee intention to stay in the company is the likelihood of an employee to continue to serve the same organization in the future (King & Grace, 2010).

Figure 3.
Source: (Kwon, 2013)
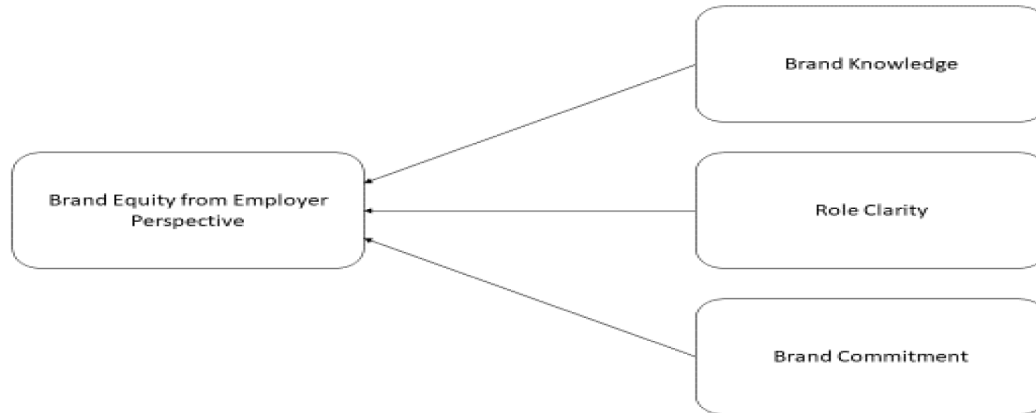
3.4 Positive Employee Word-of-Mouth

Positive employee word-of-mouth is the propensity of an employee to talk positively and to recommend others to be served by the organization he is currently employed in (King & Grace, 2010).

4.0 SOURCES OF EMPLOYEE-BASED BRAND EQUITY

A great deal of work on EBBE has been done by three of the authors. Their prominent work is the development of EBBE. Aaker (1996) and King and Grace (2010) suggested the model represents three major dimensions; brand knowledge, brand commitment, and role clarity. Kwon (2013) has also contributed to the development of the model. It is further emphasized that this dimension can add consumer commitment to the brand ultimately resulting in enhanced brand equity.

These three dimensions can briefly be discussed as follows;

4.1 Brand Knowledge

Employees with better brand knowledge are expected to clarify their brand roles and can better deliver brand promise (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). If any of the employees are unaware of the brand philosophy, having an undesirable understanding of the brand role would be unable to contribute to the delivery of brand promise. Delivery of brand promise is one of the ultimate goals of any brand.

4.2 Role Clarity

It has been evident when employees of any organization are clear about their roles and responsibilities which they are expected to perform and which they are not. They are more satisfied with their jobs. They contribute more valuably to the organizations when their role clarity is high (Boselie & van der

Wiele, 2002). As, the service environment inside the organizations is complex and a variety of service tasks could hardly be defined with precise information and role clarity to steer employee behavior in a particular direction (Castro et al., 2005). In such circumstances, the employees are required to go the extra mile to deliver the ultimate required brand promise and expertise (Burmann et al., 2009). Thus, role clarity brings a variety of benefits both to the employees as well as to the customers.

4.3 Brand Commitment

The third dimension of EBBE is brand commitment. When employees keep serving the organizations for a longer time, they are more likely attached psychologically to their employers and ready to perform painstaking activities more than required usually. Employees exhibiting such behavior are more responsible and carry a better sense of brand commitment. Empirical insights are available where employee commitment positively contributes to employee satisfaction (King & Grace, 2010). This is popular in brand research studies that brand commitment plays a vital role in the determination of brand equity (Ambler, 2003). It is further clarified that when consumers are more committed to a brand they stay more satisfied and loyal to the brand. It is demonstrated by their active engagement with the brand's products and services (Oliver, 1999).

5.0 EMPLOYEE-BASED BRAND EQUITY; ITS'S MEASUREMENT ACROSS INDUSTRIES

This is pertinent to mention that concept of EBBE was derived to predict the organizational success and to measure the impact of investments made in the process of internal brand management (King & Grace, 2009). Furthermore, it was foreseen that evolution of EBBE would leave a varied impact on different organizations. For instance, its results may differ in the product-intense industry as when compared to in the service-intense industry (King & Grace, 2009). Thus, employees working in different industries value the incentives differently that enhance EBBE.

EBBE and its impact cannot be measured with a unified scale across different work settings. Case study kind of research settings may serve the purpose better to identify multiple dimensions of employee-based brand equity in different organizations, resultantly, it would be helpful to influence performance based on dimensions of employee-based brand equity (King et al., 2012). So, manufacturing, hotel, and financial industries have different leading antecedents of performance that can be influenced by EBBE.

Uford & Duh (2017) comprehensively studied CBBE, employee-based brand equity (EBBE) along with the impact of both on the market performance of the United Bank for Africa (UBA). The study was conducted in Nigeria. UBA is the largest bank situated in Nigeria. It has 12,900 employees and around 7.2 million customers. The bank has a wider presence with 626 branches in 36 states of Nigeria. Two branches of the UBA from each region were selected in this study. Both employees and customers of UBA were the respondents of the study. The sources for customer Based Brand Equity CBBE and EBBE for UBA were investigated and their impact on the market performance of UBA was checked. Market performance was further translated into three dimensions; customer purchase intention, brand preferences, and customer's willingness to pay more price for the services of UBA. Brand loyalty was found one of the strongest antecedents of CBBE with a 77% contribution. While brand commitment was considered a major source of EBBE for UBA with its 56% contribution. Finally, it was checked that

EBBE is positively affecting the CBBE of UBA and CBBE is the more pronounced driver impacting positively the market performance of UBA. This evidence is from the financial services sector of the Nigerian economy.

Another recent evidence about EBBE and its role in brand management has appeared in the literature. The study was conducted in the tourism industry. With the infusion of information technology, the hospitality industry is becoming competitive. Organizations have to develop and sustain competitive advantages, thus, the role of organizational culture is becoming ever important in the overall performance of the firm. The study entailed 165 employees of a hotel in Johannesburg. It was concluded that four facets of organizational culture; involvement, adaptability, consistency, and mission of the organization are positively kinked with EBBE of the hotel. It was recommended that EBBE should be emphasized to leverage the culture of the organization to attain higher brand equity (Mavuso et al., 2020).

Moreover, another study describes EBBE and its antecedents and outcomes in the context of service employees. It identified that gap, that most of the studies had been customers focused however, the employees are internal customers and they are less studied. The study focused on both external and internal customers from a wide array of services like hotels, banking, restaurants, and air travel. The study relied on social identity theory and cognitive psychology in the development and testing of the model of antecedents and outcomes of EBBE. The study differentiated how EBBE is developed via brand identification and brand knowledge, moreover, it entails the behavior of supervisors with subordinates. Most of the employees in this study were front-line workers as they have strong and frequent interaction with the customers supposedly. How do employees respond to the internal brand management process? The study also highlighted citizenship behavior 'customer orientation and brand value dissemination. The internal brand management process (IBM) caused positive impacts on brand value lying in the minds of the customers of the service sectors involved in the study (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020).

6.0 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE-BASED BRAND EQUITY (EBBE), CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY (CBBE), AND MARKET PERFORMANCE

Branding has been a particular concern of businesses. Corporations are always ready to invest a great number of their resources to build and maintain their brands (Keller, 2013). It is further thought that branding is one of the most desirable value drivers that every single organization is looking for. Therefore, the corporations should be identifying and developing parameters that are significant for their brand's success both in the short and long run (Mohan & Sequeira, 2016). Thus, businesses need to comprehend the ways their brand equity can be leveraged to uplift organizational performance (Baldauf et al., 2003).

There is sufficient literature support to prove the relationship between the sources of brand equity and market performance. For example, there is a positive relationship between brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, and market performance of an organization in terms of profitability (Mohan & Sequeira, 2012); and (Tolba & Hassan, 2009). Moreover, when a more prestigious brand image of an organization is internalized by its employees, they feel more inspired to portray it to the external world (Miles & Mangold, 2004). Such phenomenon is a part of internal brand management of an organization which triggers a more refined service role of the employees to the customers (Berry & Lampo, 2004). This is how the organizations are more likely to achieve a competitive advantage.

Figure 4.
Source: (Uford & Duh, 2017)
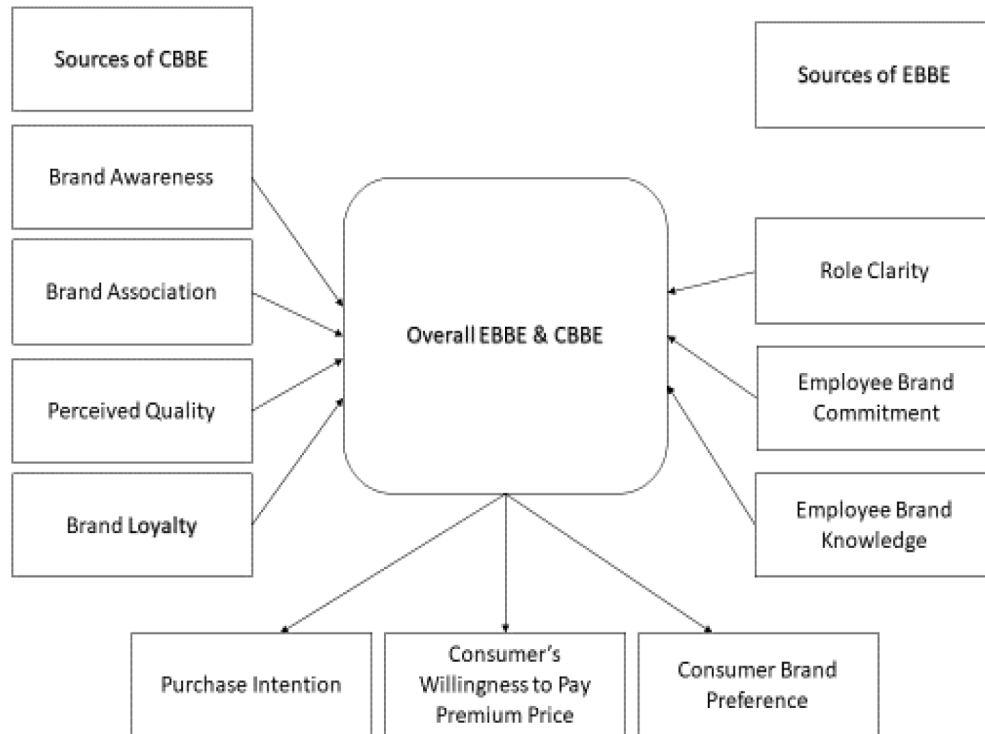
Miles & Mangold (2004) argued that whatever the way, the employees of an organization perceive their organization they try to pass on the same image to all stakeholders of the organization. This process is known as 'employee brand'. The role of employees is significant as they are primarily responsible to act as a bridge between an organization and its customers. Hence, the equity that organizations generate from their employees can serve as a base for building CBBE (Kwon, 2013). The impact of EBBE on CBBE and their combined effect on the market performance of the company is diagrammed in a framework.

All sources of EBBE; employee brand commitment, employee brand knowledge, and role clarity of the employees are taken into account along with sources of customer-based brand equity; brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, and brand loyalty, and their overall impact on market performance. Market performance of an organization is estimated in terms of customer brand preference, consumer's willingness to pay a premium price, and purchase intentions. This integrated framework is based on two models, one is presented by Aaker, (1996) where customer-based brand equity has four dimensions, and the other of employee-based brand equity carries three dimensions presented by Kwon (2013). Furthermore, employee-based brand equity positively drives customer-based brand equity and their joint impact affects the determinants of market performance (Uford & Duh, 2017).

In addition, there is recent evidence from literature about the impact of EBBE on CBBE. It has been observed that many front-line workers who are happy with their organizations, such organizations tend to have higher employee-based brand equity. Such employees tend to highlight their work-related content

on organizational as well as personal social media accounts (Smith et al., 2021). Such positive behavior of employees causes an upsurge in customer-based brand equity of that organization.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Brand management has been an area of prime interest both for scholars and practitioners. Brand equity has been a mainstay in the evaluation of brand performance for years. The way the organizations are looking for dynamic and workaholic employees with exceptional performance is comparable in many ways with the process where organizations try to market profitable clients. Organizations wish to develop a financially viable and lasting relationship with their customers. Employees of any organization are a rich source of constituting either positive or negative word of mouth about the organization they serve. In the same way, the customers of any organization like to talk about the product or service quality of the organization. Prospect customer can play their part in this process. This scenario is linked with brand equity; CBBE as well as EBBE (Etim & Uford, 2019).

Thus, this chapter offers a galaxy of literature related to IBM, EBBE, and CBBE and the way these affect the market performance of the firm collectively. It extensively narrates the sources of CBBE identified by Aaker (1996) and their impact on the overall CBBE of the firm. Moreover, it sheds light on the sources of EBBE identified by Kwon (2013) and the way they influence the overall EBBE of the firm. The interrelationship between EBBE and EBBE and their combined positive effect on the market performance of the firm (Uford & Duh, 2017) has also been described. It is obvious, that the firms interested to preserve their competitive advantages in the industry prioritize their focus on IBM, as, IBM generates EBBE and it nourishes different dimensions of CBBE which ultimately influences the firm's performance positively (Cardy et al., 2007).

Consequently, brand equity has emerged as a strategic instrument that symbolizes strong brands. It carries pivotal significance in the planning of the brands. It has attracted both scholars and practitioners. The possible dimensions where equity can be developed, measured, enhanced, and sustained over the years. This has been proven a challenge for modern-day brand managers (Keller, 2013). Thus, EBBE can benefit the organization in many ways. Organizations are always looking for employees who must understand brand essence, making their efforts to contribute to the delivery of brand promise. Consequently, employee-based brand equity is a differential outcome that brand understanding has on the response of employees towards their core work responsibilities. This leads to enhanced CBBE that in turn inflates the financial-based brand equity (FBBE) of the firm (King and Grace2009).

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Brand Citizen Behavior: It is the behavior which is usually undocumented and beyond the norms hitherto compatible with the organizational behavior.

Brand Equity: This is the value (Positive) a firm generates over a long time by offering consistent quality to its customers. This value is treated as an intangible asset of the firm. The brands with higher brand equity are more recognizable in the market.

Brand Knowledge: The extent up to, the employees of an organization are aware of organizational brand promise and trained to outperform.

Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE): This is the value of the organization directly attributed to its customers. The customers become loyal to certain brands and they afford the brand resonance.

Employee-Based Brand Equity (EBBE): This is the value of the organization attributed to its employees. It is the contribution made by the performance of the employees within the firm and usually, this is an outcome of the internal brand management process.

Financial-Based Brand Equity (FBBE): This type of brand equity is related to additional cash inflows to the company as an outcome of the brand's worth. Such brand equity is contributing to stock prices and incremental sales revenue.

H-Factor: The H-factor signifies the human factor here when employees think that organization is taking them like humans in every respect. They are taken care of thoroughly by their organization, they enjoy a sense of comfort and protection. Thus, H-factor entices employees to perform up to the mark in the delivery of brand promise.

Internal Brand Management (IBM): This is a corporate strategy and a process, where the employees are trained and motivated to deliver the brand promise, rather, they are expected to live the brand promise.

Market Performance of the Firm: The way a particular firm is performing in the industry, in this chapter, means if the customers of the firms have future purchase intentions, if they are willing to pay a premium price and if they have a brand preference of the firm. It means the firm is performing up to the mark.

Role Clarity: The clarity of the employees of any organization about their roles and responsibilities which they are expected to perform. They are more satisfied with their jobs, and they contribute more valuably to the organizations when their role clarity is high. Their behavior is more responsible when they are clear about their particular role in the organization.

Chapter 3

Psychological Capital as an Antecedent of Employee Engagement and Its Relationship With Intention to Stay

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement is an evolving concept in human resources (HR). Most organizations strive to attain employee engagement because of the various organization-related outcomes. It is important for employees to feel engaged emotionally, socially, and intellectually with the work and organization. Various antecedents affect employee engagement and, in turn, result in an organization-related positive outcome. This chapter discusses in-depth PsyCap as an antecedent of employee engagement and how it relates to intent to stay regarding employees working in travel organizations in India and aims to build relevant theoretical frameworks based on the findings. The chapter also discusses some strategies organizations can implement to achieve employee engagement based on the findings.

INTRODUCTION

A report titled "Analytics India Attrition Study," published by Analytics India Magazine (2021), determined that the attrition rate had dropped from 30.7% in 2019 to 16.0% in 2020. Though the data indicates an improvement in the attrition rate, it still stands higher than the world average of 14.1%. When analysed industry-specific, the travel and tourism industry has a very high employee turnover rate of 73.8% in the hospitality industry, which is way above the annual average (Hayton, 2019). High turnover is due to unclear job expectations, ineffective communication with managers, improper work timings, an unfavorable work environment, and no growth opportunities and recognition. If an organization fails

to retain and attract talents, more time and money is wasted. The "replacement cost can reach as high as 50-60% of an employee's annual salary" (Janani, 2014). The most effective strategy to tackle this issue is to ensure that the employees are actively engaged by promptly addressing their concerns. Another approach to attaining engagement is providing that employees hired are high in hope, confidence, and resilience. Yan, Mansor, Choo, and Abdullah (2021) conducted a study based on hotels, and the results revealed that employees' psychological resources, such as psychological capital, should be high as it positively affects organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and employee engagement (as cited in Karatepe & Karadas, 2015). Thus, it is essential for all the companies across the industries to measure employee engagement at frequent intervals, especially the travel and tourism industry, considering its contribution to Indian economic development. This chapter explains the association between psychological capital and employee engagement and its relationship with Intent to stay. According to the Human Resource Management International Digest, "creating a retention-rich organization that attracts, engages, and builds lasting loyalty among the most talented employees is the key to success in the modern globalized economy."

Objectives

Employee engagement is a mixture of "many old wines in a new bottle" consisting of three factors: purpose, participation, and progress. Employee engagement is significant as it gives an edge over the competition. There are many essential antecedents of employee engagement, and one such critical antecedent is psychological capital. Studies have reported that higher psychological capital positively influences employee engagement (Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007a; Herbert, 2011). Employee engagement is not attained only by providing a good salary or positive work environment; they need to be hopeful, self-confident, and resilient. Therefore, managers are responsible for measuring and seeing where their employees stand concerning psychological capital.

Another concern organizations face is employees' intention to leave. Employees leaving an organization are unavoidable, but it is an alarming concern when the turnover rate increases. Quitting intentions develop in employees' minds due to various factors that prevail in and around the organization. Studies have shown that being less engaged leads to the intention to leave (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008), and highly engaged employees intend to stay with the organization for a longer duration (McCarthy, Moonesinghe & Dean, 2020). Thus, employers need to prioritize employee engagement strategically as it is one way to control turnover in the long run. In this context, this chapter addresses the following objectives;

- To find the employee engagement level in travel organization
- To determine the demographic effects on employee engagement
- To determine the relationship between psychological capital and employee engagement
- To measure the impact of employee engagement on Intent to stay

BACKGROUND

Travel Organization

The tourism industry comprises sectors providing different tourism-related services, and people drive it. The tourism industry consists of classification, such as boarding and lodging, recreational activities, infrastructure facilities, shopping activities (Tsai, Tseng, Tzeng, Wu & Day, 2011), transportation, hospitality, and lodging (Brahmkshatriya & Pandit, 2020). The classification made by Goeldner and Ritchie (2012) covers most sectors like hotels, airlines, restaurants, festival attractions, tourist destinations, recreation tourism, travel-trade sectors, lodging, and motel. Travel-trade sectors, also known as tour operators or travel agents, are important sectors in the tourism industry. They play a crucial role in providing suitable packages to tourists and achieving tourist satisfaction. They also have a greater responsibility in ensuring sustainability (Otoo, Senbeto & Demssie, 2020). In the tourism industry, travel agents are the essential supplier that helps in cooperation between the tourism industry and tourist planning, organizing, and other management-related functions (Bakhriddinovna & Qizi, 2020).

Role of HR in Travel Organization

Tourists may not revisit the same destination even if they had the best vacation, but the travel agent is highly likely to be approached again for more travel packages. Thus, achieving tourist loyalty and satisfaction is essential for a travel agent. A victory of any business is considerably associated with the kind of employees they have, which is more relevant to service sectors like travel agents. The service quality provided by travel agents is significantly and directly dependent upon employees' efficiency (Amantayevna & Adletkyzy, 2020). Hence, while hiring, companies need to focus on employees' energy, enthusiasm, and motivation level beyond professional knowledge and experience. HR managers need to pay great attention to hiring and regularly measure employees' commitment and engagement levels. The ongoing pandemic has pushed the tourism industry into a challenging situation and calls for much effort and innovative strategies to revive tourism and attract tourists. Revival is achieved only through a joint effort taken by the travel agency owners and the employees. According to Dash and Sharma (2021), employees need to be highly engaged and motivated to revive tourism.

Variables in the Study

The study consists of psychological capital, Intent to stay, and employee engagement. The table shows the definition of each concept considered in the current chapter.

Employee Engagement (EE)

Employee engagement is a concept that is gaining much importance among researchers, corporates, academicians, and HRs. Khan (1990) was the first to coin the idea; Personal engagement, described as "harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles"; in engagement, "people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances." Personal disengagement means "uncoupling of selves from work roles"; in disengagement, "people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances" (p.694). According

Table 1. Variables considered in the study

S.NO	Variable	Definition	Source
1.	Employee Engagement (EE): a) Intellectual engagement b) Social engagement c) Affective engagement	"The extent to which one is intellectually absorbed in work" "The extent to which one is socially connected with the working environment and shares common values with colleagues" "The extent to which one experiences a state of positive affects relating to one's work role."	Soane et al. (2012)
2	Psychological Capital (PsyCap)	"An individual's positive psychological state of development is characterized by: (1) having the confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed in challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering towards goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) to succeed; and (4) when behest by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success".	Luthans et al. (2006)
3	Intent to Stay (IS)	It refers to the likelihood that an individual will sever ties with an organization	Lyons (1971)

to Khan, engagement consists of three psychological sub-dimensions: psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability, and is used to measure personal engagement and disengagement. These conditions lead to engagement, and the absence leads to disengagement. Khan's study lacked constructs functionality, which Maslach and Leiter (1997) addressed. They defined engagement as "the antithesis of burnout," Engagement constructs consisted of energy involvement and efficacy in place of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. Schaufeli and Bakker (2001) had a different argument; they stated that engagement and burnout are two other constructs and led to the development of three dimensions such as vigor and dedication (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2001), and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2001). Hence employee engagement was redefined as a "positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2001).

Gallup, a consulting firm, 1999 reconstructed the concept of "Employee Engagement" to apply at the business level, and the scale developed consisted of 12 questions measuring employee engagement. Further, Gallup (2006) determined three engagement levels: engaged, not engaged, and actively disengaged. The first study on employee engagement which covered a large sample of 7939 business units, revealed that employee satisfaction positively leads to employee engagement and other related organization-related outcomes such as customer satisfaction, productivity, and better profits (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002). Many academicians and researchers have developed different dimensions measuring employee engagement and contributed to the theory (Saks, 2006; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Jiandong, 2009; Jiandong & Min, 2009). Soane et al. (2012) developed an engagement scale that measures engagement with three dimensions; social, intellectual, and affective, and it is considered a recent measure for employee engagement.

Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

Psychological capital (PsyCap) refers to how an employee feels positive about oneself. According to Luthans et al. (2006), it is defined as "an individual's positive psychological state of development" and

characterized as having a high level of HERO: Hope, (Self)-Efficacy, Resilience, and Optimism. Each person holds a different level of PsyCap as the dimensions have their characteristics and interventions. Variables such as age, gender, income level, and work experience influence the PsyCap of an individual. This finding is supported in many other studies; according to Dargahi (2012), self-efficacy differed with gender. Like demographic factors, even personality traits act as an antecedent of PsyCap. Each individual differs and carries different characteristics, such as introverts, extroverts, type A, type B, and more. According to a study by Brandt, Gomes, and Boyanova (2011), extroverts, intuitive and thoughtful individuals according to Myers-Briggs theory, have high psychological capital than introverts sensing and emotional. The study also identified that PsyCap differed among people from different cultures and countries.

Investigating PsyCap is necessary as it has many positive outcomes for the organization. Research has shown that employees high in PsyCap displayed positive organization-related results. Research has indicated that employees with high PsyCap have exhibited high employee performance and motivation (Cherian & Jacob, 2013), positive employee behavior, and increased competitiveness (Kim, Karatepe & Lee, 2017; Ozturk & Karatepe, 2018). Other related benefits due to high PsyCap are better mistake management (Amini & Mortazavi, 2012), emotional commitment (Etebarian, Tavakoli, & Abzari, 2012; Rowe, 2013) and lower turnover intentions (Rowe, 2013), higher job satisfaction, and lower work tension (Hmieleski & Carr, 2007), higher the creative performance, lower the job stress (Abbas & Raja, 2011; Mortazavi, Yazdi & Amini, 2012), higher the emotional engagement, lower cynicism (Avey, Wernsing & Luthans, 2008), and better the quality of work-life (Mortazavi et al., 2012). Employees who are habitual of taking frequent leaves and becoming irregular can affect performance, and if not addressed, it can lead to turnover. One way to curb absenteeism is by ensuring employees are high in PsyCap (Avey, Patera & West, 2006).

There are ways in which organizations can help their employees to improve their PsyCap. When individuals can achieve mastery over what they do, it builds their confidence. It is essential to provide employees with clear goals, which prepares them to achieve those goals and readiness to face goal-related obstacles; this helps achieve hope. Employees who possess self-defeating beliefs, better control over their negative thoughts, and remain calm when besieged with stress are optimistic and resilient. Training and development programs related to PsyCap can be incorporated as it helps the employees acquire the skills, knowledge, confidence, and hope, contributing to PsyCap (Abbas & Raja, 2011; Luthans, Avey, Avolio & Peterson, 2010; Luthans, Avey & Patera, 2008; Luthans, Avey, Avolio, Norman & Combs, 2006; 2007).

Direct and Mediating Relationship between the Antecedent and Outcome of Employee Engagement

Psychological Capital and Employee Engagement

In this chapter, employee engagement is the primary variable; past research has shown that PsyCap can help increase employee engagement. However, studies related to the same are very minimal. Studies are done on different professions, such as electrical engineers, nurses, graduate students, and all findings unanimously showed that the higher PsyCap higher is the engagement level (Nigah, Davis &Hurrell, 2012; Herbert, 2011; Othman & Nasurdin, 2011; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007a); IT(Sihag & Sarikwal, 2014). In this ongoing pandemic, organizations cannot get engaged and committed employees by providing good salaries, better job roles, or adequate training, but need employees

who have high confidence and optimism about the future and should be resilient. Below hypothesis is posited, based on the review discussion;

H₁: *There is a significant and positive influence of psychological capital on employee engagement*

Intent to Stay (IS)

Refers to employees' willingness to stay in a particular organization, the opposite of Intent to leave. Various factors drive the Intention to leave or stay an employee. According to a study by Council (2004), employees with high emotional and rational commitment positively impact Intent to stay. Person- organization fit (P-O fit) (Chew & Chan, 2008); autonomy one receives from the job (Mustapha et al., 2010; Pieterse-Landman, 2012); the variety of skills, task identity, the relevance of task, and also regular feedback (Pieterse-Landman, 2012; Samad, 2006). Turnover intentions changes with industries. The restaurant industry based in Pakistan determined that ethical work climate and servant leadership are positively associated with Intent to stay (Ullah, Yasir, Hamayun, Ullah & Khan, 2021). Another study on Saudi Arabian nurses found that higher work stress and low job satisfaction negatively affect turnover intention (Nassani, Alzamami, Salamah & Alkhamis, 2021).

Employee Engagement and Intent to Stay

According to a report by Right Management (2012), companies must take the initiative to retain employees who have served for a more extended period and are engaged because their experience and knowledge hugely benefit the companies. However, on the other hand, disengaged employees will always be with the "desire to leave." Employee engagement is one of the critical predictors of turnover intentions supported in many studies; engaged employees are less likely to leave the organizations (Shuck, 2019). To have an optimistic intention about the organization, it should have engaged employees (Andrew & Sofian, 2012). Employees who work in an organization with the mindset to quit can affect the work environment negatively. These employees also start exhibiting frequent quarrels with co-workers or managers, low performance, and frequent absenteeism, leading to unfavorable work conditions. Hence it is essential to measure turnover intentions, as it will help the HR managers and other leaders in the organization understand why employees develop such intentions. It allows them to curtail such intentions initially before an employee leaves the organization. The current study also analyzes the relationship between employee engagement and Intent to stay. According to Ongori (2007), employee engagement is recommended to be one of the most robust strategies to reduce or control employee turnover. Based on reviews, the below hypothesis developed:

H₂: *There is a significant and positive influence of employee engagement on the Intent to stay*

The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement between Psychological Capital and Intent to Stay

Intention to leave or stay still continues to interest most researchers. Certain studies have mentioned that PsyCap negatively correlates with turnover intentions (Avey Luthans & Jensen., 2009). It is critical to analyze and discuss that high PsyCap leads to fewer turnover intentions. As discussed earlier, employees high in PsyCap results are more confident, optimistic, and resilient. Also, it inferred that they would be highly involved and immersed in their work (Luthans et al., 2007). As they are high in PsyCap, they

Figure 1. Conceptual model on antecedent and outcome of employee engagement
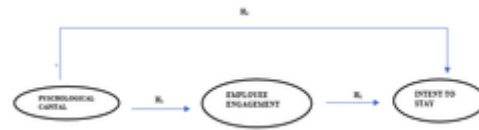
remain dedicated, attached, and hopeful about their successes. Hence it is less likely that they exhibit withdrawal behavior such as intent to leave (Avey Luthans & Jensen., 2009). Thus, the mediating hypothesis developed in this research is;

H₃: *Employee engagement mediates the relationship between psychological capital and Intent to stay*

METHODOLOGY

Research Framework

Based on the reviews and hypotheses formed, the below model has been developed and tested in the current chapter;

Sample Selection and Size

To standardize the population, it considered employees working full time in travel organizations approved and members of IATA/TAAI/UFTAA/IATO/ADTOI or should be recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The research considered samples only from organizations set up for more than a year and employees who have been part of the organization for more than a year. Purposive (Babbie, 2021; Oliver, 2006) and convenience sampling (Gravetter & Forzano, 2015) were the two methods adopted for sample collection, and the final respondents for the study were n=433.

Tools for Data Collection

The study adopted standardized questionnaires on Employee engagement (Soane et al., 2012), Psychological Capital (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007), and Intent to stay (Lyons,1971) were adopted and used for collecting data. The authors were contacted, and after seeking permission, the questionnaire was adopted for the study. A pilot study was conducted on a sample of 60 to measure the reliability and validity in the Indian context. The Cronbach's alpha values for all the scales were good; thus, the investigation proceeded with final data collection without any modification. Data analysis tools used in the present study were descriptive statistics, correlation, independent t-test, one-way ANOVA, and SEM to assess the model's fit.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographic variables	Category	Sample Size (n=433)	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	204	47.1%
	Female	229	52.9%
Age	25-39 yrs	84	19.4%
	40-54 yrs	169	39%
	55-65 yrs	121	27.9%
	66 yrs and above	59	13.6%
Tenure	between 1-2 yrs	88	20.3%
	> 2 yrs- up to 3 yrs	155	35.8%
	> 3 yrs- up to 4 yrs	125	28.9%
	>4 yrs	65	15%

DISCUSSIONS

The demographic profile of the respondents was as follows;

Reliability Statistics

According to Eisinga, TeGrotenhuis, and Pelzer (2013), when a scale consists of multiple items, the most used reliability test is Cronbach's Alpha, as the estimates are accurate, but when the Scale consists of only two items, then these tests are not done as they underestimate the scales' actual reliability. Thus, the authors have suggested using the Spearman-Brown coefficient because the test is average and less biased. The below table shows Cronbach's alpha values;

Descriptive Statistics

The mean score for each construct was computed, and the results are presented in Table 3

Mean Score of Employee Engagement, PsyCap, and Intent to Stay

The mean scores of employee engagement and all the sub-constructs measuring employee engagement lie between 3.56 to 3.89, indicating that employees in the travel industry are intellectually, socially, and affectively engaged. The efficacy score was 4.59, meaning that employees in travel organizations have the confidence to take up the effort and work towards succeeding in challenging tasks. They are also hopeful about growing and performing well in the future, as the mean score for hope was 4.16. Employees also have perseverance in achieving their goals, as their mean score concerning resiliency was 4.06. However, in the case of optimism, the mean score was 3.79, indicating that when employees face problems and adversity, the process of accepting the situation and working towards a goal is slightly less. Employees had a neutral opinion on Intent to stay employees, and the mean score ranged from

Table 2. Reliability statistics of scale

Name of Scale	Numbers of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Employee Engagement	**9**	**.892**
Intellectual engagement	3	.904
Social engagement	3	.900
Affective engagement	3	.892
Psychological Capital	**21**	**.928**
Efficacy	6	.907
Hope	6	.881
Resiliency	5	.868
Optimism	4	.839
Intent to Stay	3	.861

3.3 to 3.48. When asked the employees whether they are willing to stay with the company for a more extended period, the score attained was only 3.31, which indicates they are ready to wait a little longer but not as long as they can.

Testing the Measurement Model

There are two stages involved in SEM: (i) the measurement model or known as Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and (ii) the Structural model (Jayasinghe-Mudalige, Udugama & Ikram, 2012).

Table 3. Mean scores of employee engagement, PsyCap, and Intent to stay

Employee engagement dimensions	Mean
Intellectual engagement	3.89
Social engagement	3.56
Affective engagement	3.78
Overall mean	**3.74**
Psychological capital dimensions	**Mean**
Efficacy	4.59
Hope	4.16
Resiliency	4.06
Optimism	3.79
Overall mean	**4.15**
Intent to stay items	**Mean**
If I were completely free to choose, I would prefer to continue working in this company	3.41
I would you like to stay in this company for a long time	3.31
If I had to quit work for a while (for personal reasons), I would return to this company.	3.48
Overall mean	**3.39**

CFA helps to understand if each item is measuring the construct. According to Jayasinghe-Mudalige, Udugama, and Ikram (2012), the measurement model help to (i) Identify the item for each construct and (ii) measure the reliability of each construct to estimate their causal relationship. As a first step, a measurement model was constructed to test the construct validity and discriminant validity of employee engagement, psychological capital, and Intent to stay.Testing measurement model for employee engagement, psychological capital, and Intent to stay.

Employee Engagement

The standardized factor loadings for all items ranged between .80 and .95, in the accepted range. The critical ratios of all employee engagement items were above 2.58 and thus significant at 0.01. Both unstandardized and standardized estimates are shown in table 9, and figure 2 illustrates the model of employee engagement with the standardized estimates.

Figure 2. Measurement model of employee engagement with standardized estimates
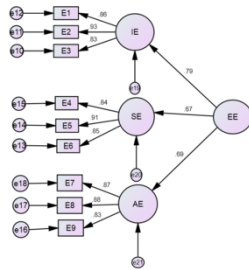
Table 4. Model fit summary of employee engagement

Fit statistics values	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA
	3.342	.962	.929	.980	.969	.980	.030	.074

The fit indices of the model assessed and the results of fit statistics shown in table 4 were found to be good and are within the accepted range; analysis indicated that the model had a good fit and was considered for further analysis.

Psychological Capital

Factor loadings of three items were below .50; the fit indices value was unacceptable. Thus, the three items, i.e., PsyCap13, PsyCap20, and PsyCap23 which had low factor loadings, were dropped, and the measurement model was re-assessed. The fit indices values were adequate and considered for further analysis.

Figure 3. Modified measurement model of psychological capital with standardized estimates
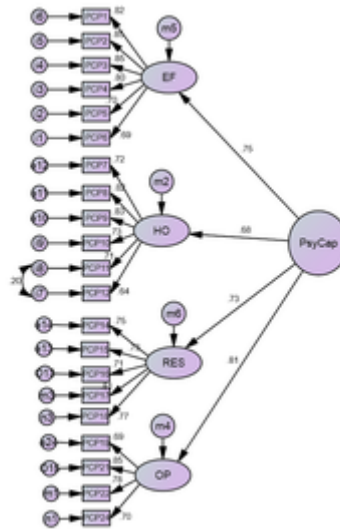
Table 5. Modified model fit summary of psychological capital

Fit statistics values	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA
	2.62	.913	.878	.943	.904	.943	.054	.061

Intent to Stay

The scale measuring intent to stay consisted of three items; SEM requires a minimum of four items (Muliak and Millsap, 2000). If the items are less than four, then the possibility of increasing the likelihood of problems with interpretational confounding and increasing the higher probability of estimation problems can arise. The factor loadings were checked, and all three items loaded between .765 and .882, which is good and considered for further analysis.

Testing the Path and the Hypothesized Model

The results of the hypothesis model are shown in table 6, fit indices of the overall model in table 7, and the hypothesized structural model are shown in figure 3. The regression weight of the paths between psychological capital (PsyCap) and employee engagement (B=.267); employee engagement and Intent to stay (IS) (B=.897). All paths were accepted as positive and significant at a significance level of 0.01 (99%). The fit of the hypothesized model was assessed; fit indices values are presented in table 4.29. Correlation between employee engagement and psychological capital (r= .324), employee engagement, and Intent to stay (r=.595) indicate a positive and moderate relationship.

Table 6. Results of the proposed paths in the model

Direct Effect	Unstandardized estimates (B)	S.E	C.R	P	Standardized estimates (β)
PsyCap--->EE	.267	.056	4.776	***	.298
EE-------> IS	.897	.101	8.848	***	.649

*** Significant at 0.01

Table 7. Model fit summary of structural model

Fit statistics values	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA
	2.190	.903	.913	.889	.901	.908	.061	.052

Figure 4. Hypothesized structural model with standardized estimates
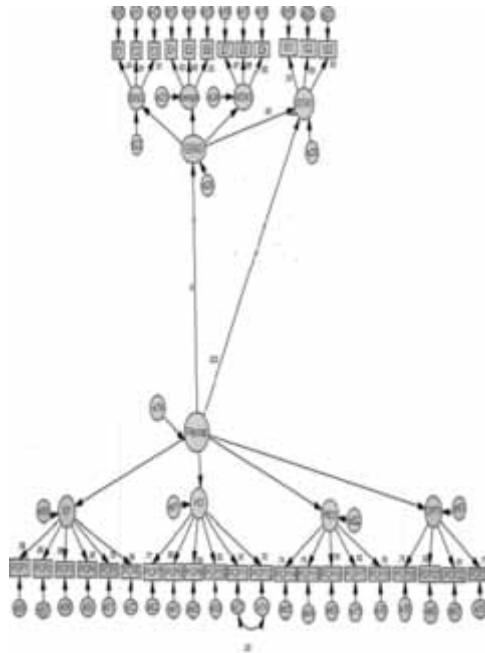
Psychological Capital and Employee Engagement

Employees with a positive attitude are essential in all sectors. However, the need for it is more concerning in labor-intensive industries such segments as travel agents and tour operators. Employees become part and parcel of their customers' experience (Saltten & Mehmetoglu, 2011). Thus, employees' frame of mind, temperament, and behavior become vital as they can significantly impact productivity, service

quality, and customer satisfaction (Salanova, Agut & Peiro., 2005). The data analysis shows that the PsyCap of employees working in these travel organizations is high.

The second hypothesis was to test whether psychological capital and employee engagement are positively related. The study determined a significant positive relationship between psychological capital and employee engagement which supported the findings of previous studies. A study based in India on IT employees conducted by Sihag and Sarikwal (2014) on a sample size of 420 found that psychological capital increases the engagement level of the employees. Many researchers also carried out studies based on psychological capital and employee engagement in the hotel industry. A few are a study by Paek, Schuckert, Kim, and Lee (2015) conducted on five-star hotels. Another study based on four and five-star hotels set up in Romania also found optimism is the best predictor, followed by resilience, efficacy, and hope (Karatepe & Karadas, 2015).

Employee Engagement and Intent to Stay

Every organization experiences turnover, but it becomes a problem when high turnover is the case in a service industry like travel organizations. Higher attrition results in adverse outcomes such as delay in work, high operational cost, and lesser productivity. Addressing these issues has been the primary concern for most organizations. When a company has a high operating cost there, revenues are affected. Thus, companies need to devise a plan that helps tackle these issues and increase the retention of employees. Data showed that employee engagement positively relates to intent to stay, supported by previous research (Moore, Durst, Ritter, Nobregar & Barkema, 2020). A call center called KFFS introduced programs related to engagement, and the results showed a reduction in turnover from 52% to 34%(Work Foundation, 2014). The direct relationship between PsyCap and intent to stay was insignificant, but employee engagement positively mediated the association. This is because when employees are positive about them, they tend to become more engaged in work, and when engaged, the reasons to quit reduce to a great extent.

Mediating Effect of Employee Engagement between Psychological Capital and Intent to Stay

The mediation results of employee engagement between psychological capital and Intent to stay are presented in Table 8, and the model shown in figure 5

The regression coefficient of the total effect is B= .445, which is positive and significant. The regression coefficient of direct effect, PsyCap on Intent to stay, is B= .003 is insignificant. The indirect effect of PsyCap on Intent to stay through employee engagement is B= .442 and is significantly different from zero at the 0.01 level (p=.000). Thus, to conclude, employee engagement mediates between PsyCap and Intent to stay. Hence the alternate H_3 is accepted, and the null hypothesis rejected.

H$_4$: *There is a significant difference among demographic profiles such as gender, age, and tenure with employee engagement*

H$_{4a}$: *There is a significant difference between gender and employee engagement*

The independent sample t-test, t-test for equality of means, indicated no association between the mean of employee engagement for males and females (t=.544, p=.587), which is greater than 0.05. Thus null hypothesis is accepted.

H$_{4b}$: *There is a significant difference between age and employee engagement*

Figure 5. Three variable mediation model between employee engagement, psychological capital, and Intent to stay
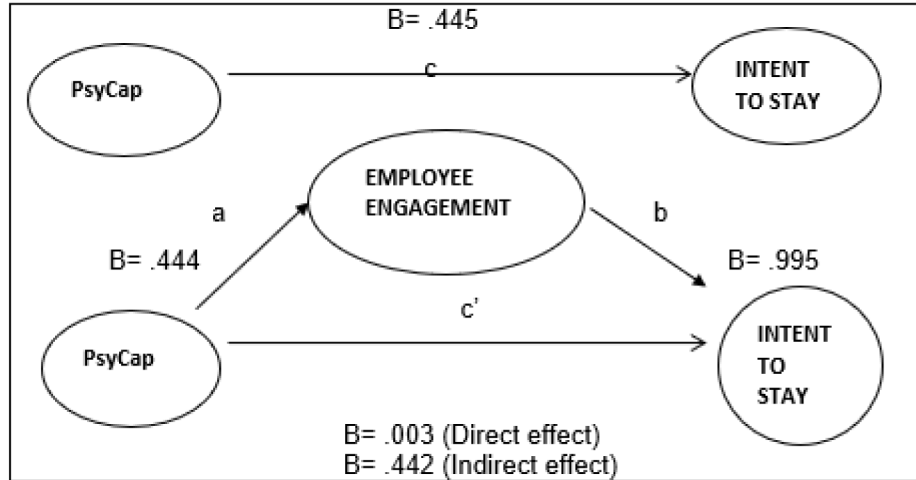
The mean score of employee engagement across all age groups has the only minimal difference, and the sig value is .548, which is greater than 0.05, signifying no association between employee engagement and age.

H$_{4c}$: *There is a significant difference between tenure and employee engagement*

Engagement levels across employee tenure were minimal, with a sig value of .868, greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference in employee engagement among different tenure in the organization.

Table 8. Mediating effect of employee engagement between psychological capital and Intent to stay

Test for mediation- Indirect effect (Bootstrap samples=5000 and Confidence Interval= 95%)								
			95% Confidence Interval					
Effect	B	SE	Bias Corrected			Percentile Method		
			LB	UB	P	LB	UB	P
c	.445	.097	.268	.651	.000	.268	.651	.000
c'	.003	.089	-.163	.191	.952	-.167	.185	.988
a*b	.442	.094	.281	.653	.000	.273	.644	.000

Table 9. Difference among gender and employee engagement

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
EE	Male	204	3.834	.829	.058
	Female	229	3.789	.866	.057

44

Table 10.

Independent Samples Test				
			EE	
			Equal variances assumed	Equal variances not assumed
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	F		.253	
	Sig.		.615	
t-test for Equality of Means	T		.544	.546
	Df		431	428.771
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.587**	.586
	Mean Difference		.04446	.04446
	Std. Error Difference		.08170	.08149
	95% C. I of the Difference	Lower	-.11612	-.11571
		Upper	.20503	.20462

**Significant at .05

IMPLICATION

Theory Implication

The reviews revealed a dearth of academic research on the relationship between the predictors and outcomes of employee engagement regarding travel organizations. Studies on employee engagement in the hotel industry (Singh, 2016), manufacturing sector (Ali., Asrar-ul-Haq, Amin, Noor, Haris-ul-Ma-

Table 11. Difference between age and employee engagement

Descriptive								
Age	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% C. I for mean		Min	Max
					LB	UB		
25-39	84	3.791	.924	.101	3.590	3.992	1.56	5.00
40-54	169	3.869	.776	.060	3.751	3.987	1.56	5.00
55-65	121	3.726	.930	.084	3.559	3.894	1.56	5.00
66 and above	59	3.842	.758	.099	3.644	4.039	1.78	5.00
Total	433	3.810	.848	.041	3.730	3.890	1.56	5.00
ANOVA								
	Sum of Squares		Df	Mean Square		F		Sig.
Betwee4n Groups	1.528		3	.509		.707		.548**
Within Groups	309.037		429	.720				
Total	310.565		432					

**Significant at .05

Table 12. Difference between tenure and employee engagement

					95% C.I for mean			
Descriptive								
	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	LB	UB	Min	Max
1- up to 2 yrs	88	3.764	.873	.093	3.579	3.945	1.67	5.00
> 2 yrs- up to 3 yrs	155	3.803	.904	.073	3.659	3.947	1.56	5.00
> 3 yrs- up to 4 yrs	125	3.816	.795	.071	3.675	3.957	1.78	5.00
> 4 yrs	65	3.880	.785	.097	3.686	4.075	1.56	5.00
Total	433	3.810	.848	.041	3.730	3.891	1.56	5.00

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.521	3	.174	.240	.868**
Within Groups	310.044	429	.723		
Total	310.565	432			

**Significant at .05

hasbi & Aslam, 2020), banking sector (Gupta, Ganguli & Ponnam, 2015), and many other industries exist. However, there are no substantial studies conducted on travel organizations, specifically in India. Hence, these findings concerning travel organizations contribute to the theory of employee engagement, Psychological Capital (PsyCap), and Intent to stay.

Firstly, the study tested the relationships between psychological capital and employee engagement. Evidence showed that PsyCap is essential in determining employee engagement, especially concerning travel organizations because this is one such sector where human resources drive the business entirely. Unlike the IT, engineering, or banking sector, which depends to a greater extent on technology, travel organizations are all about human resources. Thus, it becomes essential that the self-confident and optimistic employees perceive the work environment provided, consequently helping them become engaged.

Secondly, the study also tested the association between employee engagement and intent to stay. The findings proved that highly engaged employees rarely think about leaving an organization. Intent to stay being a common problem for all companies can thus be tackled more efficiently by keeping their employees engaged

Thirdly, the study examined the mediating effect of employee engagement between the antecedent and outcome variables and the results supported by previous research. The direct impact of PsyCap on intent to stay was negative, and when employee engagement mediated, the indirect effect was significant and positive. Thus, we can infer that employee engagement becomes very important, and it positively correlates with many positive organizational outcomes.

Practical Implication

Implications indicate the necessity for industrialists, policymakers, and HR managers to understand the importance of employee engagement. The findings also benefit from designing the most appropriate strategy, which helps achieve employee engagement. Employees working in the travel sector are

constantly confronted with problems and concerns from the customers; to deal with this calls for a high level of confidence, hope, and a positive attitude. Organizations can also develop strategies and programs to ensure that employees are highly engaged. Psychological Capital (PsyCap) and employee engagement indicated a positive and significant relationship in the current research. The nature of employees working in travel organizations is that they are involved in the problem management process. Thus, employees with high PsyCap will be able to manage it more efficiently. Therefore, it is essential for travel organizations to measure the PsyCap level of employees working in their organization as a low PsyCap level can be enhanced through training (Abbas & Raja, 2011; Luthans et al., 2006; 2007; Luthans et al., 2008; Luthans et al., 2010). Employees experience bulk travel, travel emergencies, and unanticipated customer schedule changes during the peak season. Employees need to be confident and resilient enough to handle such situations smoothly, and therefore organization needs to take steps to provide constant training to increase their psychological capital. From the observation, it is clear that employees working in these sectors have a high intention to leave due to varied reasons such as low pay, unfavorable working conditions, and unclear career paths leading to disengagement. Thus, the tourism industry generally sees a high turnover rate, making the sector unattractive for seeking job opportunities. One way to tackle these challenges is by making the disengaged employees engaged. When employees are engaged, their intentions to leave an organization reduces.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the research findings are restricted only to one sector concerning a single city, future research can focus on travel operators across India and other sectors. Studying a broader sample helps get a bigger picture of the engagement level of employees in the tourism industry. Further studies can also incorporate other relevant antecedent variables such as organizational commitment, job autonomy, to mention a few, and outcome variables, which helps develop a more suitable employee engagement model.

LIMITATIONS

The study had certain limitations; Firstly, the study was geographically limited to a single city in Karnataka; hence it is hard to generalize the finding to the entire tourism industry. Secondly, employee engagement is driven by various factors, but the current study has only considered a PsyCap as an antecedent variable and the same in the outcome variable were only intent to stay is measured. The respondents were employees belonging to travel operators, but other sub-sectors should have also been considered in the study to understand better.

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicated that the engagement level of the existing employees working in travel sectors is high though the attrition rate is on the higher side. From the reviews, it is evident that a single strategy alone does not help attain engagement. It is also challenging to keep the employees engaged. However, without a doubt, this is a requirement to withstand the market competition. Chitra and Badri-

nath (2012) have mentioned that employee engagement is considered a powerful weapon against competitors. Thus, it is an eye-opener for corporates, HR professionals, and industrialists to understand and realize the importance of measuring employees' engagement levels at frequent intervals. Together with it, measuring their psychological capital becomes essential, and strategies and policies to be formulated such that their PsyCap level and engagement level is high among employees.

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Chapter 4
Employee–Based Brand Equity and Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT

Employee-based brand equity (EBBE) is a term that has recently emerged in the business world. Many organizations are placing a strong emphasis on the development of their personnel to efficiently deliver brand promises and acquire a competitive advantage over their competitors. Therefore, this chapter examines the EBBE from various perspectives to improve the firms' competitive advantages and long-term profitability. As a result, prior literature identified some critical factors as the dimensions of the EBBE, such as the employee brand knowledge effects, internal brand management, and benefits of EBBE that help the organizations in increasing their competitive advantages to sustain their businesses in competitive markets. Similarly, some critical factors help the firms in improving their employee's satisfaction. Thus, organizations should concentrate their efforts and resources on developing internal brand strategies (EBBE) in order to boost their external branding strategies (CBBE). As a result, they can develop sustainable competitive advantages in order to flourish in markets.

INTRODUCTION

It is not easy to achieve long-term competitive advantages by providing functional and tangible benefits in today's fragmented and competitive marketplaces. Earlier studies suggested that competitive advantages can be acquired through improving an organization's overall productivity, for example, through skill and knowledge development (King & Grace, 2010; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). While functional advantages may be copied, emotional advantages can be used to obtain a competitive advantage. Thus, corporations seek

competitive advantage by leveraging functional and emotional benefits in today's era (Altaf et al., 2021; King & Grace, 2010). In general, successful brands have a high level of brand equity, and successful companies have a higher level of brand quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and brand credibility (Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006).

Previously, brands were defined as the entity, trademark, or logo that served to represent a company's product or service in a competitive environment (Mustaqiem et al., 2021). Employees of the organization can rely on and manage brand implications by creating and maintaining brand characters and values. Nowadays, brands have widened their definitions to include stakeholders, such as shareholders, customers, suppliers, employees, etc. (Kim et al., 2011). Firms are developing their brands in various ways in the contemporary age. These brands can be classified into two external and internal categories, i.e., consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) and employee-based brand equity (EBBE) (King & Grace, 2009). CBBE is wholly focused on the customer, also referred to as external brand management (Keller, 1993). The second internal brand category is EBBE, primarily concerned with the employees' perspective; it is also referred to as internal brand management (King & Grace, 2010). As a result, these brand categories have contributed to the organization's growth and have developed into significant sources of sustained competitive advantage (Smith et al., 2021; Veloutsou & Delgado-Ballester, 2018). To thrive in a competitive market area, employees must be aligned with the firm's value offer. When employees perceive the required brand quality in accordance with the apparent nature of the brand guarantee, the employee brand equity model indicates that customer satisfaction is achieved (Simi, 2014). It is critical for an organization to empower its employees in terms of brand equity in order to be dominant in external markets. To successfully execute internal branding initiatives such as EBBE, employee relationships with customers are critical since it results in customer satisfaction in brand understanding and communication. Several researchers emphasized the importance of brands as a competitive advantage for SMEs in order to ensure their long-term success (A. Muhammad et al., 2019; Mustaqiem et al., 2021; Safeer et al., 2018; Safeer et al., 2019).

Given the significance of brand equity, it is clear that organizational success has become increasingly dependent on employee performance in recent years. Due to the high level of competition, firms must foster a sense of pride among their employees. Similarly, employee performance has become increasingly important (Kumar et al., 2021). EBBE is a ground-breaking concept that enables organizations to significantly increase their overall productivity (Preetha & Murugesan, 2020). EBBE has a wide range of actions depending on the industry, and these actions must be carried out to ensure the organization's success (Poulis & Wisker, 2016). For example, considering the service industry, it has been widely accepted that customer experiences with an organization are primarily determined by their interactions with its employees, who have the power to build and maintain customer-based brand equity; enhancing EBBE critical to gaining a competitive edge in the market (Maleki Minbashrazgah et al., 2021; Schlager et al., 2011). Similarly, organizational trust can be built by connecting employer and employee activities. Likewise, an organization's trustworthiness can be increased by fostering favorable relationships between its employees and management. Such trustworthy relationships can be exploited to develop customer-centric branding strategies (Alshathry et al., 2017; Safeer, Chen, et al., 2021; Safeer, He, Lin, et al., 2021; Safeer, Yuanqiong, et al., 2021).

EBBE is cognitive psychological and should not be confused with employer branding in the sense of Employer-of-Choice Branding. Rather than that, it is an Employee-of-Choice Brand, where the employee understands the brand and then communicates it to the customers. Additionally, this methodology reflects the employees' reaction to such cognizance. Previous studies propose that EBBE as an internal branding

strategy is advantageous for CBBE (Benraiss-Noailles & Viot, 2021; King, 2017). Prior literature has emphasized the customer and shareholder perspectives but has not adequately addressed employees' brand equity role. Thus, the literature on the efficiency of internal brand management in terms of employee perceptions of brand equity remains insufficient (Fathya, 2021; King & Grace, 2010). According to Barros-Arrieta and García-Cali (2021), firms tend to prioritize external branding despite the growing importance of EBBE as an internal branding strategy. As a result, many scholars have emphasized the critical role of EBBE in competitiveness and urged for additional research on internal branding (EBBE) (Altaf et al., 2021; Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020; Piehler et al., 2019).

The current study assumes that the company's employees have the knowledge of the brand, and based on their attitudes and behavior, they proceed employee-based brand equity model (EBBEM). The most influential element in EBBEM is the ownership of the brand by the employees in carrying forward the brand image connecting with the Customer-Based Brand Equity Model (CBBEM). According to Keller (1993), brand equity, whether customer-based or employee-based, uses the cognitive aspect of psychology in which thoughts are inter-exchanged to comprehend the brand and building proprietorship. When an employee is associated with the company's brand, the employee's behaviors automatically signal the same in terms of interpreting brand creditability and quality (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020). This chapter contributes in the following way:

First, this chapter strengthens the EBBE by incorporating conceptual and empirical studies on the organization's competitive advantages.

Second, this chapter offers solutions and recommendations by highlighting the scope of EBBE's dimensions affecting organizations' competitive advantages.

Finally, this chapter suggests future research directions for improving the EBBE in the context of organizations' competitive advantages.

BACKGROUND

Earlier research has demonstrated that branding strategies are shifting away from customer-based brand equity as a source of competitiveness toward employee-based brand equity (Erkmen, 2018). Since the early 1990s, the realm of brand equity has expanded to include both financial and perception-based brand equity. Brand equity in terms of finance is concerned with the inflows and outflows of monetary value, whereas brand equity in terms of perception is concerned with cognitive and economic perspectives (Piehler et al., 2019; Tasci, 2021). Thus, brand equity is directed at consumers, customers, and employees. Some studies have indicated that employees contribute far more to brand equity than customers, which indirectly affects financial brand equity (Dechawatanapaisal, 2019; Tasci, 2021). King and Grace (2009) described EBBE as "the differential effect that brand knowledge has on an employee's response to their work environment, requires the translation of the brand identity in a way that is meaningful to the employee in the context of their roles and responsibilities." Therefore, EBBE enables employees to acquire knowledge about the business and its brands, thereby assisting in retaining and inspiring employees to perform at a high level to deliver on brand promises. As a result, they help build overall brand equity.

Prior research demonstrated that the EBBE is a novel idea that has become increasingly relevant for business branding in recent years (Altaf et al., 2021; Benraiss-Noailles & Viot, 2021; Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020). According to Barros-Arrieta and García-Cali (2021), several researchers demonstrated that employees represent the firms' faces, and their behaviors heavily influence how custom-

ers perceive brands. Thus, the benefits of EBBE are viewed as the foundation for improving financial performance and customer satisfaction, as they demonstrate whether the first loop in the service-profit chain, namely the employee, is capable of creating and maintaining the subsequent loops, particularly regarding profitability and customer satisfaction (Maleki Minbashrazgah et al., 2021). When we incorporate the brand management component of internal orientation as internal branding, in which workers and external stakeholders work cooperatively, the ideal corporate brand image is seen by customers (Medis, 2021; Safeer, He, & Abrar, 2021). Past research highlighted the EBBE dimensions such as brand awareness, brand commitment, role clarity, corporate social responsibility, perceived organizational prestige, organizational trust, internal brand involvement, psychological-based contractual obligations, brand importance, environmental-based perceived uncertainty, brand image, and perceived quality as critical factors (Bataineh et al., 2017; Erkmen, 2018; King & Grace, 2009). These aspects are directly or indirectly related to the firm's competitive advantage, such as external rewards, customer-based brand equity, and firm performance. Thus, continuing analyses have begun to recognize the critical nature of customer contact with personnel in conveying the brand promises. Erkmen (2018) emphasized that there is still a need to comprehend internal brand strategies, particularly EBBE, in order to improve brand comprehension. Likewise, other authors emphasized the importance of employee competencies in terms of brand citizenship behavior, the human (H) factor, positive employee word of mouth (WOM), role clarity, brand commitment, employee satisfaction, and knowledge dissemination for a firm's competitiveness (Nogueira et al., 2020).

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

The notion of EBBE is extremely important, and numerous authors have called for additional research into the subject (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020; Maleki Minbashrazgah et al., 2021; Medis, 2021). The majority of experts agreed that companies must continue to study their employees' behavior in terms of their knowledge about corporate brands in order to deliver on their brand promises successfully. Numerous strategies for establishing employee-based brand equity to achieve competitive advantages have been covered in previous literature. The human (H) factor and brand citizenship behavior are more significant concepts to consider. Other concepts consider to include employee WOM, brand commitment, role clarity, and knowledge distribution, as well as employee satisfaction (Jayampathi & Dissanayake, 2018; Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009; King & Grace, 2009, 2010; Maleki Minbashrazgah et al., 2021). Given the significance of this subject, this chapter will concentrate on strengthening the EBBE by incorporating conceptual and empirical research on competitive organizational advantages. Similarly, this chapter broadens the scope of EBBE's dimensions affecting an organization's competitive advantage. Finally, this chapter makes solutions and recommendations and discusses future study topics for optimizing the EBBE in light of an organization's competitive advantages.

Issues, Controversies, Problems

Despite the fact that there is a sufficient amount of literature on EBBE, many researchers believe that this concept should be investigated in greater depth (Smith et al., 2021). In a similar vein, several scholars believe that EBBE is experiencing a resurgence in terms of internal management perspective. This concept should be rigorously examined from the viewpoint of internal stakeholders, which is unfortunately

underrepresented in the literature (Fathya, 2021; Ngo et al., 2020; Smith et al., 2021). Thus, there is a dearth of knowledge, particularly from internal stakeholders' perspectives (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020), and EBBE is helpful to improve the competitive organizational advantages.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the significance of EBBE, it is necessary to discuss and recommend its dimensions, including employee brand knowledge effects, internal brand management, and EBBE benefits (Maleki Minbashrazgah et al., 2021). Each dimension of EBBE plays a significant role and contributes to the organization's competitive advantages and performance.

Employee Brand Knowledge Effects

While the benefits of employee brand equity are reflected in employee intents and acts, understanding the motivations and decisions that underpin these observed actions is regarded as equally important as enjoying the benefits themselves (Schiffman et al., 2005). Thus, the evaluation of the knowledge benefits conferred on an employee based on brand knowledge provision is deemed significant to the EBBE conception. Therefore, brand knowledge emerged in terms of role clarity and brand commitment among employees (see figure 1).

Role Clarity

Role clarity is the consequence of the dissemination of knowledge necessary for an employee to effectively perform their role in carrying the brand image and promises in accordance with management expectations. If there is ambiguity in the definition of roles, ambiguity arises in job performance and brand perception to the external market (Karkkola et al., 2019). Prior research revealed that brand ambiguity might occur due to role non-clarity, resulting in negative consequences towards brand commitment and brand citizenship behavior (King & Grace, 2010). Bataineh et al. (2017) operationalized the concept of work role clarity as a stimulus for brand knowledge. A high level of awareness of the company's brand image and its commitments to its consumers enables employees to be confident and loyal when expressing the company's brand image. According to Piehler et al. (2019), when employees clearly understand their roles, they can interact effectively with the external market and depict values that are true to the brand and consistent with internal marketing strategies. This in turn will help to build the brand. As increased role congruence results in decreased role conflict, the employee is better able to explain what the consumer expects, which aligns with the brand promises.

Naseri et al. (2021) recently demonstrated that role clarity could improve employee behavior and performance, and role ambiguity can impair employee behavior and performance. Thus, proper comprehension is required to manage the staff's requirements and needs in relation to their obligations. Role clarity improves the organization's performance and brand image, which provides organizations with a competitive advantage. Likewise, when employees are satisfied with their job roles and responsibilities, they will better understand the work and deliver results to improve the firm's competitiveness. Clarity of roles results in great employee satisfaction and a clear grasp of delivering on the brand's promises (Bataineh et al., 2017; Naseri et al., 2021). Consequently, employee role clarity synchronizes knowledge

Figure 1. EBBE dimensions
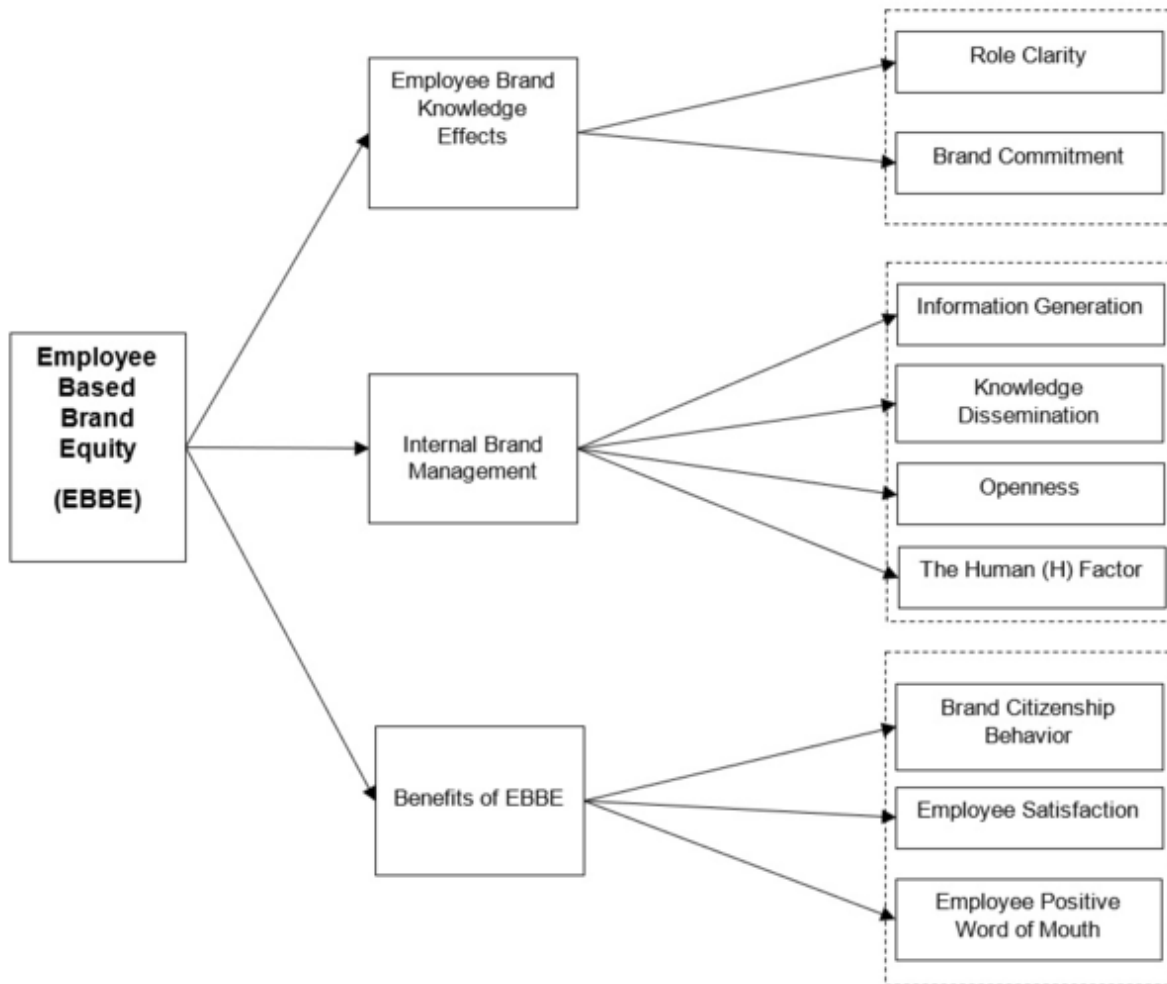
dissemination. It positively impacts organizations' external stakeholders, resulting in increased customer satisfaction, a positive brand image, and competitive advantages, which are essential for long-term organizational success.

Brand Commitment

Brand commitment is an emotional attachment that contributes to the development of psychological bonds between employees and brands, resulting in an employee's brand citizenship behavior (Piehler et al., 2019). According to Naseri et al. (2021), brand commitment is an emotional factor, as commitment is essential in determining organizational loyalty, and organizational loyalty benefits both organizations and customers. Prior research has confirmed that brand commitment is a critical component of EBBE (King & Grace, 2010; King et al., 2012; Naseri et al., 2021). Likewise, when employees are enthusiastic about brands and work diligently to attain the required goals. As a result of these efforts,

the firm's competitiveness increases. Psychologically, employees are perceived to be more connected to the organization and are motivated to work more closely with the company brand and its brand image in order to accomplish the brand's objectives. Brand Commitment is a critical component of establishing a strong connection with the consumer and significantly impacts employee fulfillment and brand citizenship behavior. Consumer loyalty to products or services, as well as a psychological relationship with the employee as a result of both sides' brand commitment, result in increased responsibility, repeat purchases, and recommendations of the products to others (Bataineh et al., 2017). Thus, a positive relationship demonstrates that satisfaction is a commitment to the employer, organization, work function, brand promises, and value. The brand commitment encourages employees to stay with the organization for an extended period. As a result, brand commitment has a beneficial effect on customer satisfaction, positive word of mouth, and EBBE (Naseri et al., 2021).

Brand commitment connects internal and external marketing strategies by requiring employees to communicate brand values consistently to customers, so establishing a win-win situation and fostering a healthy relationship between the organization and the external market (Alshathry et al., 2017; Benraiss-Noailles & Viot, 2021; Naseri et al., 2021). Brand commitment is the employee's psychological state of satisfaction with the brand. Brand commitment ensures that brand responsibility is operationalized in its genuine sense, boosting firm performance, consumer or customer satisfaction, and minimizing employee turnover (Barros-Arrieta & García-Cali, 2021; Park et al., 2019). As a result, brand loyalty increases a firm's competitive advantages over time, ensuring the business's long-term sustainability in the market (Abrar et al., 2019).

Internal Brand Management

EBBE indicates a recognition of the current brand knowledge that employees possess as active market participants and a desire to turn that brand knowledge into a way that aids employees to succeed. In another sense, to provide employees with the necessary brand understanding to deliver on the brand promise. From this viewpoint, information generation aims to guide organizational activities by improving existing employee brand cognitive structure knowledge. On the other hand, at the level of knowledge dissemination, the emphasis is on converting brand information into meaningful and relevant terms to the employee's task. This information facilitation is deemed necessary for employees to comprehend their involvement in delivering the brand promise. Internal brand management comprises four components: information generation, knowledge dissemination, openness, and the human (H) factor (see figure 1).

Information Generation

Employees recognize their value due to management's intentional acquisition of knowledge about their job requirements and assurance that they can be transparent. However, information accessibility exists only in an environment where management recognizes and promotes employees' efforts (Amangala & Amangala, 2013). Organizations that value employee feedback supports their employees in providing meaningful information that enhances their knowledge and long-term organizational success (King & Grace, 2010). To develop effective internal communications that ultimately result in a shift in employee behavior, firms must first understand employee skills, wants, and needs (Lings, 2004). The information generation helps the firm create internal products or services that employees believe are relevant and meaningful to their responsibilities and tasks. For instance, performing employee research enables firms to

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gain insight into the organizational commitment and employee capabilities (or lack thereof) and serves as an observer regarding customer satisfaction (Awan et al., 2017; King & Grace, 2009). Organizations can respond to internal market needs through initiatives such as improved internal processes and procedures, focused training and development, and improved products and services that meet the end customer's needs. Thus, information generation is a critical component of internal brand management. With efficient external brand management approaches, understanding how the target market realizes and responds to brand management activities facilitates informed decision-making (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020). As a result, firms are better equipped to shape, structure, and deliver brand information (knowledge distribution) necessary for considerate employee behavior associated with the capabilities and wants of the internal market. Consequently, it gives organizations a strategic advantage over their competitors.

Knowledge Dissemination

The practice of utilizing specialized employees with unique skills to gain a competitive edge is antiquated. However, the disseminated knowledge assists organizations in achieving competitive benefits (Agbim & Idris, 2015). Employees acquire knowledge by determining the correct information from within and outside the firm (co-workers and customer feedback). Appropriate use of this information in an employee's work activity helps the organization perform better. Thus, managers must appropriately manage knowledge by assuring that individuals' knowledge is translated into organizational knowledge (Xiong & King, 2019). Employees' roles are deemed critical in relation to the company's brand image. Employee cognition and brand knowledge regarding the company's vision and the promise made to its customers are required for the efficient distribution of knowledge associated with CBBE wants and expectations and employee involvement with EBBE (S. Muhammad et al., 2019; Xiong & King, 2019). According to Fathya (2021), effective brand knowledge dissemination increases employee knowledge, leading to the organization's growth and profitability. In the same way, greater brand knowledge improves the customer and brand experiences. As a result, the distribution of knowledge across employees has a favorable impact on the competitive organizational advantages as well as on its overall brand equity. (Dechawatanapaisal, 2019; Ngo et al., 2020).

Brand knowledge may assist the employee in overcoming obstacles encountered when connecting with customers, thereby transforming the brand's vision into reality. Similarly, brand knowledge can assist the employee to cope-up with the challenges that are faced during communicating with customers, turning the vision of the brand into reality. The sources of knowledge dissemination enable employees to develop a sense of the brand and deliver the message to customers. When employees communicate brand knowledge in a clear and motivating manner, they assist the firm in aligning its internal and external branding strategies (Simi, 2014). Prior research demonstrated that information sharing is helpful to build up an information-driven society (Yang & Yen, 2021). Thus, knowledge distribution was a significant source of competitive advantage due to its ability to improve employee performance and business competitiveness. As a result, it is clear that employee behavior has a strong correlation with brand knowledge, and managers should guarantee that employees possess the necessary information to fulfil their job functions in branding the firm's image, resulting in organizational performance (Xiong & King, 2019; Yang & Yen, 2021).

Openness

To ensure that information is sent properly and interpreted correctly, the recipient (the employee) should be ready to receive it. Thus, openness refers to features of the organizational commitment that are critical in ensuring that employees are receptive to the organization and, accordingly, to its customers (King & Grace, 2009). The distinctive characteristics of openness are amplified by perceiving openness as an internal brand management feature. Similarly, many streams of marketing and management literature contribute to its definition collectively (Awan et al., 2017; Bell et al., 2004). For example, given the close vicinity of working connections with employees, the management's role, particularly management support, is critical in fostering an open workplace. Because such, management assistance is recognized as important to achieving positive employee outcomes. Thus, openness is a vital component of internal brand management. Additionally, socialization of the organization, or the process through which employees develop an understanding of the organization's values and beliefs and the following expectations placed on them through the organization, is recognized as a critical aspect in enhancing employee responsiveness (King & Grace, 2009; Naudé et al., 2003).

Employee attitude toward their job is regarded as another critical factor in minimizing communication distortion. Employee attitude, determined by how they perceive their treatment as an organization member, affects an employee's job satisfaction (Bataineh et al., 2017). Considering that employees should be eager to accept information created by the firm in order to develop adequate brand knowledge, a good employee attitude toward their employment is critical. Additionally, it is conceived that employee involvement is essential to the development of an atmosphere that is open to organizational information. Likewise, employee involvement refers to the degree to which employees participate actively in company objectives, such as giving feedback or shaping consumer-based decisions when given the opportunity. This type of involvement is seen to improve an employee's commitment to the organization, hence increasing their responsiveness to such information (Awan et al., 2017; Kashive & Khanna, 2017).

The Human (H) Factor

According to King and Grace (2010), the Human (H) factor is defined as the organization's perception of its employees in terms of dignity, cooperation, effective communication, trustworthiness, and support for a win-win situation between the organization and the employee. It also reflects the social considerations necessary for effective trade, which is beneficial for representing the internal market (EBBE). Thus, the H-factor eliminates the barrier between employers, thereby facilitating transactions that result in excellent organizational performance. The human factor is critical in reflecting societal compassion for profitable trades, which results in positive employee behavior and EBBE (Awan et al., 2017). Human resource management should prioritize employee treatment to reflect the relationship considerations necessary for successful exchanges to ensure that the H-factor functions well. Naseri et al. (2021) demonstrated that "the level of interest and investment of organization and employees, the feeling of respect and regard of agents inside the association and the degree of employees' trust in organization inside the association, and so forth" With the affirmation of employees' involvement in branding, there has been a trend toward embracing EBBE strategies.

Human factors competencies are critical components of a firm's sustained competitive advantage. If an organization understands how human resources contribute to its profitability, it can be valued and managed appropriately. The way businesses interact with their employees can have an effect on their

performance (King & Grace, 2009). Employee participation, employee empowerment, and performance-based compensation are all widely regarded to improve a firm's competitiveness. The execution of the H-factor is facilitated by the firm's strategic leadership vision, which fosters unity, pride, and proprietorship in employees, motivating them to perform at their best in terms of customer satisfaction, product or service quality, efficiency, and cost reduction (Mangi, 2009). According to Stor and Haromszeki (2020), an organization's execution and intensity are increasingly dependent on its information resources and employee competencies. As a result, organizations should focus on increasing their H-factor by facilitating communication between employees and top management, aligning organizational objectives through employee engagement, and empowering employees to improve the organization's competitiveness, productivity, and overall brand equity.

Benefits of EBBE

Within this perspective, the benefits expected by firms that implement internal brand management strategies are found in the employees' attitudes and associated behavioral intentions. This is due to the fact that behavioral intentions are regarded as indications of the likelihood of a favorable relationship with management continuing in the long term (Bloemer & Odekerken-Schröder, 2006; King & Grace, 2010). The importance of discovering EBBE benefits stems from the fact that such benefits are widely regarded as the underpinning for improving financial performance and customer satisfaction (King & Grace, 2009). There are primarily three components, which are as follows: brand citizenship behavior, customer satisfaction, and positive word of mouth.

Brand Citizenship Behaviors

Brand citizenship behavior is a relatively new yet critical concept that elucidates how employees can increase their brand's performance by aligning their attitudes and behavior. When employees develop a sense of belonging to a brand, they will endeavor to improve their behavior and disposition to reflect the brand's value (Barros-Arrieta & García-Cali, 2021; Medis, 2021). According to Piehler et al. (2016), brand citizenship behavior is an employee's behavior that corresponds to the brand's identification and the promises kept by the brand, thereby strengthening the brand's positioning. Similarly, brand citizenship behavior is a multidimensional construct that covers brand compliance, brand endorsement, and brand development in terms of EBBE or CBBE.

Previous research revealed that BCB is important from a brand positioning perspective. Likewise, brand knowledge and BCB contribute to increased employee satisfaction and overall performance (Jayampathi & Dissanayake, 2018). Thus, brand knowledge is required to effectively carry out the brand's promises. When employees are instructed to align their interests with the firm's competitiveness objective, they demonstrate a significant increase in their engagement in brand citizenship behaviors (Medis, 2021). Several researchers have demonstrated that brand-focused employees can demonstrate a favorable disposition and behavior toward the brand, increasing customer satisfaction (Quaratino & Mazzei, 2018). Employees who practice brand citizenship demonstrate an undeniable level of help in building brand equity, pursuing self-advancement in the brand's characteristics, and spreading positive words about the brand (King & Grace, 2009). As a result, BCB communicates with employees internally and externally and delivers on brand promises. Thus, BCB strengthens the organization's competitive advantage and performance relative to competitors.

Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is defined as the overall state of engagement, collaboration, teamwork, resource allocation, and perceived management quality (King & Grace, 2010). Satisfied employees have positive feelings and beliefs about themselves, which benefits the company's image and their job role. To be successful in their job duties, employees must be satisfied with their work, which increases productivity and individual fulfillment (Rashidi & Khanaposhtani, 2017). Similarly, happy employees with their jobs are more motivated to provide high-quality services to their customers. Job satisfaction is beneficial in sustaining customer satisfaction and building confidence between customers and employees (Bataineh et al., 2017). Job satisfaction varies according to the individual demands of each employee. Having positive relationships with the firm, receiving competitive compensation, enjoying favorable working circumstances, having training requirements assessed, advancing in one's career, or obtaining other benefits may increase job satisfaction. A satisfied employee will provide superior customer service and contribute to the brand's image, thereby increasing the firm's productivity (Sageer et al., 2012).

Additionally, human relations specialists believe that the greatest way to ensure employee satisfaction and feelings is to maintain a friendly authoritative climate, for example, by providing independence, investment, and shared trust. Work satisfaction and its accompanying environments are significant because they are harnessing to choose community-oriented execution services beneficial to their brand equity (Davidescu et al., 2020). Earlier research demonstrated a positive relationship between Internal Branding (EBBE) and employee satisfaction, which resulted in higher performance levels. Thus, EBBE assists organizations in aligning their beliefs with their employees, increasing employee satisfaction and decreasing turnover rates (Eid et al., 2019). As a result, satisfied employees and customers help organizations maintain their competitive advantages and performance.

Positive Employee Word of Mouth

According to King and Grace (2010), positive employee word of mouth (WOM) refers to an employee's willingness to extol the brand's virtues and the firm's image in the external market. Previous research indicates the importance of positive employee WOM. Some academics suggest that positive employee WOM substantially impacts customers' minds, either positively or negatively, regarding purchasing behavior (Awan et al., 2017). Many organizations realize the value of WOM, as their market investments and equities have a sizable market share due to their employees' brand correspondence and identification, resulting in satisfied customers. Customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by an employee's belief in the brand image. Previously, customers were educated about companies through advertisements. Still, it is now recognized that employees WOM play a significant role in purchasing decisions, which assists in the promotion of the brand image as well (Rashidi & Khanaposhtani, 2017). The WOM establishes a dependable correspondence between the employee and the customer, whether in the traditional sender-receiver physical mode or the electronic form of WOM. Several authors asserted that the traditional mode of WOM does not adequately reflect the deep connectedness between receiver-sender networks. Thus, in order to strengthen the CBBE model with the EBBE, traditional forms of WOM must be transformed into more competitive forms such as e-WOM for managing brand portfolios that are subject to diversified networks and where customer satisfaction and trustworthy employee brand equity are properly represented and functioned. Similarly, when comparing traditional WOM to electronic WOM, both have their advantages and disadvantages in terms of a firm's competitiveness (Kursan Milaković et al., 2017).

According to previous research, employee positive WOM may be harnessed by defining the job, encouraging employees to participate in brand growth, and providing an acceptable source of knowledge distribution. Thus, in social situations, when employees perceive a positive image of the company, the customer also perceives a positive image (Wang et al., 2019). Similarly, positive employee word of mouth affects job satisfaction, employee commitment, and organizational performance. Thus, the EBBE benefited organizations by improving their brand image, brand experience, and brand performance (King et al., 2012; Maleki Minbashrazgah et al., 2021). As a result, the EBBE is likely to result in employee endorsement of the brand in terms of knowledge dissemination, brand commitment, brand satisfaction, brand citizenship behavior, human factor, role clarity, and positive employee WOM. All of which contribute to the organization's performance and competitive advantage.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

After a thorough examination of the EBBE literature, it is clear that the concept is still in its infancy. Additional research is required to contribute to theory and literature. We observed relatively few studies on EBBE positioning methods such as internal branding. However, it would be interesting to investigate the impact of internal branding strategies and their consequences on external branding strategies. Several avenues still need to examine in future research. First, to ensure the brand's long-term sustainability, it is vital to integrate the brand-centric strategies across managers and employees. Although emphasis has been given to developing and implementing brand strategies, there is still a gap between employees and the organization regarding EBBE. Second, future research directions can be addressed in terms of brand alignment between internal and external stakeholders, as well as brand experience throughout the EBBE and CBBE. Whereas most literature has discussed the pre-brand experience, new opportunities for investigation exist in the areas of post-brand experiences, particularly in the service-oriented business. Third, the H-factor and BCB are the most critical components of EBBE because they leverage positive employee word of mouth. Prior studies established the importance of brand ambassadors' association with positive word-of-mouth among employees (Schmidt & Baumgarth, 2018). Thus, an association of brand ambassadors can perform an impactful role in the context of internal branding. Therefore, this area can be investigated in future research, particularly in EBBE. Thus, the association of brand ambassadors can have a significant impact on internal branding. Therefore, this area of research can be addressed in the future, particularly in the context of EBBE. Finally, new avenues can be investigated by evaluating brand portfolios and the various alliances of brands that influence the EBBE and its corporate outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The EBBE is characterized as the branding effect that establishes a connection between internal and external branding strategies. By connecting CBBE and EBBE strategies, organizations can achieve sustainable competitive advantages. The EBBE can influence employee attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs about the firm's brand image. Therefore, brand image reinforces the firm's performance, thereby increasing the brand's value both inside and outside the organization. Our findings revealed the critical nature of EBBE and its dimensions, including employee brand knowledge effects, internal brand management, and EBBE benefits. The findings from the literature indicated that job clarity and brand commitment

assisted in the improvement of employee brand knowledge, which contributes to the EBBE. Similarly, information generation, knowledge dissemination, openness, and the human factor contribute to an organization's internal brand management and improve the EBBE. Furthermore, brand citizenship, employee satisfaction, and employee word of mouth are substantial advantages of EBBE that contribute to an organization's success. These EBBE aspects can be leveraged to help organizations in achieving competitive advantages, effective performance, and long-term success. Firms should invest resources in developing emotional brand responsibility, which can help employees connect with the brand. Thus, by utilizing the EBBE, significant weight can be focused on delivering practices that enhance customer experiences. It does not only increase the value of the brand but also boosts the firm's profitability index.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB): Employee behavior toward brand citizenship is described as volunteer efforts that extend beyond the scope of the job in the domain of demonstrating brand ownership.

Brand Commitment: It is the degree to which an employee has an emotional connection to the brand and exhibits attachment.

Employee Satisfaction: Employee satisfaction refers to the extent to which the employee is satisfied with his or her work and the role he or she performs in the organization.

Employee-Based Brand Equity (EBBE): It is the differentiation created when brand information is conveyed through employees, eliciting an emotional response to their workplace. In other words, it serves as a catalyst for employees to act appropriately and communicates the brand promise.

Human (H) Factor: It defines a thorough understanding of employees' capabilities, traits, and barriers in order to improve job performance through organizational design and structure.

Knowledge Dissemination: It is defined as the degree to which an employee interprets the brand information shared by the firm in a meaningful and pertinent manner.

Openness: It refers to an employee's openness to exchanging information, understanding what is happening, and appreciating. However, it also entails being responsive to and expecting various working methods, assessments, and feedback.

Positive Employee Word of Mouth (WOM): Positive word of mouth refers to an employee's positive attitude regarding his or her organization's products and services, as well as educating others about the brand's greatness and functionality.

Chapter 5
Employee–Based Brand Equity:
A Literature Review and a Way Forward

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ABSTRACT

The notion of employee-based brand equity has gained in popularity during the last two decades. The concept of employee-based brand equity has become a key management and marketing concept because of its role in the branding and brand management process. This perspective reflects two intangible resources such as employees and brand, which are critical for a long-term competitive advantage. This chapter provides an updated literature review on the concept of employee-based brand equity that covers background, significance, objectives, conceptualization, antecedents, and outcomes/benefits of employee brand equity. The past literature is critically reviewed, and a potential research gap is identified for future researchers.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the competition among brands (products and services) has increased intensively. As a result, attracting and retaining potential as well as existing customers has become a great challenge for organizations (King, 2017). Brand managers have recognized the value of having a strong brand because a strong brand enables the organizations to stay competitive in the market, and is a key source of long-term competitive advantage. A strong brand identity is crucial in the whole process of brand management (Zhang, Niu, & Zhang, 2016). Given this, organizations of all types endeavor to distinguish

their products and services to develop a distinctive identity of their brands (Liu, Hsu, & Fan, 2020). Organizations generally do this through the physical appearance of brands (King, 2017). The rationale of brandings is to create strong brand equity for products and services (Erkmen, 2018).

Brand equity is considered one of the most important indicators of the success of a brand and business (Minbashrazgah, Garbollagh, & Varmaghani, 2021). Previous research has mainly studied brand equity from the perspective of customers (external branding), and managers and academics were mainly focused on the concept of customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1998). However, a shift in the thinking has been observed in this established market logic, and managers are now turning their attention to internal or employee-based branding (King & Grace, 2009). Employee-based brand equity (EBBE) refers to the "value a brand provides to a firm through its effects on the attitudes and behaviors of its employees" (Tavassoli, Sorescu, & Chandy, 2014, p. 6776-677).

It has been now realized by the organizations that competitive advantage cannot be sustained for a longer time solely based on tangible assets. Intangible resources such as knowledge and skills have gained more importance for sustainable competitive advantage in the current highly competitive marketplace (King & Grace, 2010). These skills and capabilities are embedded in the human resource of an organization. Organizations cannot completely deliver the brand promise to the customer without considering the role of their employees (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020). It is employees' capabilities and skills that make customers' experience good or bad about the brand, which in turn shapes their perception of the brand (de Chernatony and Cottam, 2006). Nowadays, employees of organizations are an important source for achieving organizational goals, and for building brand equity (Barros-Arrieta & García-Cali, 2021).

Employees are the reflection of organizations (Piehler et al. 2016), and employees are frontline actors who directly interact with the customers. Positive interaction between employees and customers can lead to increased customer satisfaction, loyalty, and ultimately to the brand equity of the organization (Saleem & Iglesias 2016). According to this logic, brand management in an organization should not just be based on the customers, but also consider the role of employees, who are the real advocators of organizational brands (Anisimova & Mavondo 2010). This suggests that successful brand management is based on the balance between customer-based brand equity and EBBE (Kang 2016).

Considering the importance of EBBE, the objective of this chapter is to provide a compressive literature review on this important organizational construct. To achieve this objective, the present review particularly focuses on both theoretical and empirical works to identify the conceptualizations antecedents, outcomes, and benefits of EBBE.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF EBBE

Brands are important intangible assets, therefore brand management has gained significant importance among managers and academicians (Keller and Lehmann, 2006). Brands deliver offers advantages to the consumers both symbolically and economically (Keller, 1998). A brand is a source of product and provides the opportunity to the organizations to develop specific products by considering the quality, consumers' needs, and making promises (Hanaysha & Al-Shaikh, 2021). As a result, brands earn profit for the organizations, if the promise is delivered successfully. Therefore, brands are believed as the key sources of business to general value (Deepa & Baral, 2021).

High brand equity is linked with successful brands. High brand equity is only earned when an organizations' brands have high customer loyalty, high popularity, high perceived quality, credibility, and

strong customers affiliation (Jacobson, Smith, & Rudkowski, 2021). When brands are assessed on these non-financial measures, it is called the customer-based view, and this view is often coupled with financial measures such as the ratio of profit, to determine the brand's success. In addition, the customer-based view considers brand management activities as successful when the brand captures a high market share and earns a high profit (Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006). With an increase in the interests of managers and researchers in the outcomes of brand management which is reflected in the brand equity (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020), it is becoming more crucial to evaluate brand success from different aspects to get a better understanding. By doing this, the benefits of brand success from the different stakeholders can be assessed. Given this, most of the researchers have concentrated on external stakeholders such as customers and based on customers' views the brand success and brand equity of brands were determined (Cambra-Fierro, et al., 2021; Nguyen-Viet, 2022).

Recently researchers have turned their attention towards another perspective that considers employees as central to brand equity. Employees' importance has been increased in contemporary organizations and their role in the brand management process has become also critical. Employees are now considered brand ambassadors, therefore the success of brands and the level of brand equity are believed to be largely dependent on the employees (de Chernatony, Cottam, and Segal – Horn, 2006). Therefore, research on brand equity from the perspective of employees is necessary. Considering the increased efforts of marketing personnel for understanding the process of brand management and brand equity, it has become the need of the hour to take into account the role of internal stakeholders (i.e. employees) in brand management practices, because omission of employees from the brand management can significantly influence the measurement of brand equity (Nogueira, Santarém, & Gomes, 2020). Moreover, as the competition among brands is increasing locally as well as internationally, better brand management practices and measures are needed so that the concept of brand equity can be extended, and thereby a balanced brand management perspective can be developed (Nogueira, et al., 2020).

In the literature, there are many conceptual definitions of brand equity (Keller, 1998; Kim et al., 2003). Apart from this, there are two general perspectives on brand equity namely, the consumer-based perspective and the financial perspective (Kim et al., 2003). The proponents of the financial view of brand equity conceptualize brand equity in terms of the brand's total value that can be separated from other assets of an organization on the balance sheet (Atilgan et al., 2005). In this perspective, brand equity is measured in terms of financial value. Another perspective is customer-based brand equity. This perspective of brand equity is based on customer view. It refers to "the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand" (Keller, 1998, p. 45). Existing theoretical and empirical evidence suggests that marketing managers' more focus was on these two perspectives concerning brand equity, which was creating an imbalance (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). Therefore, a more balanced view was warranted on brand equity. To address this issue, scholars (i.e. Heskett et al., 2001) developed a more balanced view that considers employees, consumers, and profitability together. This model represents the role of internal support (i.e. from employees) in brand management processes that is key to brand loyalty, success, customer satisfaction, and ultimately increased financial profit (Heskett et al., 2001). In this model, the satisfaction of employees, productivity, and loyalty is a key factors in the maximization of organizational profit. This suggests the key role of human capital in the branding process, but the neglect of employees from brand equity is surprising. Whereas, the customer-based view of brand equity is only limited to the financial perspective, thus making it too narrow. Whereas, considering the scope of brand equity, researchers felt the need for a broader view of brand equity. As a result, researchers started to recognize the value of human resources. At this stage, the internal branding

or brand management process started (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005), which was later termed EBBE (King & Grace, 2009). This conceptualization of brand equity is more comprehensive that reflects the brand management practices and theory outcomes at the organizational level. Since the introduction of the EBBE idea, researchers have examined various determinants, outcomes, measurements, and benefits of it.

DETERMINANTS OF EBBE

Internal brand management has become essential in contemporary organizations for success and growth. Firms initiate internal branding to develop EBBE because internal branding is an effective instrument to create and sustain successful brands (Burmann et al., 2009). Organizations can clarify employees' roles in the internal brand management process through the provision of brand knowledge. When employees will have complete knowledge about the brand, they ultimately feel connected with the brand and will show loyalty to the brand. As a result, they will think more about the brand and strive for its success (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013). Therefore, EBBE has received a great deal of attention in the recent brand equity literature.

Considering the importance of EBBE, researchers are increasingly trying to investigate its factors or determinants of it. In this regard, researchers have studied different determinants of EBBE. For example, Altaf, et al. (2019) investigated the impact of openness on EBBE in the context of Islamic banks. They collected data from 278 employees through a self-administered questionnaire. The results indicated that openness directly as well as indirectly influences EBBE. Vatankhah and Darvishi, (2018) conducted a study on flight attendants in Iran. The results of this study indicate that top management commitment to internal branding is an important determinant of EBBE. Hanaysha and Al-Shaikh, (2021) examined the impact of customer relationship management on EBBE. Data were collected from 164 employees through questionnaires. The results showed that customer relationship management positively influences EBBE. Minbashrazgah, et al. (2021) explored the relationship between transactional leadership and EBBE. Results suggested that brand-specific transactional leadership positively influences EBBE. Boukis and Christodoulides, (2020) found that brand knowledge, leader behavior, and internal market orientation are important determinants of EBBE.

Deepa and Baral (2021) investigated the role of integrated communication effectiveness in EBBE. The findings suggest that integrated communication is an important determinant of EBBE. Wisker and Kwiatek, (2019) have used EBBE as a mediator in the relationship between environmental orientation and the performance of hotel employees. Results indicated that environmental orientation influences EBBE, which in turn influences performance. Lee, et al. (2019) investigated how brand-specific leadership styles such as transactional leadership and transformational leadership play role in the development of EBBE. The findings revealed that both types of leadership styles influence EBBE. However, this effect was differential, meaning that both types of leadership impact the EBBE differently.

CONSEQUENCES OF EBBE

Vatankhah & Darvishi, (2018) have undertaken a study on the role of internal branding in determining the flight attendants' behavior. They collected primary data through questionnaires. The findings show that internal branding positively influences the extra-role behavior of flight attendants in the Airline

Industry of Iran. Boukis and Christodoulides, (2020) investigated the outcomes of EBBE. They found that EBBE influences both internal as well as external outcomes of an organization. Poulis and Wisker, (2016) examined the impact of EBBE on firm performance. The findings show that EBBE strongly impacts firm performance.

BENEFITS OF CREATING EBBE

EBBE, as discussed above, helps employees to gain knowledge about the brand, which in turn is considered an important factor for organizations to receive tangible benefits (Minbashrazgah, et al., 2021). The benefits that organizations extracted from internal branding depend on employees' attitudes and behaviors (Sánchez-Casado, et al., 2018). Employees' behavioral intentions are an indication that they want to continue a positive association with the employing organization (Bloemer & Odekerken- Schröder, 2006). The importance of realizing the benefits of EBBE is based on the reality that these benefits are the underpinnings upon which customer satisfaction, as well as organizational performance heavily, depends (King & Grace, 2010). More specifically, measuring the outcomes or benefits of internal branding objectively provides insights into the degree of success of organizational efforts regarding the internal brand management practices (Tavassoli, et al., 2014). This informs the management about the link between employees, customer satisfaction, and financial performance (Boukis & Christodoulides, 2020). Effective internal brand management ultimately leads to high customer satisfaction and profit maximization (Deepa & Baral, 2021). According to (Keller, 2001), the beneficiary (i.e. employees) of brand experience actively engage with a brand, and they put more effort to satisfy the customers as well as showing positive behaviors towards their organization. The first benefit that is expected from the employees in internal brand management is brand citizenship behavior (Porricelli, et al., 2014). The brand citizenship behavior, in turn, leads to a wide range of subsequent behaviors such as satisfaction (Loveman, 1998; Poulis & Wisker, 2016). When employees have low job satisfaction, they are more likely to engagement deviant behavior, which in turn may negatively influence the internal brand management practices (Wisker & Kwiatek, 2019). Therefore, the satisfaction of employees is considered an integral part of the benefits of EBBE (Jiang & Iles, 2011).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

EBBE is an important concept in the fields of management and marketing. This, especially, helps the brand managers to make their brands strong by developing internal brand equity that not only positively impacts the performance of that brand, but also the overall performance of the organization. In addition, when employees are getting educated about the brand, they feel satisfied with the organization, become loyal, and show high productivity.

Considering the above discussion, it is concluded that literature on the EBBE is increasing, however, the pace of this increase is low. For example, limited researchers have examined the factors that can lead to the development of EBBE. The majority of these factors are individual-based factors, such as the perception of employees or the cognition of employees. This put limitations on our understanding of the EBBE. Apart from this, the current state of antecedent in the literature on EBBE provides the

opportunity to researchers to explore further antecedents at different levels such as team level, dyadic level, and organizational level.

Similarly, the literature on the outcomes of EBBE is also underdeveloped. Very few studies have examined the impact of EBBE on the employees' behavior. This also provides an opportunity for the researchers to investigate the outcomes of EBBE. In doing so, employees' emotions, attitudes, cognition, and behavior can be focused on. Moreover, outcomes at a brand as well as at the organizational level such as reputation can also be considered as an outcome in future studies.

Moreover, literature suffers from the limitation of underlying mechanisms of EBBE. In particular, the moderators and mediators. Existing studies have used very limited underlying mechanisms to explore the impact of EBBE. Future studies can use different individual level, group level, and organizational level moderators and mediators to fully understand the benefits of EBBE.

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Chapter 6
Knowledge–Hiding Behaviors and Employee– Based Brand Equity

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ABSTRACT

This chapter begins with the simple operative definition of brand equity, previously studied in the context of consumers only, and then extends the notion to employee-based brand equity. This reading suggests that once marketers were challenged to build positive brand equity amongst their customer base to gain a competitive advantage. In contrast, the dynamic world has triggered researchers toward other aspects to gain competitive advantage, such as employee-based brand equity (EBBE), because human capital can add value to the organizations. The second part of this chapter illustrates the role of knowledge hiding as a phenomenon in shattering the EBBE. The debate concludes by providing a framework and recommending that future researchers explore the EBBE due to knowledge hiding practices.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of brand equity has been under investigation for the last decades; however, this investigation is mainly accompanied by the idea of customer-based brand equity (Lassar et al., 1995; Washburn and Plank, 2002; Pappu et al., 2006; Christodoulides and de Chernatony, 2010; Nguyen-Viet, 2022). Brand equity is the measurable value that a brand brings to a business (Keller, 1993). Brands are both strategic,

and a financial asset; a strong brand creates customer loyalty (Khan et al., 2022), which increases the company's value (Miao et al., 2022). Brand equity can be categorized as positive and negative brand equity. If a consumer thinks highly of a brand and prefers to make purchases from that brand, this will be considered positive brand equity.

In any business, a marketer should aim to gain more positive brand equity and deploy strategies to build a brand image that will result in more excellent sales and earn better profits. Positive brand equity allows a business to help create a competitive advantage (Rua and Santos, 2022). A strong brand itself is conceptualized as a strategic weapon in the quest for an edge over competitors (Pappu et al., 2006).

The dominant literature about brand equity mainly stands divided into two streams. One side covers the financial, and the other side covers the consumer perspective related to competitive advantage development. The researchers towards other aspects impart considerably less attention to gaining competitive advantage, such as Employee Based Brand Equity (EBBE). Brand building efforts of employees (human capital) provide an "added value" to an organization's brand (Khan et al., 2020). Therefore, a relatively emerging challenge for marketers resides in replicating the human capital, which adds value to the organization's brand.

Despite the significance of EBBE as a source of potential competitive advantage and an integral component of brand equity assessment, still, there is considerably less amount of literature on the conceptualization of EBBE (King and Grace, 2008, 2010; Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010; King et al., 2013). In pertinent literature, it has been observed that employees are acknowledged for their contribution to building brand reputation. Still, very little research exists in practice on how EBBE should be enhanced to overcome workplace problems. Employees would feel empowered and contribute to the best of their efforts to become internal brand ambassadors (Boukis and Christodoulides, 2018, 2020).

Therefore, this chapter contends to shed light on the concept of EBBE and tends to highlight its potential antecedent in the new paradigm.

EMPLOYEE-BASED BRAND EQUITY

Employee-based brand equity is a value offered to an organization by influencing employees' behavior and attitude. Dedicated and competent employees of an organization have the potential to meet deadlines and benchmarks directed to achieve organizational goals both at the individual and collective level. EBBE is developed and maintained efficiently when employees of a company are treated in just, fair, and ethical, and motivation manner. We come across the conceptualization of Customer-Based Brand Equity very frequently, whereas there are two critical factors, brands and employees, which are given less importance. If these two assets are very well taken care of, these would likely reap many benefits for the firms. In the dynamic world, where demographic changes are reshaping business practices, an organization must focus on developing its human capital to attract and retain a competent workforce (Wilden et al., 2006). Marketers and human resource managers need to realize that employee-based brand equity is a component of a wider framework of customer-based brand equity. They must conceptualize employees as additional stakeholders. They must pay attention to managing them to ensure effective and efficient performance of their workforce. Researchers have noted that understanding and evaluating the EBBE level is equally essential to engaging employees and gaining their trust within the company.

EBBE can be defined as "the differential effect that brand knowledge has on an employee's response to their work environment" (King and Grace, 2008). This conceptualization requires that roles and

responsibilities inherited in an employee's job provide them with meaningful internal branding. While EBBE, from another perspective, is defined as "the differential effect that brand knowledge has on an employee's response to internal brand management" (King et al., 2012). This conceptualization is based on three dimensions, namely:

- Brand endorsement;
- Brand-consistent behaviors; and
- Brand allegiance

Brand endorsement is how an individual is willing to advocate positively about the organization (King et al., 2012; Poulis and Wisker, 2016). The concept of external branding based on customers' perceptions can be overlapped with internal branding in such a way that if an individual is motivated enough intrinsically and extrinsically, they are likely to advocate positively about the organization or employer to others. Similarly, *Brand-consistent behavior* indicates behaviors that are usually non-prescribed but consistent with the organization's brand values (King et al., 2012; Poulis and Wisker, 2016). Thus, if the behaviors of employees are compatible with the importance of the firm, they are likely to internalize brand values and would express brand attributes in their conduct. Finally, *Brand allegiance*, as indicated by (2012), denotes an individual's intention to remain with their employer. Overlapping the concept of internal branding over external branding, it can be safely assumed that if an individual is satisfied with the organization or employee, he or she would likely to show behavioral loyalty and attachment with the organization (King and Grace, 2008; Poulis and Wisker, 2016; Reis et al., 2021).

Branding is viewed from multiple perceptions as efforts are made organization and its management on various levels to ensure company employees are empowered through the employment value proposition. Several factors contribute to building substantial brand equity both for customers and employees of a company. Organizations today tend to find ways to help develop a strong psychological bond with their employees, mainly to gain a competitive advantage in the current business arena. However, gaining employees' trust and brand loyalty is not easy to achieve. It is because today, employees are pretty aware of their rights and values as per market demand, so if, in any case, they feel they are not being warmly welcome or justly treated in the company, they tend to lose interest, trust, and connection with the company ultimately damaging the fundamentals of brand equity that organization/employer seeks to build.

Successful brands are categorized depending upon their capability of executing the levels of brand equity for both customers, i.e., internal customers or external customers. Organizations and their management are bound to have such practices that can restrict their way of dealing with and treating their employees, which could negatively influence employee-company bonding. Such as keeping some information hidden from middle-level managers or executive workers; although, on ethical standards, employees expect to have transparent, fair, and just treatment from their company, which also includes access to information they deserve to know.

KNOWLEDGE HIDING PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE-BASED BRAND EQUITY

Knowledge-hiding behavior; is defined as "an intentional attempt by an individual to withhold or conceal knowledge that another person has requested" (Connelly et al., 2012; Irum et al., 2020). Knowledge hiding behaviors are divided into three categories (Connelly et al., 2012). The first type of knowledge

hiding behavior is termed ***playing dumb behavior,*** which involves a kind of deception when an individual request to seek some knowledge or information from his colleague and pretends falsely that he does not know that piece of information (Burmeister et al., 2019). While in ***evasive hiding***, the 'knowledge-able employee' tends to hide the knowledge by providing irrelevant and incorrect information. Lastly, ***Rationalized hiding*** attempts to block the access to requested knowledge by explaining the reasons for failure to share relevant knowledge (Connelly et al., 2012).

Knowledge hiding is a crucial matter that is considerate for both employees and employers as they both are likely to face the consequences of hiding knowledge. Significantly for employers, when the company hides knowledge from their staff members, it negatively influences their bonding with the company they are working for. According to Connelly et al. (2012), knowledge hiding is different from other types of behavior that are mostly dysfunctional, for instance, social undermining, deception, lack of knowledge sharing, and aggression. Thus, a negative correlation between knowledge hiding behavior and ethical leadership is established in past studies, as ethical leadership is associated with the right thing who does not believe in compromising professionalism, integrity, and values in all the matters linked with their position at the workplace. Similarly, Tang et al. (2015) and Men et al. (2020) showed through their studies that the relationship between ethical leadership and knowledge hiding is negative. Ethical leaders are more likely to follow patterns that depend upon openness, loyalty, care, and their true self to express their thoughts with the team without fearing destructive repercussions. All these factors have a profound impact on EBBE.

Human resource management is mainly responsible for increasing and managing employee-based brand equity as HR is the most strategic department of the company that connects employees and employers and their expectations from each other. Since the development of the concept of brand equity, efforts of professionals have remained in promoting branding. However, such practices still lack investment in employees at multiple levels. Current literature has evidenced that the conceptualization of brand equity positively correlates with the financial investment made to employees by their company. However, gaining brand equity from employees is not confined to financial assets; other factors contribute to building EBBE. Such as motivation, good work environment, learning opportunities, career succession, rewards, etc.; these factors contribute to strengthening employees' bond with the company they are currently working in and consequently develop EBBE.

Note that managerial staff members use different diagnostic tools to understand the brand-based equity of members. Such as some of the widely used diagnostic tools include an employee attitude survey used to measure employee equity based on their connection and psychological bond with the company. Such surveys involve knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding with staff members. Previous studies indicate that employees have even expressed that knowledge sharing by the management also helps them understand standards that demand them to work up to the expectations of an organization (Liang et al., 2016).

Just as knowledge sharing boosts their morale to have substantial brand-based equity, knowledge hiding from employees works in the opposite direction. Knowledge hiding can be highly demotivating for staff members because they can perceive under such circumstances that their organization does not trust them enough that a good flow of information can be shared with them. As a result, they feel disconnected and more likely to lose interest in the work (Pan et al., 2018). There are adverse effects of knowledge hiding on employees' loyalty and equity for the company; when employees are highly discouraged or disappointed with the organizational system, their accountability towards their performance decreases (Zhao and Liu, 2021).

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Employees-based brand equity can be observed as reflected in their attitudes and input while at the workplace (Morrell et al., 2004), such as turnover rate, which indicates how satisfied and connected the company employees are. It is worth discussing that the employee turnover rate within the company suggests how well-settled, satisfied, engaged, and brand loyal the company employees are. Evaluating the staff turnover rate shows whether employees have found knowledge hiding or sharing beneficial or discouraging. The rate of turnover either increased or decreased with the company when new approaches to employee equity were implemented, and management started motivating them in an entirely different way. Engaged and empowered employees are more likely satisfied employees who do not have any issues if their company is hiding anything from them. What matters most for them is the organization is meeting their basic and other needs, and they are least interested in knowing what management wants to keep hidden from them. Hence, chances for such employees to switch on their employees are pretty low, indicating that the company manages them well and the turnover rate is low.

On the other side, similar to the rate of staff retention, the rate of absenteeism is an important indicator of whether employees are enjoying engagement and equity within the company or not. In some cases, employee equity could be because of many other factors apart from sharing. However, it is understood that absenteeism is a part of a corporate business. Still, its rate fluctuates based on different factors, and employee equity is one of the most influential factors that either motivate or demotivate them to show up in the office regularly. Suppose it is noted that the rate of absenteeism is high in the company. In that case, it becomes clear that management is failing not just to engage the employees but also to motivate them by hiding information from them, which could upgrade their level of psychological connectivity with the company (Morrell et al., 2004).

The stability that comes with a good flow of knowledge and shared with company staff members to ensure that they are an essential part of the organization and their company values their skills, talent, experiences, and, most important, presence in the company. With the effective EBBE, there is no concept of one size fits all because, in today's competitive era, it has been realized that every individual/employee is different, primarily if they work in global organizations and come from diverse backgrounds. Hence, their needs and expectations have to be met in accordance. Only then is a company known to have effective EBBE for its people. It implies that companies that strongly believe in diversity of employees have to cater to their needs respectively, especially in terms of providing them stability with their current job. Strength in the position can be delivered to staff members by ensuring them that all practices within the company are fair, just, and transparent, and nothing in the office environment is hidden from them. Previous studies have underpinned the importance of another factor that can help gain an employee's equity based on brand (Langelett, 2014): respect that employees accept from their management in return for their dedication, equity, and loyalty towards the organization. In this regard, it has been noted that employees' opinions can be different from each other, which require a company to respect their difference and views, which they seek to put forwards during various processes. For example, it is an acute phase when employees are made to accept the change; hence it is significant to empower them through encouragement, respect, and immense support, and this all comes from knowledge. And if at any point during the change process some knowledge is kept hidden from members, which they find out later they feel ditched. It is crucial because, with change implementation, employees' equity can also get changed for the brand. Hence they have to be motivated entirely to a new level so that they show loyalty towards the company with trust in all the new patterns and processes they are introduced to.

However, it is an ambiguity to the concept of EBBE, a lack of clarity about the idea of EBBE is developed when knowledge is hidden, it happens when employees do not have any idea what is EBBE and

how they are expected to behave in terms of attitude as well as performance while at the workplace which is expected from them as loyal and dedicated staff members. This serves as a barrier because expected outcomes and performances cannot be attained unless employees are clear of their role, equity, and the concept of EBBE as a whole itself. In this case, HR is responsible for *making* them understand the idea through demonstration, some counseling sessions presenting examples, and issues of other companies with high brand-based equity of their members (Datta et al., 2021). On the other hand, they must have a solid motivation to have substantial equity from the company employees. It mainly comes when the employees are informed about the rewards and recognition they can get by performing up to the mark. In return for their reliable performance and contribution, employees expect recognition and rewards. Still, when they are not even informed about any such policy by the company, they feel discouraged as they do not have any direction or source of motivation to work for.

In contrast, when employees of a company are given immense value by sharing critical information with them, such as related rewards and recognition they can get by performing well, they feel empowered and likely to increase their equity towards the brand they are working for. Additionally, communication is an effective strategy to develop a bond, and it is the only and best possible way of knowledge sharing with employees. However, in organizations where management lacks practical communication skills, it becomes difficult to share knowledge with employees, resulting in negative consequences.

CONCLUSION

Concisely, it can be understood that knowledge sharing is essential on all levels. Still, if an organization lacks a proper strategic approach to knowledge sharing, employees of a company can indulge in knowledge hiding. Based on available empirical evidence, it can be noted that knowledge hiding can hamper the EBBE case when an employee loses their interest and trust in the company and its management due to knowledge hiding practices. This state of affairs demands that the research community pay heed to recognizing the knowledge hiding role concerning employee-based brand equity. Because, under such circumstances, the capitalized investment in the employees would not be fruitful in motivating, engaging, and bonding long-term relationships with their internal customers. Employee-based brand equity indicates a psychological connection with the organization, which can be hampered through impairment due to knowledge hiding. Thus, it would be imperative for the future researchers to investigate the following framework, especially in the context of change management

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Brand Allegiance: Denotes an individual's intention to remain with their employer in the future.

Brand Endorsement: Indicates an individual's willingness to advocate positively about the organization.

Brand-Consistent Behavior: Indicates behaviors that are usually non-prescribed but consistent with the organization's brand values.

Employee-Based Brand Equity (EBBE): Is referred to employees' internalization of an organization's fundamental values, as seen by brand image, brand loyalty, and brand value congruence.

Evasive Hiding: Portrays a situation where a 'knowledgeable employee' tends to hide the knowledge by providing irrelevant and incorrect information.

Knowledge-Hiding Behavior: Denotes an intentional attempt by an employee to block the access to requested knowledge by other individuals.

Playing Dumb Behavior: Indicates a kind of deception when an individual request to seek some knowledge or information from his colleague and pretends falsely that he does not know that piece of information.

Rationalized Hiding: Indicates an attempt to block access to requested knowledge by explaining the reasons for failure to share relevant knowledge.

Chapter 7

Impact of Leader-Member Exchange on Innovative Work Behavior:
Role of Employee-Based Brand Equity, Humor, and Humble Leadership

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to test the impact of leader-member exchange on innovative work behavior while examining the moderating role of employee-based brand equity within the financial industry including banking and insurance companies in the Rawalpindi and Islamabad regions. Two hundred thirty responses have been collected through questionnaires. The results indicate that supervisory humor and humble leadership mediate the relationship between leader-member exchange and innovative work behavior. Also, the results demonstrate that employee-based brand equity moderates the relationship between leader-member exchange and innovative work behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Innovation is achieved when the employees are independent to generate new ideas that perfectly fit to solve specific problems and give sustainable success to the organization. Researches demonstrate that innovative behavior of employees develops efficiency and improvement in the quality of work (Chang & Liu, 2008; Wang Liu, & Zhu, 2018). Innovative work behavior (IWB) includes identifying issues and deliberately introducing the novel ideas within groups or organization. It also includes implementation of creative ideas (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007). Basically, employee IWB is vital for the success of any organization. As such, there is no organization which can be advanced, up to date and contemporary without its innovative employees. That means the innovative employee is a main asset to an organization's success in the today's quickly changing business environment (Abstein & Spieth, 2014).

Review of literature reveals that leadership is an important antecedent of IWB. Leadership plays a very crucial role for the creativity of followers (Gilmore et al, 2013). Many researchers have widely observed that various leadership theories and traits significantly influence the performance, positive outcomes and attitudes of the employees in an organization. In this study, leader member exchange (LMX) is studied as an antecedent to employee innovative behavior.

LMX is a relationship between a leader and his or her employees. This connection might be either direct or indirect. It also consistently maintains the highest level of quality and staff performance. Several studies on the LMX-IWB association have found that the LMX has a great impact on the latter (Altunoglu & Gurel, 2015; Kheng et al., 2013). Thus, LMX is a significant predictor of this behavior (Altunoglu & Gurel, 2015; Kheng et al., 2013). (Xerri, 2013, Agarwal, 2014). Interaction between followers is also demonstrated through the exchange of leader members. Many studies have found that a high level of leader member exchange produces effective outcomes and attitudes. The major goal of this study is to see how LMX affects IWB in the Pakistani financial industry.

This study proposes that the relationship between LMX and IWB is not only direct relationship. Thus, in this study this relation is also studied through the indirect path provided by humble leadership and supervisor humor. Humble leadership treats everyone with respect regardless of their role, position, and title. This shows humble leaders have confidence to accept the weaknesses of others (Owens, 2013). Many studies have found that when individuals of a company use their "sense of humor" in the workplace, they may generate the most innovative environment and achieve the best organizational outcomes (Shanti & Jaafar, 2021). Humble leader plays a very crucial role to promote an innovative behavior where employees creatively learn and practice in the working environment. Leader enable employees to independently carry out their challenges and keep flourishing the learning environment in the organizational context (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007). This phenomenon leads towards employee development and provides liberty to perceive the activities and challenges with innovation and creativity (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010). Like humble leadership, managers use humor to reduce the stress in pandemic situation (Clouse & Spurgeon 1995) and thus help promote innovative behaviors. Thus, another important aim of the study is to investigate how humor and humble leadership mediate the impact of LMX on IWB.

The Pakistani financial industry is fiercely competitive, prompting various firms to reconsider how they employ both tangible and intangible assets to obtain competitive advantage. Unfortunately, such a critical and volatile corporate environment breeds insecurity among employees. In this regard, employee based brand equity is an important concept. Employers face a challenge in ensuring that staff produce the highest level of quality. It is critical to interact with customers as an employee in this regard. In fact,

one of the most essential aspects of brand theory is the employee-customer interaction, which is likely to lead to brand loyalty (Al-Hawary, 2013; Sahin et al., 2011). Every company wants its customers to have a fantastic experience with their product. According to Iglesias, Singh, and Batista-Foguet (2011), an experience is defined as "the sensation that customers build in their minds when they experience a brand offer" from the perspective of the brand board. Thus, this study will also examine the moderating role of employee based brand equity between LMX and IWB. Surprisingly, there is a link between brand equity and brand understanding (Beig & Nika, 2019). Brand value is defined as the perceived and assumed worth of a brand in the perspective of a customer (Davcik and Sharma, 2015). The current exploration is pointed toward addressing the accompanying examination questions.

RQ1: How does leader-member exchange influence innovative work behavior?

RQ2: Does supervisory humor mediates the relationship between LMX and IWB?

RQ3: Does humble leadership mediates the relationship between LMX and IWB?

RQ4: To what extent the employee based brand equity moderates the relationship between leader-member exchange influence innovative work behavior?

Research Significance

The importance of the LMX theory in evaluating any perceptions that others on your team may have, according to the findings of this study. Many entrepreneurs and policymakers believe that innovative work behavior is a very effective driver of future competitiveness, according to this study. Humor will continue to be a significant variable in the future since it appeals to people of all ages and cultures. The value of self-enhancing humor is positively connected with psychological wellness and subordinates' job performance. Also the trait of humble leadership is that it treats everyone equally, regardless of their title, job, or position. It is also believed that humble leadership is critical for allowing ideas to arise. It is expected that humble leadership will help to develop a learning culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The deliberate development of ideas within an organization or group is known as innovative work behavior (IWB) (Janssen, 2000, p. 288). Many studies have shown the relevance of innovation and creativity in the workplace for organizational growth and success (Damanpour, 1991; Jimenez-Jimenez & Sanz-Valle, 2011; Thornhill, 2006). Individuals are an important part of any innovation, hence employee imaginative behavior is key to a company's ability to innovate. Despite its role, information about IWB and the ways to enhance such behaviors is limited.

As a result, because they don't know how to drive active employees to engage in IWB, businesses may be limited in their potential to innovate. IWB differs throughout the development cycle, from the start to the finish (De Jong & Den Hartog 2007). In contrast to IWB, which is more narrow and only focused on the discovery and invention of new ideas, Innovation is more expansive. Similarly, proactive work behavior is broader than IWB (Crant, 2000; Parker, Williams, and Turner, 2006). While IWB is beneficial to organizations, it is a voluntary activity (Agarwal, 2014).

Innovative behaviors for the most part include the identification of business related issues, introduction of innovative and better ideas, and finally execution of those ideas. Likewise, such behaviors are

not only limited to idea generation (Saeed, Afsar, Cheema, & Javed, 2019), as is the case with creativity (Lee, Hallak, & Sardesh Mukh, 2019).

Job design, job characteristics, and job resources, according to some authors, influence innovative work behavior and motivation. As a result of this motivation, innovative work behavior can be influenced in a positive way (Amabile et al., 1996; Shalley et al., 2004). Vertical Dyad Linkage (VDL) theory was the initial name for LMX theory (Dansereau et al., 1975). Positive leader member exchange is named after the fact that it explains how high-quality relationships produce positive leaders. A positive leadership style, according to the research, creates drive, which in turn influences innovative work behavior; the focus of this research is on member exchange among leaders and modest leadership. The basic construct of the LMX theory is that the foremost effective process of leadership emerge followers and leaders maintain mature and high-quality relationships.

The leader-member exchange hypothesis develops as an exchange process in which employees can have low or high-quality interactions (Graen & UhlBien, 1995). High-quality exchange is defined by more effort and loyalty to the leader, in exchange for the leader granting more control and influence to the followers (Graen & UhlBien, 1995; Schriesheim, Castro, Zhou, & Yammarino, 2001). Furthermore, leaders may regard followers who engage in high-quality exchanges as "in groups" or "advisors", treat groups similarly, and esteem these followers as subgroups. Followers who make mediocre efforts and rely on organizational exchange patterns to foster relationships are likely to have poor quality exchanges.

Internal Branding is turning out to be progressively vital inside industry and the in academia. A firm creates inward marking or interior showcasing to sustain its representative based brand value (Burmann et al., 2009; Keller 1998; Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006). Internal brand the executives fills in as a compelling apparatus for making and keeping up with solid brands (Burmann et al., 2009). By advancing and teaching the brand to workers, internal branding assists them about their roles in creating and conveying brand ascribes related with the items. That means, workers can make a strong association with the organizational products as well as organization (Mitchell, 2002) and get familiar with their position in big picture' (Bergstrom et al., 2002).

There has been a lot of studies about applying a realistic approach to internal branding. However, since the mid-2000s, academics have become increasingly interested in observational studies on internal branding (Burmann et al., 2009; King and Grace, 2009). Mitchell's (2002) "Selling the Brand Inside," for instance, has recently been discussed by analysts. Directors and managers, according to Mitchell (2002), should encourage their employees to grasp the organization's goal so that employees who understand the brand vision can express it to clients.

Lord and Grace (2009, 2010) articulate that brand value according to the representative point of view ought to be thought of an estimated since workers are ministers who convey brand image to clients. Thus it can be concluded, worker based brand equity is the establishment for buyer based value. Based on this conversation, a significant contribution of the present study is to study the role of EBBE on LMX and IWB link.

Another crucial factor in this approach is humor. Humor can be viewed as a valuable communication tool for many leaders and managers in various fields. Along with other qualities like intelligence, inventiveness, persuasiveness, and general communication skills, a sense of humor is frequently regarded as a crucial feature of a leader. Effective leadership, according to leadership studies, requires abilities in the following areas: (1) delivering and accessing information, (2) making decisions, (3) influencing people, and (4) developing relationships. Is it necessary? (Yukl & Lep Singer, 1990).

In various studies, supervisory humor has been given crucial importance in the organizational context as it positively influences the performance of an employee (Avolio et al, 1999) as leaders tend to be more interactive towards their subordinates. Humor is basically a type of communication laughter Pyrczak (1999). We can also define humor as what people say or do in a way that is regarded amusing or causes others to chuckle (Goh et al., 2020). But, in general, comedy isn't restricted to a few amusing acts or a few amusing stories. Philosophy, psychology, sociology, and better communication skills are also included. With humor, the learning atmosphere is more favorable.

As discussed earlier, while many models improve performance, positive leadership styles lead the employees to innovatively carry out their task. In recent years, humble leadership has been given significant importance as leaders can play important role to modify employee attitude and behavior which ultimately enhance performance. Humble leader efficiently leads as a role model by creating a trustworthy environment for the employees and eliminates egoistic, scandalous, and self-assertive culture (Boje et al., 2004).

For this study, humble leadership follows three core dimensions which provides justification that how it positively influences the employees innovative work behavior (Owens et al., 2013). First, leaders are determinant to evaluate their incapability and mistakes during the practice of innovation which promotes the environment of IWB among employees (Hu, Erdogan, Jiang, Bauer, & Liu, 2018; Yuan et al., 2018). Second, leaders recognize the requisite of motivating employees to engage in innovative activities rather than diminishing the creativity (Wang, Zhang, & Jia 2016; Wang, Owens, et al., 2018; Wang Liu, & Zhu, 2018). Finally, leaders are quite competent to attain innovative recommendations from employees and also provides an opportunity to practices such innovative ideas within an organization (Hu et al., 2018; Mao et al., 2008).

In short, humble leadership creates a supportive working behavior which stimulates an environment where innovation is encouraged and criticisms are acknowledged. Thus, the final objective of this study is to examine how humble leadership mediates the impact of LMX on IWB.

Hypothesis 1:

There is positive and significant impact of leader member exchange (LMX) on innovative work Behavior (IWB)

Hypothesis 2:

There is positive and significant impact of leader member exchange on humor

Hypothesis 3:

There is positive and significant impact of humor on innovative work behavior

Hypothesis 4:

Humor mediates the relationship between leader-member exchange and innovative work behavior

Hypothesis 5:

There is a positive and significant impact of leader-member exchange (LMX) on humble leadership

Hypothesis 6:

There is a positive and significant impact of humble leadership on innovative work behavior (IWB)

Hypothesis 7:

Humble leadership mediates the relationship between leader-member exchange and innovative work behavior.

Hypothesis 8:

Employee based brand equity moderates the relationship between leader-member exchange and innovative work behavior.

Research Gaps

Abdillah (2021) conducted a study in Indonesia to analyze the impact of leader humor and Knowledge-sharing behavior through LMX. The finding shows that Leader humor leads to knowledge sharing behavior It also identifies the importance of leader humor for employee performance. Researcher further recommended to work in the field of humble leadership. For this purpose, the research gap is based upon humble leadership to analyze the performance along with behavior of employees.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

Research Design for Study

For conducting the present research study, quantitative approach was applied. Questionnaires were filled by the employees of banking and insurance. Online medium was also be used due to COVID-19 situation. However, visits were also be conducted by going to various banking and insurance companies.

Population, Sample, and Procedure

Mainly targeted population for this research was the employees of banks and insurance where equal opportunity to give responses has been provided to the employees to each title/job holders. Population for designated research mainly included associates, managers, interns, entry level, senior manager, and director. 300 participants were targeted to collect data, out which 230 questionnaires were used for final analysis.

MEASUREMENT

The variables in this research comprised of: (**LMX**) Leader-Member Exchange as Independent Variable; Employee based brand equity as moderator, Humor and Humble Leadership as mediating variables; Innovative Work Behavior as a dependent Variable. Five point Likert type scale will be used ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5).

LMX in this study was measured by eight items adopted from **Berneth(2007)**. Subordinates will be asked to provide their perception about quality LMX at their workplace.

Supervisory humor in this study was measured by four items adopted from **Cooper (2018) and Yam et al., (2018).**

Humble leadership was measured with nine items scale developed by **Owens, Johnson, and Mitchell (2013).**

Innovative Work Behavior is dependent variable used in this study. IWB was measured with the items developed by **Sethibe and Steyn (2017).**

Employee based brand equity was measured using 17 items scale developed by **Kwon (2013).**

Table 1. Gender

		Frequency
Valid	Male	120
	Female	110
	Total	230

DATA ANALYSIS

Demographics

The given table shows the gender of respondents that includes 55.4% male and 44.6% female from the targeted sample.

Table 2. Marital Status

		Frequency
Valid	single	140
	married	90
	Total	230

The table shows significant frequency of targeted marital status where 60% belongs to single employees and 40% married employees.

Table 3. Age in years

		Frequency
Valid	18-25	100
	26-35	66
	36-45	52
	45-older	12
	Total	230

Frequency of age vary accordingly in the given table.
The tables that majority of respondent comes from graduated and master degree employees

Descriptive Statistics

The table shows that mean value of humble leadership is higher among all variables that is 3.8.

Table 4. Education

		Frequency
Valid	higher secondary	9
	Graduation	130
	Master	81
	m.phil/phd	40
	Total	230

Table 5. Experience

		Frequency
Valid	less than 5 years	105
	5-10 years	38
	10-15 years	50
	more than 15 years	37
	Total	230

Table 6. Job title

		Frequency
Valid	Intern	13
	entry level	29
	associate	92
	manager	59
	senior manager	32
	Director	4
	Vp	1
	CEO	2
	Total	230

Table 7.

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LMXN	1	5	3.46	.648
SHN	2	5	3.68	.608
HLN	1	5	3.80	.513
IWBN	1	5	3.56	.586
EBBE	1	5	3.46	0.458

Table 8.

	Constructs	I	II	III	IV	V
I	LMX	1				
II	SH	0.348**	1			
III	HL	0.488**	0.370*	1		
IV	IWB	0.309**	0.176*	0.288*	1	
V	EBBE	0.418*	0.255*	0.294*	0.384*	1

Correlation

Table 9. Impact of LMX on IWB (H1)

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.317	.295		7.865	.000
	LMX	.279	.065	.309	4.270	.000
a. Dependent Variable: IWBN						

Regression

Hypothesis Testing

Table 10. Impact of LMX on humor

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.219	.302		7.354	.000
	LMX	.326	.067	.348	4.879	.000
a. Dependent Variable: SH						

DISCUSSION

Practical Implementations

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Table 11. Impact of humor on IWB

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.939	.268		10.953	.000
	SH	.169	.072	.176	2.351	.020
a. Dependent Variable: IWB						

Table 12. Humor mediates the relationship between LMX and IWB

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.317	.295		7.865	.000
	LMX	*.279*	.065	.309	4.270	.000
2	(Constant)	2.150	.337		6.372	.000
	LMX	*.254*	.070	.282	3.652	*.000*
	SH	.075	.074	.078	1.012	.313
a. Dependent Variable: IWB						

Table 13. Impact of LMX on HL

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.078	.237		8.779	.000
	LMX	.386	.052	.488	7.362	.000
a. Dependent Variable: HL						

Table 14. Impact of HL on IWB

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.180	.332		9.584	.000
	HL	.210	.086	.088	1.162	.027
a. Dependent Variable: IWB						

Table 15. Humble leadership mediates the relationship between LMX and IWB

Coefficients^a						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**T**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	2.317	.295		7.865	.000
	LMX	.279	.065	.309	4.270	.000
2	(Constant)	2.512	.354		7.094	.000
	LMX	.215	.075	.249	4.213	.000
	HL	.094	.095	.083	.996	.321
a. Dependent Variable: IWB						

The current study is done on independent variable (IV) "Leader-member Exchange" (LMX), mediating variables (MV) Humor at workplace & Humble Leadership, then dependent variable (DV) Innovative work Behavior (IWB) and moderating variable employee based brand equity. This study added literature to these variables. In this study, conditions and outcomes both are studied together which are helpful for many other organizations as well as mangers. The research gap is based upon humble leadership to analyze the performance along with behavior of employees. The results are different in Eastern and Western countries, so managers should keep the results in mind when strategizing in their organizations during the COD-19 epidemic.

Limitations

This research has been done on a small and very basic level. The study mainly targeted Pakistan's banking industry and insurance industry. The results of his study do not apply to Western banking and insurance industries. The survey was conducted at the time of the outbreak of the epidemic in COVID-19. It was not at its peak and the situation was under control. The banking and insurance industries in Pakistan were not completely shut down. Policies and strategies in the banking and insurance industries were

Table 16. Moderated regression

Predictor	IWB		
	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1		0.080	
Control variable			
Step 2			
LMX	0.253**		
EBBE	0.126*		
Step 3			
LMX X EBBE	-1.788**	0.226	0.029**

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001

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formulated in this epidemic of health crisis in the context of human resource management. Therefore, in this epidemic, the general role of humor in the workplace, humble leadership and the exact effect of Leadership Member Exchange (LMX) and innovative Work Behavior (IWB) is unexpected. This study was performed using random sampling, so it basically prevents the results from being more common.

Future Recommendation

For the further development of research, it is suggested to follow up future directions to make the study ongoing with advance implications. Firstly, the study is conducted in Banking and Insurance Corporation. It is suggested that researchers must analyze the humble and humor leadership behavior in the other sectors of Pakistan's private or public industry such as technology, hospitals, and restaurants as it will provide clear evaluation of results between the present and future research. This research mainly focuses on humble and humor leadership. For future research, it is suggested to adopt other leadership styles such as democratic and transformational leadership to analyze its impact according to the culture of Pakistan's industry. Furthermore, multiple time-source data must be design for the implication of future research. It is also suggested to use KSB and OCB as a mediators and built a relationship with IWB.

CONCLUSION

In the concluding remarks of the study, this research distinguishes that how Leader-member exchange impacts the innovative working behavior of the employees if supervisory humor and humble leadership is applied in the contextual environment of banking and insurance corporation. Data has been combined through questionnaires that has been floated within the Twin Cities of Pakistan; Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Various responses were accumulated from the employees of various titles and the analysis shows that humble leadership and supervisory humor positively and significantly influence the employee's behavior and outcome. For this purpose, the study overview regression, correlation, reliability, and descriptive analysis for the testing of defined hypothesis. It has been observed that the testing significantly relates with the definite hypothesis.

The study demonstrates that leader-member exchange positively impacts the innovative working behavior. Through testing, it is noticed that the results outcomes relate with each other. Equivalent findings have been recognized with mediating role of humor in the relation between LMX and IWB. Furthermore, the research shows that banking and insurance employee's behavior positively relates with the humble leadership and supervisory humor as it leads towards enhancing the innovative behavior in the banking and insurance corporation context.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Banking and Insurance Corporation: Financial institutions.

Employee-Based Brand Equity: A term used for a brand that is known just because of the attitude of the firm employee. Good behavior of employee makes a brand valuable.

Humble Leadership: It means leader is a humble personality and leader treats everyone with respect and take care of employee's emotions.

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB): It is basically behavior of employee that is used to generate innovative ideas. Behavior of making innovation in a product or in a procedure of attaining goals. It means someone knows how to do thing in a unique way.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX): It is basically a strong two-way relationship between leader and the one who follows the leader. LMX is the trust bonding between leader and member/follower, who trust each other and work with each other with greater interest and pave a path for goal orientation.

Supervisory Humor: It is quality of Leader/Supervisor to make communication in such a way that amuse and engage employees with work.

Chapter 8
An Exploration of the Factors Affecting Brand Association

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore essential factors affecting brand association that ultimately help in achieving brand equity. Based on the available literature, the authors explored several studies in which the researchers highlight the importance of brand equity and how the brand association could boost brand equity. They explored several factors such as brand awareness, brand experience, brand image, brand citizenship behavior, and brand identity. They also suggest how these factors can enhance brand association and brand equity in production as well as services organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations are striving to know about the preferences of employees in order to maintain their association with the brands(Camiciottoli et al., 2014). Thus, knowledge about the brands helps customers in bridging associations with the brands (Gordon et al., 2016). Brand knowledge is a key factor of employee brand association which becomes an important cause of employee choice between several brands (Camiciottoli et al., 2014; Phong et al., 2020). Due to having an association with the brand consumers happily pay for a extraordinary price for the product, instead of having alternative options (Berni et al., 2020). Consequently, organizations are earning more profits and enjoying a competitive advantage whose customers are more committed to them (Jamshidi & Rousta, 2021). Researchers and practitioners have identified a number of factors that can influence employee brand association (Parekh & Jha, 2021). Like

brand awareness/brand knowledge (Sürücü et al., 2019), brand understanding (Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018), brand commitment (Jamshidi & Rousta, 2021), brand citizenship behavior (Khan et al., 2021) etc. The brand association also helps employees in brand differentiation (Phong et al., 2020). The brand association builds thinking in the mind of employees which helps them in recalling and differentiating the brand (Gupta et al., 2020). Brand association help employees in the decision-making process (Parekh & Jha, 2021). Researchers categorized three elements of brand association such as attributes, attitudes, and benefits (Lane, 1991). Attributes have consisted of the descriptive characteristics of the product or services which can be further separated into two sets (e.g., product and non-product). Attributes related to the product consisted of the services and performance of the product. Attributes related to non-product consisted of the external factors of product such as packaging, price, and images (Koll & von Wallpach, 2014). Attitudes are defined as the overall evaluation of the brand which is developed by the buying behavior of consumers. Attitudes are developed by the distinctiveness, power, and durability of the brand. Benefits are definedas particular values which employees link with the brand. Employees link three types of benefits with the brand such as symbolic, experiential, and functional. Experiential benefits are the sentiments connected with the product. Symbolic benefits are linked with social status and reputation linked with the brand. Social status and prestige enhance employees' self-esteem and confidence. Functional benefits are defined as intrinsic rewards linked with the product such as psychological and safety needs (Keller & Lehmann, 2006).

Cheng-Hsui Chen (2001) examined the link between brand association, dimension of brand association and its impact on brand equity. (Phong et al., 2020) examined the connection between brand associationa and consumer's loyalty. Data were collected through questionnaire from 380 consumers belonging to North Central. The results of the study reveal brand brand association and brand awareness enhances consumers's loyalty. (Camiciottoli et al., 2014) explore the factors affecting brand association with unique methodological approach. The purpose of the study is to investigate the employee brand association in online community with brand defined brand association. The upshots of the study revealed a comsistency among employee defined brand association and brand defined brand association. Hossien Emari (2012) investigated the levels of brand equity in cholocalte industry. The purpose of the investigation was to detect the dynamics persuading brand equity. Additionally, the connotation of the factors such as brand image and brand loyalty was tested as a mediators in the link between brand personality, brand attitude, brand association and brand equity. According to the results of the study brand image and brand loyalty are important constituents of brand equity. Additionally, brand image and brand loyalty were also confirmed as mediators of the study.

John et al. (2006) suggest to form robust brand equity it is necessary for the practitioners to develop a strong association of consumers with the brand. Therefore, the author did not only introduced the brand concept map to highlight the importance of brand association through brand concept map but also investigated and present a complete map of brand association. The researchers thoroughly present how individual and group assications develops towards the brand. The researchers also presented the brand concept map methodology with the help of examples. With the help of brand concept map methodology one can easily understand its effectiveness and reliability in enhancing brand equity. Jin et al. (2019) also investigated the importance of brand association in boosting brand equity. The researchers argue there are several factors which can influence brand association and one of them is brand colour. The researcher investigated the impact of brand color with three sub dimensions and lebel them as progressive, oriental and fashionable. The brand association was also measured with three actes such as attitude, benefit and attribute and investigated its impact on brand identification and brand loyalty. Data were collected from

781 participants through open ended questionnaires and interviews. The outcomes of the investigation disclose brand color has encouraging major impact on all facets of brand association. Additionally, brand association has positive and significant impact on brand identification and brand loyalty. Thus, the researchers conclude brand color has a significant importance in marketing and it has the potientail to influence on brand accociation as well as brand loyalty. Dew & Kwon (2010) conducted a four steps exploratory research for the investigation of consumers's brand knowledge and its effect on brand association and performance. The study has been conducted on the female consumers who were studying at college level in southeastern university. In the first phase, the researchers found a positive relationship between brand recall and recognition of brand behaviour. In the seconf phase, the researcher found four brand apparal catagories which were common in female college consumers. In the third phase, the researcher investigated the link between brand awareness and brand association through interviews and open ended questionnaires. The results depicts that brand awareness was not positively associated with brand association. In the last phase, the researchers investigated the brand category membership with the model of categorization. This study focus on the importance brand association, brand awareness and brand brand categorization. All the stated factors influence on brand identification and categorization of brands.

Due to having immense importance of brand association in developing brand equity and brand performance researchers and practitioners are striving to find out the factors influencing brand association (Berni et al., 2020). The study of brand association is important in understanding the trend of employees as well as in enhancing brand equity and brand performance (Ameyibor et al., 2021). Due to brand association, employee loyalty, commitment to the brand increased and employees remained satisfied in purchasing and spending premium prices for the products and services (Jamshidi & Rousta, 2021). Therefore, researchers suggest investigating factors enhancing brand association (Ibrahim, 2021).

The objective of this chapter is to explore and extant factors which can influence employee brand association. For this, comprehensive literature available on brand association has been analyzed and presented in this chapter. This chapter will help practitioners in identifying the important factors which can help in bridging an association with the brands. Moreover, this chapter can also help researchers in investigating the impact of various factors in enhancing brand association. We also suggest several ways in enhancing brand association by considering all the available literature.

FACTORS AFFECTING BRAND ASSOCIATION

Brand Awareness (BA) and Brand Association (BAS)

BA is defined as ''the knowledge about the brand, whether employees or customers are well aware of the brand or not (Sürücü et al., 2019)? Brand awareness measures how well a consumer can remember or identify the brand. Employees' knowledge about what the brand is offering, types of products, quality of products, all factors that contribute to enhancing awareness about the brands (Foroudi, 2019). All these factors made a node in employees' memory which they use to recall the brand (Chinomona & Maziriri, 2017). Brand awareness increases bonding with the brand and brand equity (Sasmita & Mohd Suki, 2015). Brand awareness help in learning about the brands and help customers in decision making (Rachmawati et al., 2020). Therefore, an in-depth research is required on the exploration of the factors affecting brand awareness (Tsuji et al., 2009). According to Sürücü et al. (2019) there are two components

of BA ''recognition and recall''. Brand recognition is known as how well you know the brand and identifies the brand. Brand recall is defined as how well a consumer can remember the brand. According to the available literature on brand recognition, it can be accessed through the following points. First, color, design, images, logos. Second. A clear differentiation of the product from the other products. Finally, a high purchase intention (Sürücü et al., 2019). All these factors influence brand association and brand equity (Dew & Kwon, 2010). Shortly, brand association leads to brand equity.

Sasmita & Mohd Suki (2015) studied the impact of BA, brand image, brand loyalty and brand brand awareness on brand equity. The findings of the study reveal brand awareness influence brand equity, employees who are well aware about the product and services of the brand preffer to buy from the specific brand. French & Smith (2010) investigated the role of brand accociation in froming decision about brands. Cheung et al. (2019) suggest there are several factors which can help in increasing brand awareness and now a days social media is playing a vital role in spreading awareness about the brands. Therefore, the researchers examined the influence of social media marketing on brand image and BA. The researchers examined various dimensions of social media marketing such as interface, entertainment, redesign and electronic word of mouth on both factors brand awareness and imgae. The direct links between social media marketing and brand awareness and image with the moderating role of product involvement level. The researchers concluded that all dimensions of social media marketing impact on brand image and BA. Shamsudin et al. (2020) examined the relationship between brand association and awareness to investigate the relationship between consumer's purchase intention of skin care commodities. The researchers approached five largest shopping malls and total 450 participants give their responses on the questionnaire. The results of the study illustrate that brand awareness and association both increases consumer's purchasing intention. Ilyas et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between BA and consumer's repurchase intention through customer's satisfaction. Data were collected from 200 participants by using online survey method. The outcomes of the analysis indicate brand awareness has a vital impact on consumer's repurchase intenion. Additionally, customer's satisfaction umpire the relationship between BA and customer's repurchase intention. Nguyen & Nguyen, (2020) examined the factors influencing BA particularly in the context of virtual marketing. The analysis has been conducted on 552 participants. According to the findings of the study social media, spread, messages, credibility, entertainment and attractiveness increase brand awareness.

Brand Image (BI) and Brand Association (BA)

Keller (2002) describes the BI as the perception of the brand in consumer retention. These memories could be related to any aspect of the brand such as color, size, logo, etc (Cleff & Walter, 2014). BI reflect the consumer's feelings and perception about the brand (Sürücü et al., 2019). Consumers use the BI to differentiate between the competitive brands which helps them in identifying the brands (Mulyono & Pasaribu, 2021). Sometimes consumers use specific symbols to relate with the brands which helps them in identifying the brand (Manhas & Tukamushaba, 2015). Therefore, researchers suggest that the brands must have an influential brand image so that consumers can differentiate the specific brand from other brands (S. (Ally) Lee et al., 2017). BI attracts employees towards the brands and influences their purchasing behavior (Alif Fianto et al., 2014).

Lee et al. (2011) observed the impact of BI on the brand equity. The findings of the study reveals organizations with strong brand image have strong brand equity. The study has been conducted in the specific scenario of merger and acuisitions.

(Schnittka et al., 2012) introduced a novel concept known as brand concept map which can be used to measure brand image to fortifying brand association. Brrand concept map approach is defined as visual presentation of data which represents consumer's perception about the brand in contrast to their competitios. Iglesias et al. (2011) investigated the mediating role of commitment between brand experience and brand loyalty. Data were gathered by using both ways online and personal distribution of questionnaires. The results of the study reveal affective commitment with the product mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyaty. The study focused on the importance of brand experience in enhancing brand loyalty. The researchers also concluded that affective commitment play a significant role in booting brand loyalty.

Brand Experience (BE) and Brand Association (BAS)

Brakus et al. (2009) BE is defined as a personal consumer comeback regarding a brand which could be sensory, emotional, judgmental, and behavioral. BE develops through price, quantity, packaging, etc (Shaari et al., 2012). The BE could be stimulated by two ways such as direct and indirect. When the consumers have used the product or enjoy the services this is called direct experience. The indirect experience happened through advertisement, news, and social media (Bapat, 2018).

In a rapidly changing and competitive environment, brands must think about how they can give an unforgettable experience to the consumers in a way that they can memorize the brand in a positive manner (Brakus et al., 2009). If brands want that their consumers differentiate them from others and they wish to survive for a longer period of time then they should give a memorable experience (Bapat, 2018). A satisfactory brand experience enhances customers' satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and commitment to the brand (Iglesias et al., 2019). According to Bapat (2018) brand experience could have four features such as sensory, emotional, rational, and behavioral. Researchers relate these features of experience with product-oriented as well as services-oriented organizations. Researchers suggest a sensory type of feature of brand experience is related to services organizations (e.g. banks, hospitals, hospitality sector). Iglesias et al. (2019) sensory brand experience in banking industry could influence on brands and brand equity. This study investigated the relationship between sensory brand experience on brand equity. Customer's satisfaction and brand commitement were used as mediators of the study in the relationship between brand sensory experience and brand equity. While employee empathy was measured as a moderator of the study in the association between brand sensory experience and customers' satisfaction and commitment. The results of the study reveal sensory brand experience indirectly influence brand equity. Brand empathy has a negative moderating effect between sensory brand experience and commitment. Cleff & Walter (2014) advocate brand experience has several facets such as (e.g., sensory, cognitive affective, behavioral and relational) which provides consumer amusing and unforgettable experience. Thus it is generaly assumed that brand experience have positive impact on brand association which ultimately enhance brand equity. Therefore, (Cleff & Walter, 2014), investigated the relationship of all types of brand experience aon brand equity. Data were gathered from Tiwan. The outcomes of the study disclose all facets of brand experience influence brand equity but with diferent intensity. Such as brand experience is positively associated with brand image, but a little bit positive impact on bran dawareness. In this way, affective and sensory dimension have strong positive impact but cognitive and behavioral dimensions have less positive impact as contrast to sensory and affective dimension.

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Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB) and Brand Association (BAS)

Brand's positive and negative behavior towards their employees and consumers have remained a burning issue in marketing research (Kim et al., 2018). In this line, researchers introduced several behaviors of brands towards their users such as brand supportive behavior (Hu et al., 2018). Wu & Chang (2019) define brand supportive behavior as a factor of quality that brands offer to their consumers. But they did not introduce the facets or indicators of brand supportive behavior. Then the researchers conceptualize the brand supportive behavior and link this behavior with citizenship behavior. Finally, brand citizenship behavior came into its true definition which is defined as the ''behavioral performance of the inside investors of the brand that reinforce the brand identity of any organization''.

Background of BCB

To understand BCB, it is necessary to understand the organizational citizenship behavior for instance how it emerges and what type of organizational citizenship behavior have been introduced by different researchers over a period of time.

Brand citizenship behavior has been originated from citizenship behavior which has been introduced by (Posdakoff & MacKenzie, 1994; Smith et al., 1983). Smith et al. (1983) defined citizenship behavior as ''optional/unrestricted or discretionary behavior which is not implemented by the employer or the organization but is beneficial for the organization (Organ, 2009). Organizational citizenship behavior goes through a number of reiterations from the last few decades (Moon, 2016). Researchers introduced several definitions, dimensions, and constructs of OCB. it has been clearly observed from the past meta-analysis that over a period of time OCB goes through several changes or iteration regarding its dimensionality (Hoffman et al., 2007). Meta-analysis on OCB reveals that several researchers introduce different dimensions of OCB such as Organ introduced five dimensions of OCB (Smith et al., 1983), smith offer two dimensions Smith et al. (1983), and Rush suggest one dimension of OCB (Allen & Rush, 1998).

Bettencourt et al. (2001) suggest, there are three dimensions of OCB such as loyalty, participation, and services. Bettencourt et al. (2001) suggest with the help of the loyalty dimension that employees are not only the ambassadors of the services and products of the organization but they are also the ambassadors of the organization's image. While participation shows the level of engagement of employees in the betterment of their peers and colleagues. Participation does not only the level of self-motivation towards improving organizational productivity. The services dimension represents how well front-line employees interact with the customers and are willing to solve their problems (Bettencourt et al., 2001). Consisted on the above-mentioned dimensions of OCB Graham (1991) proposed three dimensions of BCB such as organizational loyalty, organizational participation, and organizational obedience which were further confirmed by tencourt et al. (2001), Sun et al. (2007), and Lin et al. (2009),.

Based on three dimensions proposed by (Graham, 1991), Maloney (2007), and subsequently Piehler (2011), identifies three dimensions of BCB which are known as a brand missionary (e.g., faithfulness with the brand's products and services), brand reception (e.g., alignment and acknowledgment of brands formal rule's and regulations) and bran progression (e.g., eagerness to learn about the brand and work for its progress). Thus brand citizenship behavior is a modern concept therefore, it is capturing the attention of several researchers (Shaari et al., 2012).

Piehler et al. (2016) workd on the conceptualization and development of the constructs of internal brand management such as brand commitment, brand awareness, brand identification and their impact on

brand citizenship behavior. Data ware collected from 375 employees working in services organizations of Australia. According to the results of the study brand understaning influence BCB. Additionally, brand identification and brand commitment both have indirect impact on BCB. Kim et al. (2018) conducted a study on food industry to examine the relationship of services fairness brand citizenship behavior through two mdiators brand awareness and brand trust. Data were collected from Korean consumers. The results of the study unveil that brand fairness is influenced by BCB through brand experience and brand trust. Shaari et al. (2015) empricially explored the impact of leadership styles such as transactional and transformational leadership styles on BCB. The researchers suggest brand citizenship behavior acts as a essenail cause of enhaching brand goodwill and brand performance. Data have been collected form 286 participants from 3-5 stars hotels of Malaysia. According to the results of the study both leadership styles (e.g., transactional and transformational leadership) positively associated with BCB.

Brand Identity and Brand Association

Organizational identity has been described as how well an employee is perceived to be a member of the organization (e.g., affiliation, belongingness, and psychological attachment with the organization) (Gioia et al., 2013). Every individual has some individual, group, and social identities from which they belong (Gioia et al., 2013). Group and social identity are based on certain characteristics (Ellemers et al., 2002). Researchers suggest individuals develop an identity with a specific group based upon their attachment, belongingness, and affiliation (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006). Therefore, they prefer the group to which they belong. Likewise, brands develop consumer and employee identities by providing them substantial values (Alvarado-Karste & Guzmán, 2020). Brand identity could be developed through different ways such as brand personality, image, product, etc (Mao et al., 2020). Several researchers define brand identity with several dimensions, researchers describe brand identity as the reflections of a brand's personality, image, and physique. Danciu (2010) described four dimensions of a brand's identity. Kapferer (2008) introduced six magnitudes of brand identity like brand presentation, brand personality, brand positioning, culture, vision, and relationship. Likewise, de Chernatony (1999) also introduced six extents of brand identity (e.g., organizational competencies, visualization, values, personality, tradition, and key offering.

CONCLUSION

The motive of this chapter was to identify the factors affecting BAS that ultimately impact brand equity. A large amount of literature on brand equity suggests consumer brand association is a key indicator of brand equity. Keeping in view the importance of brand association, we present possible factors which can influence brand association. We postulate that BA, BI, BCB and brand identity are the key factors among all other factors affecting the brand association. We do not only present these factors with the original definitions, background, and possible dimensions based on the available literature, but we also present studies and the results of the studies which suggest that the above-mentioned factors have a valuable impact on the brand association.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

Although we tried to present possible factors affecting brand association yet several issues remained unaddressed. For instance, organizational culture, structure, and individual characteristics such as certain personality types. We also suggest investigating all these factors with possible mediators and moderators. Lastly, a comprehensive review could be presented on possible ways of boosting factors affecting the brand association. It would also be benefical to add case studies and the conclusions of the case studies on the factors affecting brand association in multipal sectors.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Brand Association: Brand association is defined as ''the positive or negative state of mind about the brand in the consumers and employee's thoughts. These feelings create a memory in the user's mind. It is also served as an information collecting tool to achieve brand differentiation.

Brand Awareness: Brand awareness is defined as ''information stored in the consumer's memory related to the product or services which they use to differentiate the chosen brand from the other brands.

Brand Citizenship Behavior: Brand citizenship behavior is defined as acceptance and compliance with the brand. Researchers defined brand citizenship behavior as non-compulsory behavior in the production and delivery of services.

Brand Experience: Brand experience is defined as a consumer's sensual, interactive, and emotional interaction with the brand.

Brand Image: Brand image is defined as reflection or perception or about the brand which could be positive or negative.

Chapter 9
Knowledge–Sharing Culture and Employee–Based Brand Equity

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ABSTRACT

in this chapter, the knowledge-sharing culture and employee-based brand equity have been discussed. It's an organizational culture that promotes and allows employees to freely share their expertise, thoughts, and experiences. There are several advantages to fostering a knowledge-sharing culture in your organization. It's also worth mentioning that, while information sharing appears to be straightforward, there's a lot more to it than meets the eye. You should be aware that developing a knowledge-sharing culture in your company comes with several hurdles. It must be able to overcome these obstacles in order to design an effective one. EBBE is less concerned with the establishment of a brand identity, which is something that corporations do as a matter of course in their quest of competitive advantage. Rather, EBBE involves the translation of the brand identity in a form that is relevant to the employee in the context of their tasks and responsibilities, which may be described as the differential influence that brand knowledge has on an employee's attitude to their work environment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, you would be able to:

- Describe knowledge sharing culture and characteristics.

- Ways to develop Knowledge sharing culture.
- Highlight advantages and challenges of knowledge sharing culture.
- What is brand equity based on employees?
- Internal employee brand management.
- Employee brand knowledge effects
- Benefits of employees-based brand equity to.

An organization's learning and developing strategy is a make-or-break for business. It's not only time-consuming process but also a kind of expensive. In order to get more productivity knowledge should be shared and the transfer of learning should be appreciated. Knowledge already exists within organization especially in your leaders, well performer employees as well as experts who can share their know-how regarding business. In modern era where the turnover of staff is high, knowledge sharing has become a difference between hanging on survival and thriving. It is because knowledge can fall through the cracks when staff moves on. New staff have to relearn before they start official work. The training of each aspect is not only hard to provide but impossible to arrange for each point. Employees should share knowledge and their learning with each other in order to be more productive team and well-performers. In order to get more productivity, empowered employees and building strong connected community knowledge sharing culture is non-optional. If you are noy devoting to sharing learning as well as knowledge regarding business, unfortunately you are losing efficiency.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING CULTURE

Knowledge sharing culture is the part of internal knowledge management where employees are enabling as well as empower to share their knowledge, skills abilities and the lessons they have learnt. The culture influences the open space communication where the barrier regarding hierarchy of organization doesn't exist and employees can have open communication regarding learning and promote knowledge market. Effective knowledge sharing can happen where the alignment of organizational goals and open space communication toward cultural and technical infrastructure is good. It let organizations use the experts which are already in-house for employee's development and support (Gurteen, 1999).

Lindblom & Tikkanen, (2010) has defined knowledge sharing culture as "a conscious strategy of getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time and helping people share and put information into action in ways that will improve organizational competitiveness."

Knowledge sharing culture promotes the horizontal communication -from employees to employees-vertical communication – from CEO to workers- as well. It enhance the spirit of sharing knowledge, skills, experience and learning which opens the new gates toward success. For example the *Xerox* have introduced the culture of sharing and motivates the employees to so. This company was the one of the first who highlight the importance of knowledge sharing culture as well (Powers, 1999).

Knowledge sharing culture can be develop within organization by adopting following steps.

Steps to Build Knowledge Sharing Culture

Building a culture within organization may contain various steps according to business. But there are some general steps which may help to create effective knowledge sharing culture. *Establish an Open-Door Policy*

In any organization, open door policies can establish when the trustworthy environment can create. Where employees can start trusting each other in order to share their experience, skills, knowledge without being harmed by another colleague. Positive environment is his back bone of open space communication. Open door policies lead to break typical hierarchy where employees feel easy to ask questions, help without being humiliated. By breaking the hierarchical structure, leaders and experts would be accessible to all employees and workers which would enhance the spirit to ask questions and guidelines and inspire other to help each other as well. Most of employees get uncomfortable or feel hesitation to speak up because they are afraid of being insulted or considered dumb for being wrong. If the environment of trust would be established successfully and everyone would be allowed to get participated without being judged. Knowledge sharing culture would be seen increasing day by day and it's benefits would be highlighted.

1. **Install a Knowledge Sharing Platform:**

Organizations need to recognize the knowledge management system and why it is still using. If an organization have thousands of employees so it is impossible for firms to share knowledge to all at once so it is recommended organizations should create a platform or online sites which have all kind of information, past experiences, knowledge regarding all type of chores on job as well as helping site. E-mails should be sent and all kind of calendars, folders, files should be available to employees of particular firm at once both physically and online.

On the other hand, unofficial events should be organized time by time and meeting should be held to share experience as questions and break hierarchical structure to promote the culture of sharing. A knowledge sharing culture discourages hiding and promotes collaborations discussions and teamwork.

As Handzic & Agahari,(2004) described a case study on *Deloitte,* an Australian consulting firm that how the firm gradually introduced the knowledge sharing culture and implementation was slow and steady but was and still fruitful . Deloitte took initiative to bring innovation by changing their core value into sharing value

2. **Actively Encourage Knowledge Sharing:**

Different type of people works in organizations. so, the behaviors and psychological states vary person to person. Somme employees don't really like to open up with people and some always have new plans to discuss. Human resource department should always be bin touch with all kind of employees to promote culture of knowledge sharing. Organizations should encourage knowledge sharing culture by collaborating, teaming up and discussions.

Now a days firms run on collaborations and sharing. Employees don't want to put their head down and work all the day long. They want to communicate, take advice, listen suggestions and seek help. In order to get all these employees, adopt the habit of being helpful as well. Which promotes the culture of sharing as well.

3. **Reward Employees Who are Sharing Knowledge:**

Performance appraisal system has already changed the way of working of employees of modern ear. It is the psychological game for human to reward on good and punish on bad. For the sake of motivation, not employees but all kind of humans like to get rewarded for doing good work. Same theory would be applied here. Employees should be motivated by rewarding for sharing knowledge. That would surly enhance the spirit of discussion and giving ideas.
For example

4. **Be patient with mistakes:**

As it is mentioned before, some employees are always afraid to be mocked or looked down for sharing or being wrong. They don't want to be highlighted as dumb or mistaken ones so they prefer to be quiet. In order to reduce this action organizations should promote the environment of trust and kindness where let employees know it is ok to do mistakes sometime. Mistakes are the ladder for learning something new. The culture of knowledge sharing directly or indirectly based on kindness, care as well as trust. There should be tolerance by authorities towards mistakes of employees and highlight how would they learn from it.

5. **Give Each New Employee a Mentor:**

Attracting great talent is a priority for firms, but it may be waste of time if the new worker is too scared to offer their expertise and talents straight away. It should be wanted them to feel at comfort and useful to business right away.
The mentor is someone to whom new employee may go to with questions or matters at any time. This particular is not new employee's direct boss, so any fear of being condemned for being themselves and attempting to fit in is gone. The mentor will set a positive example and urge your new recruit to speak out and contribute as soon as possible.

6. **Ask Employees for Their Input Directly:**

To ask workers or employees directly is the great method to figure out what they are thinking. It would be a mistake to believe that just because they are new to the organization or don't have 10 years of expertise in the sector, they don't have any relevant information or ideas. It's important to continually have a few points of view and get input from colleagues. Asking may feel uncomfortable at first, but with time, asking or providing feedback will transform into a mutually useful collaborative network.

7. **Schedule Some Social Events for Employees**

No one can be healthy if they work all the time. Organizations should plan some events for staff to participate in after work or on weekends. It's a great method for employees to spend time together in a more relaxed setting. They can get to know one other in this setting, especially if there is a restriction that no one can talk about their job tasks for the first hour!

While choosing activities, make sure they are entertaining for everyone. Avoid activities that need a high level of expertise or physical ability.

8.   **Be Patient with your Employees**

It will take time for staff to adjust if there is executing a knowledge sharing culture as a new policy in your corporation. They may have worked in past situations where being violent and treating colleagues as competitors was valued more than working together to achieve common goals. People who have been familiar to a quite different approach of working will need to rethink how colleagues are "supposed" to engage with one another. The new technique of replacing information and working together appears to be less stressful than viewing people who work for the same firm as possible threats.

9.   **Allow New Hires to Shadow Employees**

Organizations should look for someone who is good at interacting with other team members and sharing expertise. Make arrangements for your new recruit to shadow them for a few days. When your new hires observe how your more experienced employees manage discussing their thoughts with other colleagues, he or she will feel more at ease adopting a similar work style. 'The idea is to encourage your new employees to express themselves while remaining respectful to coworkers, suppliers, other company representatives, and so on. Being outspoken about one's beliefs should never lead to an attempt to drown out the thoughts of others.

Importance of Knowledge Sharing Culture

Sharing knowledge boosts company and reorganizes training—also it's valuable for people. Sharing knowledge enhances your workers' feeling of be appropriate inside the business, fosters empathy, enhances collaboration, boosts commitment, and enables the whole workforce to become professionals in their business – and in their organization. As it is stated in literature that the knowledge sharing culture would boot the organizations up like *Walmart* started converting into "sharing behaviors" in 2005 and now have culture of knowledge sharing(Walton, 2012).

*   **Reduces Support Training Costs:**

Large firms lose $47 million in productivity each year on average because they do not have effective processes in place for information exchange. Employees take longer to finish tasks and become miserable as they seek to acquire the information they require to perform their work. They may also rely on your IT department to resolve minor issues that they could manage themselves.

Knowledge-sharing structures make easier this procedure. If a worker feels misplaced on the way to clear up a problem, they could flip to an expertise base to discover the solutions they need. This permits crew embers to discover ways to use the gear wished for his or her jobs and get their paintings executed faster—and it saves your resident professionals or IT branch from feeling overwhelmed with requests.

*   **Creates Knowledge Experts:**

Knowledge sharing enables your workers to obtain information and skills that would have been tricky to attain if they had gone it alone. The method develops your existing internal experts while also helping in the formation of new experts from the rest of your organization.

When it is done correctly, this can be a really encouraging experience for everyone concerned. Your current specialists are publicly recognized as subject matter experts—their skills, ideas, and experience become the gold standard for your firm. Everyone else in business benefits from mentorship, helping them to expand their expertise and advance in their careers.

This also helps your company to recruit and retain exceptional employees. Employees are naturally drawn to firms that will invest in their professional development and provide opportunity for them to tap into the organization's pooled expertise. Making it apparent that you value employee skill development might provide you a competitive edge.

- **Sparks Innovation and Improvement**

By allowing your team to build on one other's ideas, knowledge sharing empowers your team to handle complicated issues. It produces an imaginative atmosphere in which employees can rely on one another for problem-solving rather of carrying duties alone. Researchers discovered that since rivals were permitted to take and "tweak" the work of their predecessors, total performance grew consistently over time. This environment also allowed "innovative leaps," or occurrences in which a rival made important modifications to the status quo.

When confronted with a difficult task, knowledge sharing may give your staff with a comparable starting point. They may either make effective modifications for optimizing processes or take huge inventive leaps to deliver a significant process improvement for the entire firm by accessing and iterating on existing organizational knowledge.

- **Encourages teamwork and communication**

Establishing a knowledge-sharing strategy makes it easier for employees to collaborate and share what they know to their colleagues. It adds actionable steps to a process that would otherwise go overlooked—it educates your personnel on when and how to promote their expertise. Employees may be hesitant to share their expertise (a tendency known as "knowledge hoarding"). This may be influenced by a number of things, including whether or not they are knowledge workers, their amount of autonomy, and how connected they are with their team members.

If these hurdles exist in your business, creating a culture of knowledge sharing can help workers overcome them. It also ensures that important knowledge is distributed across organizational silos, allowing individuals from different teams or departments to learn from one another.

- **Find more effective ways of doing businesses.**

Creating a common knowledge base, there are many benefits including the same mistake would not be repeated again and again. You can highlight the finest experience you had, and make sure it can be repeated. When the knowledge about specific idea would be shared, other employees would avoid to so same mistake and learn from other's experience.

- **Connect distant employees to information:**

Don't overlook your remote workers! Outside of the face-to-face context, it can be tough for individuals to learn from their colleagues, and it can be much more difficult to ask the proper questions. When you're isolated, you're concerned that you're bothering folks. When individuals can search for common information, it's like killing two birds with one stone (Chang et al., 2021).

Working remotely presents unique obstacles and settings, so there's a good possibility they'll provide a new perspective to a product, engagement, or roadblock you're encountering. As a result, it's critical that employees working away from the office have a place to share their knowledge.

Barriers of Knowledge Hiding Culture

Knowledge sharing culture now a days is considered as back bone of business. Typical trends are changing but unfortunately there are many hinders toward an ideal knowledge sharing culture which is rising problem for firms. But Barriers of knowledge sharing culture can be overcome. For example Andreasian & Andreasian, (2013) have stated the barriers of transforming firms into knowledge sharing culture . It also have been mentioned the all department should be treated in different way to bring knowledge sharing culture.

- **Lack of time:**

Appling changing in any firm is the biggest challenge and knowledge sharing culture isn't exception. Knowledge sharing culture requires the time from employees to share with each other. But in this era where every human is in race to leave others behind, no one have enough time to share. Rather than sharing with each other employees focus on their own work.

Organizations should create strategies regarding and highlight the benefits of sharing knowledge. If unofficial meeting could be arranged by firms there will be more time to share and get better day by day. Another way is to highlight the goals of organization in light of knowledge sharing culture and make the part of organization's culture. It would help to break the barrier of time.

- **Resistance to change:**

Bringing change and innovation is the most difficult thing to do in any organization. Mostly people don't like to change and want to stick in same situation for the whole life. They get afraid to be changed and adopt new ways. Same reactions for knowledge sharing culture do occur. Firstly people don't want to adopt new behaviors even for betterment. People feel threat to adopt change

Here organizations should arrange trainings and mention the perks of changing behaviors and adopting new and positive behavior for the sake of knowledge sharing. Setting the example by leaders and supervisors for it would be better.

- **Lack of participation:**

Mostly employees aren't as active in communication or sharing as they are active at work. They are introverts and don't talk too much. Those people try to avoid social connection and don't participate in any unofficial activity.

Another reason is afraid of getting insulted of looked down. Employee's thing if they start sharing and somehow, they make mistake, it would be embarrassing so they try to avoid sharing information.

By adopting internal infrastructures to mention workers who take part to the common knowledge base is a brilliant method to increase commitment. Give staff the acknowledgement they deserve to inspire information sharing. Make certain that they are fully credited (with their names appearing as the writers) for any information they offer. This will provide them with the clout they seek and encourage them to join again in the future.

- **Unreasonably difficult tools:**

Working with complicated e-learning authoring tools was also a burden in the past when it came to knowledge exchange. Management was also discouraged from pursuing a knowledge-sharing plan due to clunky, pricey technology. This result was, in fact, one of the most often cited impediments to implementing knowledge-sharing platforms.

Fortunately, those times have passed. Simple, zero-learning-curve writing tools, such as Easy generator, have made information sharing easier and more affordable than ever before. Choose an easy-to-learn authoring tool to make the content creation process as seamless and stress-free as feasible.

- **Anxieties about job security:**

Some employees may worry that sharing their expertise may jeopardies their career or job security. They may wish to "horde" their expertise in order to outperform less informed coworkers. This is a logical reaction in today's highly competitive workplace.

To combat this competition and encourage collaboration, offer employees full credit for contributing their expertise and participating in Employee-generated Learning. Employees are most motivated when they are recognized for their efforts. Include their names and even faces in internal communications, and extol their accomplishments to make them feel valued and appreciated.

EMPLOYEE BASED BRAND EQUITY (EBBE)

Brand Equity

When compared to a similar alternative, brand equity means the value advantage that a firm rises from an item with a distinctive name. Organizations can leverage brand image by manufacturing their products distinctive, instantly identifiable, and better in quality and performance.

According to a brand, the core point of interaction between an organization and its customers is a type of intellectual property. The phrase "brand equity" denotes what sets a brand besides its commodities version in terms of favorable views and emotional state among customers and prospects, lowering the relative prices of products and services bearing its name.

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Brand equity is the difference between brand value and brand equity, which is the amount at which a firm can sell its trademark to some other organization. Although, together with other advantages a consumer gets, such as accessibility offered by a distributor, it might be associated with the concept of brand image. Revenue and brand capital are not the same thing. Although revenue can be achieved rapidly by reducing expenses, growing brand value necessitates spending for longer-term possibilities to build and maintain revenue.

Strong brand equity may bring benefits like the capacity to satisfy customers during opponent price reductions, the power to charge higher prices than opponents, as well as the ability to handle bad reports such as item or service failures. This can bring to a successful placement from one's trademark on a product, as demonstrated by Procter and Gambler's decision to develop a Tide Dry Cleaner franchise. Moreover, when products and services are more widely duplicated, respected brand identity becomes an item's sole differentiating factor.

Brand equity is the equity of a franchise based on its significance and strength. The following parameters can be used to assess brand equity:

1. The cost difference between branded and non-branded goods.
2. When opposed to certain other brands in almost the same area and/or region, the brand's increased sales quantity.
3. Clients may simply subordinate the success of all of the firm's brands with the profitability ratio if the brand name is the same as the business name or if the strong brand is the same as the business name.
4. Shareholder remuneration
5. Brand's image in terms of various important qualities
6. The Brand's future revenues are the potential
7. Using a mix of the previous methodologies, some ways of calculating an effective brand entail calculating a factor. Brand image can be calculated by integrating many elements, such as brand reputation or product recognition.

Steps of Build Brand Equity

1. Step 1 – Identity: Start with your company image
2. Step 2 – Meaning: What Does Your Branding Mean and What Does It Stand For?
3. Step 3 – Response: Change the way your consumers think and believe regarding your company.
4. Step 4 – Relationships: Create a stronger connection with customers.

In the corporate world, brand equity is growing at a rapid pace, with two viewpoints:

- Employee based brand equity(EBBE)
- Customer based brand equity (CBBE)

WHY A THIRD PERSPECTIVE OF BRAND EQUITY?

Due to the increasing recognition that brands are among the most important intangible resources a business can now have, branding strategy has become a major focus for both administration and scholars. They can recognize a product's origin, allocate duties to the product manufacturer, decrease customer search and evaluation, create a commitment, symbolize performance.

Brands are thought to provide customers with benefits both monetarily and symbolically. As a result, financial gains can be gained by the operators of such brands if they can regularly deliver on their promises. Brands are seen as value producers in the corporate world.

Workers are recognized as essential to the product cycle companies are increasingly motivating them to accept their position as brand ambassadors. Non-financial metrics of brand equity, including such customer views, are frequently paired with financial metrics of brand image, such as potential income or customer base, to assess the effectiveness brand management activities.

Employee Based Brand Equity

EBBE is less concerned to the development of brand image of an organization, instead it generally helps organizations to achieve competitive advantage. In addition, EBBE is characterize as an impact of brand awareness on a individual's behavior to their work environment necessitates the interpretation of the brand image into a method that is relevant to the worker in the setting of their tasks and the responsibility. Worker brand structures are built as a result of this approach, allowing for personnel selection, engagement, and incentive to execute on the commitment. For customers to see the benefit and, as a result, demonstrate good consumption behaviors, organizations must make the product meaningful. They must also make the company interesting and relevant for workers to see a profit for them to engage in good effort behaviors, which will result in increased brand image. A distinguishing factor is relevant to brand awareness frameworks. It's because new workers are already familiar with a brand to unpredictable steps when they join the company. When it comes to a worker, the difference between proper brand awareness and brand identification can be understood as the former requires worker's ability to interpret the brand message into brand actuality. For instance, suppose someone finds a job at Disney. They recognized the grand castle emblem, Mickey Mouse, as well as the catchphrase "Where dreams come true," and the location's connection to a wonderful and enchanting world.

Workers must interpret this brand image into what remains for them and a worker and also how they behave themselves in the framework of the work situation as just a new vehicle operator responsibility for the newest and best attractions. Further, employers must be sure that, in this kind of case, the individual's work is helping too, instead of distracting people from, the execution of the brand being perceived by the customer. Intellectual capital, on behalf of the corporation and its people, is viewed as a vital source for the competitive edge from this standpoint

Facets of Employee Based Brand Equity

Internal Brand Management

Brand Knowledge

In comparison to operational or visible information, which a company, for the most part, conveys to workers via process and practices, the right products, as represented below, can be thought of as a sort of implicit or personal understanding that is complicated to schedule and thus transmits. Tacit knowledge is the foundation from which information, such as explicit knowledge, emerges, and hence has special significance for the future benefit of an organization. In the information process of transition, explicit or procedural information is essentially consistent, if not unmodified, tacit knowledge is dependent on experience or qualifications. As a consequence, tactic knowledge is more complicated than explicit knowledge, necessitating the examination of the interchangeability of such information. For instance, tacit information, like a worker's understanding of their company's brand, might be hard to recognize, explain and hence affect or shape. This is important because workers (outside of the marketing team) have a small awareness of what a brand is, as well as the fact that brand knowledge integrates the owner's own acquired knowledge, perception, and judgment.

As a result, while communicating implicit knowledge is necessary for organizational performance, it influences lead to various clarifications. Consequently, impacting implicit knowledge groups as supported in suitable worker brand knowledge necessitates the study of the ways through which such organizational knowledge exchange is achieved. According to marketing and management scholars, several factors are taken as the influencers of implementing EBBE, which results from employees' proper brands awareness. The following section analyses each facet to provide management with a full grasp of how to generate such corporate brand value (King & Grace, 2009, 2010; Poulis & Wisker, 2016)

Internal Brand Knowledge

As said before, EBBE is unconcerned with the formation of a distinct company identity from the consumer's mental image. Instead, it represents a recognition of established brand knowledge that refers to employees as energetic market players and a desire to convert that brand knowledge into ways that allow employees to succeed. To put it another way, to empower employees to have the necessary brand knowledge to fulfill the brand promise. Information creation is concern with leading organizational action through a better understanding of current worker managerial organizational structure from this viewpoint. On the other hand, at the level of knowledge sharing, the emphasis is on translating brand information in a way that is significant to the employee's task. Workers must be able to understand their role in executing the brand assurance, which necessitates such knowledge assistance.

Information Generation

Companies should have a grasp of employee skills and also its needs and goals for effective internal communications, which eventually lead to changes in employee attitudes. Specifically associated enables the company to system and create products and services that employees see as significant and vital to their positions and responsibilities. Performing employee study, for example, offers firms insight into

the status of the organizational atmosphere, worker abilities (or lack thereof), and functions as a client satisfaction observer.

Firms can react to the demands of the domestic markets through efforts like better internal processes and procedures, focused professional development, and improved goods and services for the advantage of the end customer, thanks to this understanding. As a result, internal brand management places a high value on gathering data about the target market and using that data to react to brand management efforts. Thus, businesses are better able to figure out how to structure and deliver brand knowledge that is useful for productive employee attitudes that are attentive and so matched with the domestic market's ability and aspirations.

Spreading Knowledge

The purpose of knowledge distribution is to provide the context in which the brand image can be made meaningful to each worker. That is, knowledge demonstrating the connection between the publicly advertised brand image or guarantee, and their duties and activities must be delivered to workers for them to have favorable feelings and be capable of achieving the stated brand goal. Workers use extra data resources in addition to the transmission of effective promotional information to improve their understanding of organizational requirements.

Workers should be provided with brand information to deliver the brand message; therefore, information creation and capability of releasing reflect the coding and transmission aspects of the process of communication. Therefore, providing meaningful and useful facts does not guarantee that employees react to it in the way that the company desires. Workers must be driven or have a real desire to fulfill the brand commitment readily.

Openness

The receiver must be ready to obtain the evidence in order for it to be took capably and apparent as the source intended. As a outcome, openness refers to structures of the administrative weather that are believed to play a role in employees' responsiveness to the organization and, as a result, to the organizations customers. This framework is thought to be the only one that can handle this type of internal brand management. The openness dimension's distinctive characteristics are based on the fact that marketing and management literature frequently incorporates openness as an internal brand management dimension. Managerial support is seen as critical in fostering a welcoming workplace because of the close proximity of employees. As a result, management assistance is seen as critical for good employee outcomes and, as such, is an important part of the openness dimension.

H Factor

The 'H' Factor is a term used to describe a person who has a All internal brand creation dialogues, however, are underpinned by people, who, by their very nature, bring their own perception and expectation to the table. Consequently, it is essential to take into account aspects of successful relationships that have been pushed in the literature on relationship marketing. Successful relationships are driven by mutual goals, confidence, trust, affection or attachment, respect or understanding, and collaboration, among others. Without a thorough understanding of the factors that lead to successful internal relationships,

any effort to achieve good organizational results is likely to be futile. Because of this, the "H" factor focuses on how organizations treat their employees as human beings, including how they treat them with respect, cooperate, communicate effectively, and more. In this view, the 'H' factor serves as a conduit for profit-generating exchanges between the organization and its employees.

Employee Brand Knowledge Effects

Understanding what drives employees' "observable actions" is as important as recognising the benefits of employee brand equity, which can be seen in their intentions and behaviours. As a result, the EBBE conceptualization considers the knowledge effects that an employee receives as a result of learning about a brand. As a result of this brand understanding, employees' job clarity and dedication to the brand will rise, and thus internal brand management is considered an important outcome.

Role Clarity

As a result of providing employees with proper brand knowledge, it is possible to reduce role conflict and confusion by providing them with clear guidance and directions. As a result, employees are happier and the company is more committed. If an employee perceives that information critical to meeting performance objectives is not broadly available, the employee's role ambiguity grows). Giving that having brand knowledge is vital for serving employees with the way they need to be successful in their roles, job clarity is viewed as a meaningful means of assessing employee brand knowledge.

Brand Commitment

In order to achieve EBBE, employee engagement becomes a critical factor in ensuring that employees have a genuine desire to fulfil the company's brand promise. Employees place a high value on their relationships with their employers because of the reciprocal and reciprocal exchange that takes place between them. Furthermore, an employee is more likely to stick around if he or she believes that the company's relationship with him or her is pleasant and worthwhile. Workers' sense of belonging influences their willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty, and this view views commitment as a critical determinant of organisational performance.

An employee's grasp of the company's expectations of them is improved when they have access to internal brand knowledge. It is also thought that the ability of the firm's employees to understand and appreciate the company's brand values and purposes can inspire a level of employee connection to the organisation that results in the employee having complementary values worth sustaining. The term "EBBE benefits" refers to the idea that clear job descriptions and a sense of belonging among employees lead to measurable gains for the company.

Benefits

As demonstrated in the preceding discussion, internal brand management facilitates employee brand understanding, which is thought to be the prerequisite for enterprises to experience quantitative benefits. The importance of discovering EBBE benefits stems from the fact that such benefits are seen as the cornerstone for improving customer satisfaction and financial performance.

A company's ability to quantify the results of internal brand management activities not only indicates the effectiveness of such efforts, but also informs the company as to whether the first link in its service profit chain is strong enough to maintain subsequent connections (i.e. customer satisfaction and profit realization). The strongest proof of a connection between a brand and its intended recipient comes from the receiver's active participation in the brand experience. Corporate benefits from EBBE can be traced back to employees who exhibit brand citizenship behaviour (BCB), which is considered the first step in the chain of causation. According to Bhatti et al., (2016) and Sigfsdttir & Allegrante, (2009), contentment is a prelude to positive employee behavioural intentions and subsequent behaviours. This has been emphasised by Pearson, (1995), who points out that a decrease in job satisfaction leads to an increased risk of employee withdrawal, which is in direct conflict with the desired employee behaviours by companies.

Employee Satisfaction

A company's ability to retain and grow its workforce is directly correlated to the level of happiness among its employees. The hypothesis of employee loyalty t is measured by the stated commitment and extent of employment, as well as positive word-of-mouth and intentions to stay. As a result of EBBE, employees are more likely to stay on board and spread positive word-of-mouth about the company. Because of this, EBBE benefits, which may be described as employee demonstration of brand consistent intentions and actions, include employee happiness, employee intention to stay, and positive employee word of mouth.

One major reason for in view of EBBE advantages to be multifaceted is to integrate an objective-focused conclusion that provides for organizational trust in assessing the effect of inner brand management. As a result, staff loyalty, which appears to be an acceptable advantage of EBBE given the notion that it is a key determinant of customer loyalty and, thus, the financial success of the firm, is not incorporated within this model. This is due to the fact that the term "loyalty" is open to interpretation. In the business world, for example, client loyalty is demonstrated when a customer purchases a product from a specific company on a regular basis. To purchase the same toothpaste unconsciously is known as loyalty. Furthermore, if longevity is the only indicator, an employee who stays with a company for a long time merely to earn particular benefits may be deemed loyal. Both of these viewpoints depict highly realistic and somewhat insensible decisions that are motivated by necessity rather than a sense of commitment to the organization. In the lack of proper definition and understanding of what loyalty is, more particular and thereby quantifiable advantages must be discovered. As a result, we believe that loyalty can exhibit itself in a variety of ways. As a result, it is believed that considering employee behavioral purposes in a one-dimensional manner lacks sufficient insight. As a result, the advantages of EBBE are viewed as being jointly characterized by numerous, rather than one, dimension.

PRACTICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter takes an important part in practical and managerial practices. Knowledge sharing culture is now back bone of industries. The companies which do not change with time always get fail. This chapter has highlighted the importance as well as need of sharing culture. The major and important ways has been also mentioned in order to adopt a knowledge sharing culture. By adopting those steps innovation can be brought more conveniently. There are some challenges which may or may not be faced by companies. This chapter helps to solve the problems and take a significant part in order to implementa-

tion of sharing culture. Employee based brand equity is also the most important part as well as asset of organization. This chapter opens the practical gates for organization by enhancing the importance of employee based brand equity.

CONCLUSION

In case you didn't know, it's an organizational culture that promotes and allows employees to freely share their expertise, thoughts, and experiences. There are several advantages to fostering a knowledge-sharing culture in your organization.

It's also worth mentioning that, while information sharing appears to be straightforward, there's a lot more to it than meets the eye. You should be aware that developing a knowledge sharing culture in your company comes with several hurdles. And because this is the case, you must be able to overcome these obstacles in order to design an effective one. something that corporations do as a problem of course in their quest of a competitive advantage. Rather, EBBE involves the transformation of the brand identity in a form that is relevant to the employee in the context of their tasks and responsibilities, which may be described as the differential influence that brand knowledge has on an employee's attitude to their work environment. Employee brand knowledge structures are built as a result of this approach, allowing for employee recruitment, retention, and incentive to execute on the brand promise. Equity For customers to see value and, as a result, demonstrate good consumption habits, organizations must turn the brand expressive and appropriate. They must also make the brand meaningful and relevant for workers to perceive value in order for them to engage in good work-related performances, which will result in increased brand equity.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1.

Did you know According to a report from Panopto Fortune 500 companies lose roughly $31.5 billion a year by failing to share knowledge?

New Hires to Shadow Employees

Be Patient with your Employees

Schedule Some Social Events

Ask Employees for Their Input

Give Each New Employee a Mentor

Be patient with mistakes

Reward Employees for Sharing Knowledge

Actively Encourage Knowledge

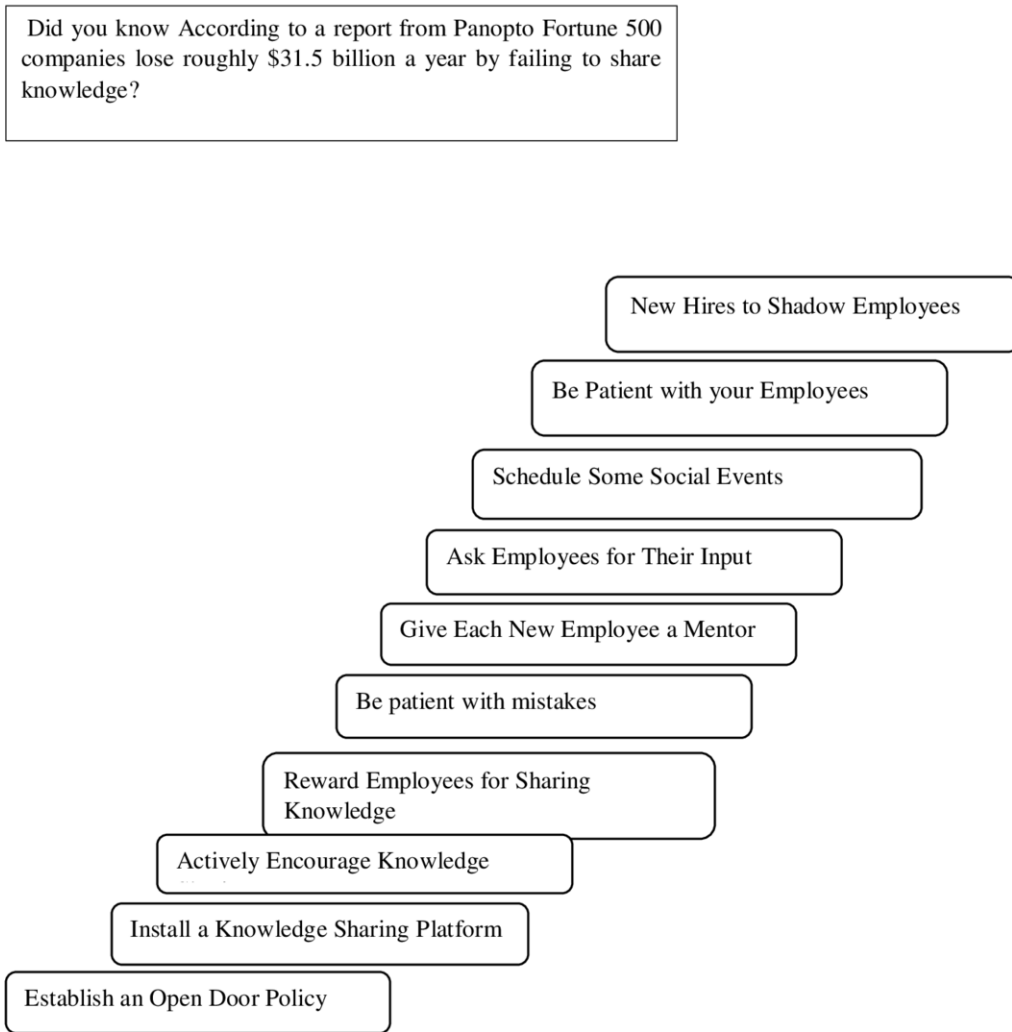Install a Knowledge Sharing Platform
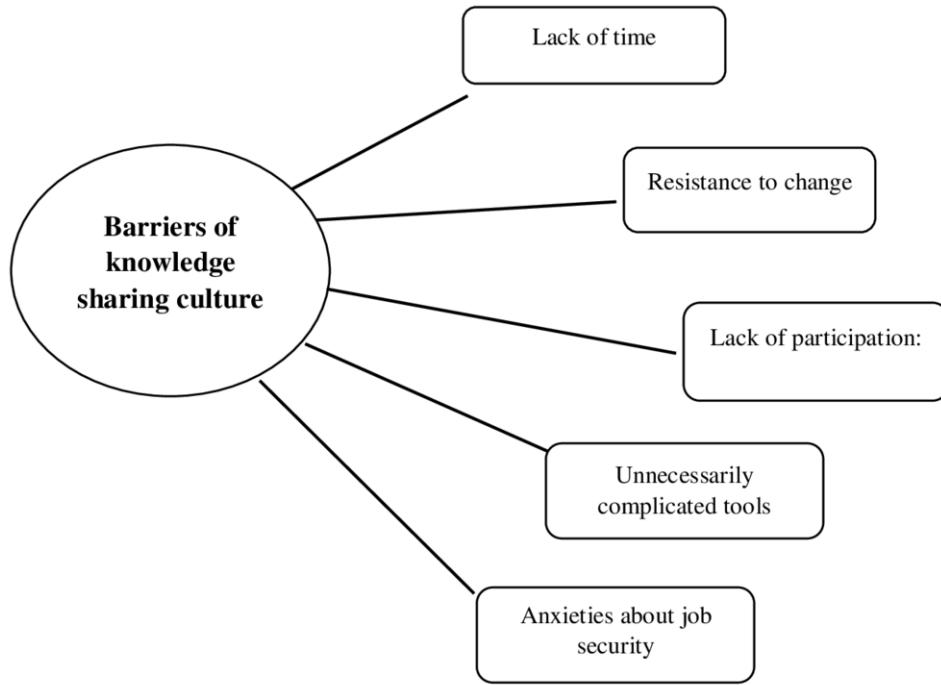
Establish an Open Door Policy

Figure 2.

Figure 3.

There are main five elements of Brand Equity.
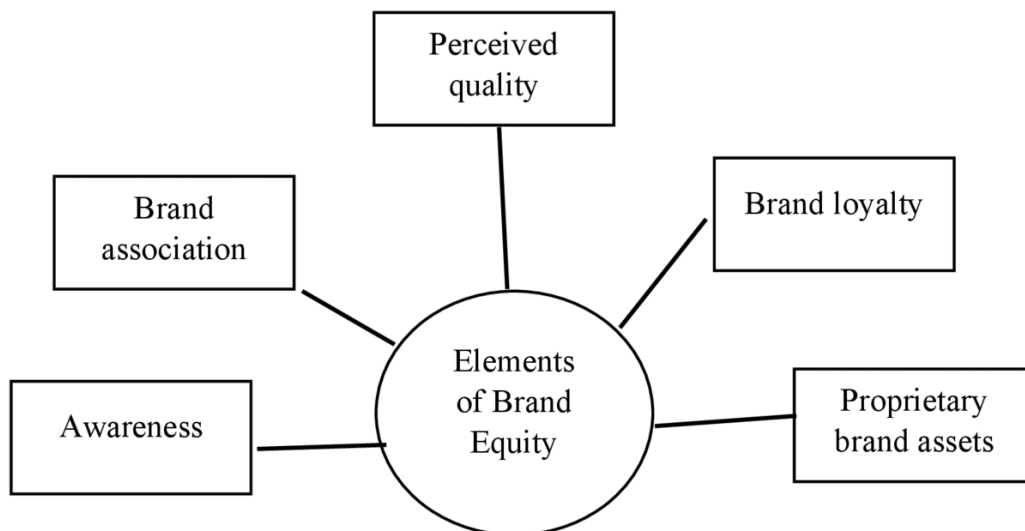
Figure 4.
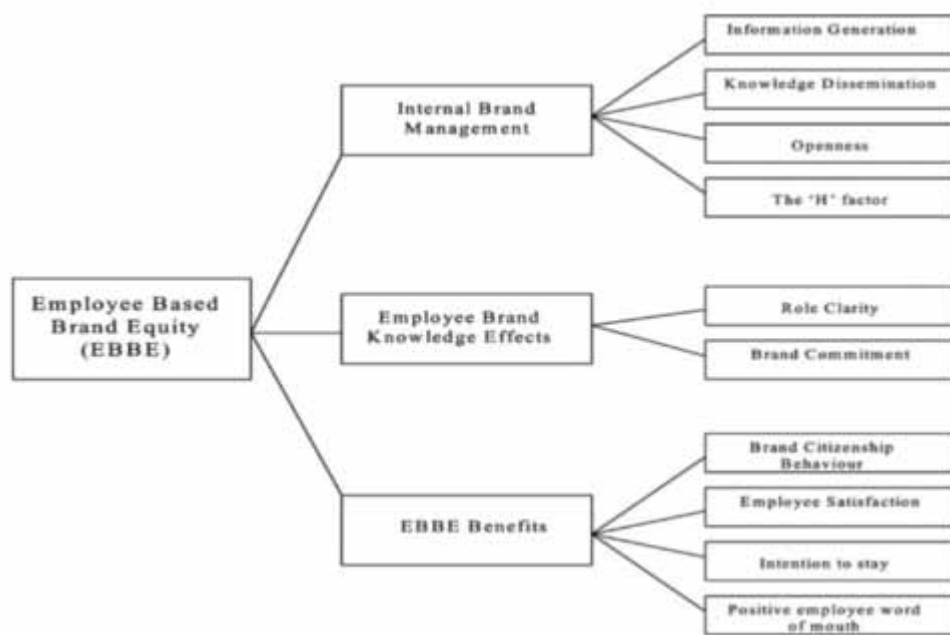
Chapter 10
Workplace Discrimination During International Work Assignments

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ABSTRACT

All people have the right to conduct their activities without equal development and discrimination, but social inequality and job subordination put the employer and the employee in an unequal situation for years. Many women have been silent for decades/centuries due to fear of losing their jobs/income and have not provided law enforcement with information about sexual acts against them. It has been about 40 years since these illegal actions were identified and fought against. These discriminatory facts remain a problem to this day and are a very topical issue not in one country but the whole world. Unlike its concept, discrimination is not a new phenomenon; it exists from the very beginning of the formation of society, and people with different signs were persecuted. Initially, there was persecution on the grounds of wealth, rank, skin color, race, and religion, but unfortunately, the number of signs of unequal treatment is increasing even in the modern era.

INTRODUCTION

The notion of discrimination means any kind of divergence, exclusion, restriction, or humiliation based on any ground, it may be racial, religious, sexual, language and birth place-based, etc. The purpose of discrimination usually is to destroy equality and human rights in any sphere either social and cultural or political and economic. These actions limit human access to exercise rights and freedoms. The most

dangerous feature of it leads to the infringement of the rights of people in political, labor, administrative, family, housing, socio-economic relations, prevents people belonging to certain groups from exercising the rights that they have - under domestic legislation or international legal norms - endowed on an equal basis with others. It is incompatible with the recognition of such values as the dignity of the individual, freedom from humiliation, the preservation of the diversity of individuals, and the creation of conditions for the all-around development of everyone (Zick, Küpper, Höfermann, 2011). Discrimination can be violent or non-violent, direct or indirect. Direct discrimination occurs when one person experiences less favorable treatment than that which another person in a similar situation has experienced, is experiencing or may experience because of his or her race, ethnicity, religion, language or characteristics, gender, age, health status, sexual orientation. Direct discrimination will take place in the event of dismissal in the event of a reduction in the staff of exclusively or predominantly women if the enterprise employs the same number of men and women or the majority of employees are men (Varlamova, Vasilyeva, Osipov, Timofeev, 2009).

The definition of equality was first given in the French Declaration of Human Rights (1789) and the French Declaration of Independence (1776). The declaration of this was caused by inequality between slaveholders and slaves, the socially affluent and the poor, the employer and the employee. The definition of discrimination was universally recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), followed by the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950) and other normative acts detailing the signs of discrimination, which are exhaustive. Experience has clearly shown that there are different types of discrimination and it is impossible to list them exhaustively under one definition. Religious and ethnic signs of discrimination are well known and still problematic, a relatively innovative sign of sexual harassment. Numerous US Supreme Court rulings address discrimination (including based on gender, race, and ethnicity) in both either the higher education and public service systems or the European Court of Human Rights and the CEDAW Committee.

METHODOLOGICAL BASES OF THE RESEARCH

The chapter is based on the general scientific, legal-comparative, analysis, systematization, classification, and comparative methods of cognition, logical, dogmatic, deduction and induction, analysis and synthesis, system-structural, dialectical, and statistical methods of functional data. The research also actively uses various sociological methodologies that take into account the specifics of the object and subject of study, particularly: the abstract-logical research method, which is based on the method of analysis and synthesis research, induction and deduction, analogy, and more.

The work presents both inductive and deductive methods, through which specific conclusions are reached, and the paper is built on the deductive method, in which the essence and definition of sexual harassment are generally examined at the initial stage, and then the specific court decisions are analyzed. Qualify the action and develop recommendations that will help the theoretician or practitioner in a particular case to solve the above problem. As part of the study, the analysis method addressed issues related to the definition of sexual harassment. Several problematic issues have been raised on which specific recommendations will be made using the dialectical method of research. In the framework of the chapter, summarizing decisions made by common courts of Georgia as well as by courts of foreign countries are analyzed in comparison with individual or different decisions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The collective monograph, Protection of the Individuals from Discrimination by the following authors, Varlamova, N. Vasilyeva, T. Osipov, A. Timofeev, M. gives very valuable recommendations about the prevention of any kind of discrimination. It highlights such issues as discrimination based on language, religious affiliation, based on sex, sexual orientation, nationality, and place of residence. The book states that discrimination is a kind of discipline, which is closely related to several other social and legal disciplines. The starting point for it is the knowledge of the theory of state and law, as well as constitutional and international law, which are fundamental to all the topics of the course. At the same time, the discipline "Protection of the Individual from Discrimination" provides the necessary factual material used by labor, civil, criminal and other branches of law for theoretical conclusions and generalizations.

Equality in the World of Work the Need of the Time is a Global report presented following the mechanism for the implementation of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work International Labor Conference 91st session 2003. It gives a deep analysis of such issues as growing international recognition of the need to eliminate discrimination in the world of work; the sources of elimination of any kind of discrimination, and the notion, and essence of discrimination. It gives recommendations on how to avoid discrimination in work and occupation; It highlights the role of labor market institutions and the processes taking place in it and the necessity to eliminate discrimination in the world of work. Describes the relationship between discrimination and poverty and shows the changing nature of discrimination in the World of Work. The importance of the book is based on the very common 21st-century type of discrimination which is called – Racial and Religious Discrimination.

The interim report of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief on Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance issued by the United Nations General Assembly is a valuable work. The valuable work of the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Heiner Bielefeldt, gives a clear synopsis of the report to the Council of Human Rights about countries he has visited. The Special Rapporteur pays special attention to the means of the discrimination and religious intolerance elimination in the workplace, as this problem, in his opinion, requires a more systematic approach. The sources of workplace religious-based intolerance and discrimination can be very diverse, including prejudice among employers, employees, or clients, restrictive interpretation of the corporate style, or simply fear of religious diversity. While noting that the individual's right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief, in particular, includes the manifestation of religious diversity in the workplace, the Special Rapporteur pays particular attention to "reasonable accommodation" measures that may be required to combat discrimination. Drawing on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which legislates the principle of "reasonable accommodation" as an integral part of relevant anti-discrimination programs, he argues that such measures should also be taken to eliminate discrimination based on religion or belief in the workplace. The Special Rapporteur concludes by presenting his recommendations and conclusions to government bodies, public and private employers, and other stakeholders.

The precious work, ***Building Human Rights into Everyday Practice***, issued by the Center for the Rule of Law, Lord Bingham London, United Kingdom, provides an overview of international legislation that ensures the implementation and human rights defense; these legislative norms have been established both on this basis of the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Particular emphasis is placed in the text on the consideration of the application of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). During the review, key topics are raised and the law enforcement practice in the field of human rights protection standards is explained. It deals with the requirements for the legality of decisions made, posi-

tive obligations, proportionality, the absence of any kind of discrimination, and the inadmissibility of applying retroactive criminal law. The manual also deals with more specific, specialized issues, such as equality as the basis for the human rights defense, human rights in emergencies, the extraterritorial application of relevant norms, and the participation of a non-state actor in the process. The guide discusses democratic rights and rights of direct participation, which are essential elements for the functioning of a society based on the rule of law and human rights values; these are categories such as freedom of association, assembly, and speech. Private rights and the right to follow any religion and perform its rituals are also analyzed in the text of the study guide. Privacy rights are considered in the context of the collection of evidence and evidence, as well as the conduct of intelligence gathering operations under covert surveillance.

The report, Six Steps Effective Advocacy for LGBT Rights: Guide to Action conducted by Angus Carroll describes the certain principles of human rights and their concepts, which form the basis of work in this area.

It describes in detail the powers and tools developed by institutions at the international and regional level; considers finding and analyzing the questions/problems that one might have at the workplace; analysis the basic human rights document of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which was developed in response to the inhumane treatment of people during the Second World War. It states that the dictatorships of fascism and communism, as well as other regimes, have demonstrated the tendency of these regimes to abuse power, genocide, oppression, and other repressive measures concerning certain groups of people.

The report, Intolerance, Prejudice, and Discrimination. A European Report, compiled by, Zick, A., Küpper, B., and Höfermann, A. answers the following questions: Do Europeans believe in human rights values such as tolerance, intercultural diversity, and solidarity? How widespread is prejudice against "others" whom they believe are "others"? And to what extent are we ready to accept social, ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities as equals and give them equal participation? What does this mean for politics and society?

Report, Problems of Xenophobia, Discrimination and Aggressive Nationalism in Europe, created by European Center for Democracy Development, is carried out in the following categories: legislation affecting the interests of minorities (its possible changes during the period under review, compliance by the authorities); law enforcement practice; discriminatory practices affecting minorities; statements and actions of government officials affecting the interests of minorities; the situation of immigrants, as well as the attitude of society towards immigrants, foreigners, various ethnic groups; cases of inciting inter-ethnic and inter-religious hatred; activities of neo-Nazi and radical nationalist parties and groups, their influence on the government and civil society; hate crimes by severity; public glorification of German National Socialism and accomplices of Nazi Germany, desecration of military graves and memorials to the soldiers of the anti-Hitler coalition, denial of the Holocaust; misuse of anti-extremist legislation and persecution of human rights defenders. The main sources for the preparation of reports on these countries were: legislative acts, internal documents of ministries and departments that are in the public domain (for example, statistical reports on hate crimes), documents of the Ombudsman Office, materials of international human rights organizations, materials of sociological surveys conducted in countries during the period under review, media materials.

The publication, Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: Law and Practice, written by Alba Conte, is structured in such a way as to show theoretical foundations, the history of sexual harassment law, and elements of sexual harassment claims, court cases, administrative procedures, employer defenses,

alleged harassers actions, and other important issues. This publication provides research on the sexual exploitation of persons employed by different organizations at different times; Discusses the reasons why victims do not often go to court; What is the consequences of hearing the case in court; All the important circumstances for the existence of the action are presented; The problem of lack of evidence is discussed; Several examples are analyzed, after which the relevant conclusions are made. The publication will help researchers interested in sexual harassment to get complete information about this action, which is gathered in the paper.

Marieta Akhvlediani's Practical Guide to Sexual Harassment is a valuable work that provides information on the history of discrimination, the definition of sexual harassment, elements relevant to the composition of the action, groups at risk, and evidence standards set by the court in each case. The book is interesting to the reader insofar as it contains court precedents through which specific issues are explained. It presents the results of various studies related to the issue under consideration, approaches, and regulations of the Georgian legislation on the issue of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a rather big problem in the field of employment, the declaration of which is the greatest achievement of the twentieth century. The work is important insofar as it contains a comprehensive study that analyzes the reasons for the action and the consequences that accompany the action of the harasser. The book is a great source of information for those interested in the subject.

THE NOTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND ADOPTED DOCUMENTS COMBATING IT

To determine whether there is discrimination, it is necessary to analyze the nature of the differences in treatment, to see whether they are appropriate and justified, whether they have a legitimate aim and whether the same legitimate aim can be achieved without resorting to discriminatory measures. It is also important how the distinction is made between circulations. The restriction of any fundamental rights or the creation of difficulties for persons to access them because of their gender, ethnicity, religion, or mother tongue cannot be justified by any reasons and cannot have any legitimate purpose. At the same time, the employer's claims about belonging to a certain religion for employees of religious institutions or about knowledge of the state language for employees of state institutions, school teachers, or judges can be recognized as justified.

The most common mistake when discussing the problems of discrimination is to understand it solely as making distinctions between groups of people at the legislative level, depriving certain groups. It is believed that if the law proclaims the principle of equality and contains a ban on discrimination on any grounds, then there can be no discrimination in this state. In this case, we have to admit that this approach is wrong (Engel, 2015).

The concept of "Discriminatory Practices", which is mentioned in the 1978 UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (UN, 1978) is increasingly found in legal studies and new legislation in European countries. Discriminatory practices of state and non-state bodies and individuals are most often manifested concerning ethnic and religious minorities, women, and persons with unconventional sexual orientation. It is associated with stereotypes, attitudes, and prejudices that exist in society regarding these groups and includes the behavior, structural organization, and institutionalized practices of administrative and law enforcement agencies that lead to inequality. Created based on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 and the Optional Protocol to it, the UN Human Rights Committee

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noted in one of its reports that states should report not only on the provisions of constitutions and laws that enshrine equal opportunities in law and equality of persons but also about problems of discrimination in practice, which are generated by officials, society as a whole or individuals and organizations (UN, 1966). In doing so, the Committee made it clear that there is such a thing as "discriminatory practice" and that this practice, while not based on law, may nonetheless be widespread.

1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, that the law works equal for everybody and that everyone has the right to be protected without any distinctions. Every person is ensured to be equally protected from any form of discrimination (UN, 1948). International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted in 1966, in its article 2 obligates each state and any governmental body to respect and ensure everyone in its territory the rights acknowledged in the Covenant, without any kind of distinctions.

The UN Charter (Article 55) calls on states to respect human rights for everybody without any kind of discrimination. These four grounds are most often and most important because they are inextricably linked with the self-identification of a person, his personality. Race, gender, native language, and, as a rule, religion are not chosen by a person independently, but either belong to him from birth or are introduced from early childhood by the family and the local community. At the same time, the race of a person, his ethnicity is the most integral feature of personality identification, since it is independent of the will of a person and cannot be changed by him. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in Article 7 requires ensuring the rights of another vulnerable group that is often discriminated against - labor migrants (UN, 1990).

It is worth highlighting the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (hereinafter - CERD), especially the definition given in Article 1, paragraph 1 of the Convention about racial discrimination, which means any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, color, ancestral, national or ethnic origin, to destroy or impair the recognition, use or exercise on an equal footing principle of human rights and fundamental freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural or any other area of public life (UN, 1965). This definition, taken together with the other provisions of the Convention, adequately describes all the elements of racial discrimination: the distinction based on race or ethnicity, the adverse consequences that result or may result from this for one of the parties between whom the distinction is made, the arbitrary and unreasonable nature of such distinctions. The latter is conveyed through the category of preventing or hindering the enjoyment by anyone of human rights and fundamental freedoms and through the description of the conditions under which a distinction aimed at the creation of equal conditions for the enjoyment of human rights will not be considered discriminatory (UN, 2014). There is no universally recognized systematization of the types and forms of racial discrimination. In the field of racial discrimination, like any other discrimination, one can single out such types as direct and indirect discrimination. The totality of phenomena attributable to racial discrimination is often divided into violent acts of a criminal nature (racial violence), non-violent discrimination affecting the realization of rights and freedoms, and acts of a verbal nature - propaganda of racist ideas, incitement of hatred (having an element of publicity) and humiliation of dignity (harassment, usually devoid of an element of publicity) (International Labor Organization, 2003).

In addition to forms and types of discrimination, some international instruments single out multicomponent phenomena that are also subject to prohibition. These include "racism" and "apartheid". The concept of "racism", highlighted by several UNESCO declarations, includes not only discriminatory rules and practices but also ideas and perceptions. "Apartheid" is prohibited by two conventions adopted within the framework of the UN, but is defined in them not by highlighting signs, but by listing specific manifestations.

It should be noted that the clarification of concepts describing the characteristics of personal status, or grounds based on which discrimination is carried out. Race, nationality, or ethnicity is indicated in a similar but not identical way in various international instruments, as well as in national constitutions and laws. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and many other instruments developed in the UN system mention, among others, the following features: race, color, national origin, birth (UN, 1966). Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention No. 111 of the International Labor Organization1 adds "foreign origin". As mentioned above, CERD prohibits any kind of discrimination. Racial or ethnic discrimination may include making distinctions on very different parameters: related to physical appearance, country of origin, belonging to a culturally distinctive group, etc. At the same time, none of the listed signs - race, ethnicity, and national origin - has a single and established, including the legal definition.

The issue of racial or ethnic discrimination should not be confused with the protection of national or ethnic minorities, an approach that is also enshrined in international law and national laws and is also based on the ethnic categorization of people. The two approaches overlap to some extent, as protecting minorities also implies their protection from discrimination. However, the general thrust of minority protection is to create safeguards against forced assimilation and conditions for the preservation of the linguistic and cultural identity of minority groups (UN, 1990).

Thus, racial or ethnic discrimination means making distinctions on racial or ethnic grounds that are arbitrary and unreasonable, or that create or could create adverse consequences for one of the parties between whom there is a difference (Alaverdov, 2012. Race or ethnicity should not be understood as an objective characteristic of persons between whom a distinction is made, but as a broad set of social categorizations based on people's attributed origin, cultural characteristics, appearance, etc. Racial discrimination should not be understood as a relationship between racial or ethnic groups as such, and its prohibition to be confused with such approaches as the protection of minorities prohibition of racial discrimination is universal and applies to everyone, not just members of minorities (UN, 1978).

RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION AT THE WORKPLACE

The 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief determines religious-based intolerance and discrimination (UN, 1981). Analyzing the forms of manifestation of discrimination, it should be highlighted that religious discrimination manifests itself, first of all, in the persecution of minorities and non-traditional religions by the religious majority (Alaverdov, 2021). The right to religious freedom as defined in international law is a broad right concerning numerous separate but correlated issues. The 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a vital document that fixes a wide range of religious rights (Krishnaswami, 1960). Bases for it is its article 18 which states that everyone has entitled to the right to any kind of freedom within the frame of legal documents; it says that everyone has the right to follow or change religion or belief, can join or observe any rituals or teaching publicly or privately (UN, 1948). The Universal Declaration insists on respect for individual religious differences. She argues that one of the important modern political principles that should guide the state is the protection of the religious choice of an individual, and by no means an indication of religious conformity (Strabac, Listhaug, 2008). It took centuries, even millennia, from the policy of religious wars and persecution of faith by the state, to come to the recognition of this principle and its wide application in the practice of state-church relations. We have to say that the

Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, adopted on November 25, 1981, by the UN General Assembly (resolution 36/55) is a valuable international document in the field of protecting human rights from religious discrimination is (UN, 1982). It was the acme of almost two decades of work, which was initiated by the UN mandate of December 7, 1962, on the preparation of a corresponding document. The UN General Assembly continues to actively deal with the protection of the right to freedom of conscience and religion, paying special attention to the problems of discrimination and intolerance based on religion. In its resolution 2002/40 on the Elimination of All Forms of Religious Intolerance of 23 April 2002, the UN General Assembly calls the countries and all the officials to respect every religion, nation, and nationality and treat them without any discrimination (UN, 2002). For these purposes, the necessary professional training and appropriate training of such officials should be introduced.

The problem of the growing number of religious conflicts and, in particular, the problem of growing Islamophobia around the world led to the creation by the UN Secretary-General in 2005 of the so-called "Alliance of Civilizations" (UN, 2005), which included prominent political and public figures - representatives of "Islamic" and "Christian" states. The Alliance seeks to overcome the growing divisions between communities by promoting the principle of mutual respect between people belonging to different cultures and religious traditions.

The prohibition of discrimination based on religious affiliation in one form or another is enshrined in the national legislation of almost all countries of the world, while the consolidation was carried out at the highest level - state constitutions level (UN, 2014). At the same time, we are talking not only about European, "civilized" states, with established democracy and rich democratic traditions but also about countries that were not "seen" among active supporters of human rights (Osipov, 2012).

DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN GEORGIAN LEGISLATION

Sexual harassment is one of the major problems of the twenty-first century. The 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) obliges states to eliminate discrimination against women in labor relations, including the fight against sexual harassment (UN, 1979). In 1995, the UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action called on states, trade unions, and the private sector to develop an action plan to combat sexual harassment, which includes training and programs to eliminate violence. It also focused on the consequent consequences of sexual harassment, which damages the dignity of the employee and prevents women from discovering opportunities (UN, 1995). The definition of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights also contains mandatory norms for the protection of employees from sexual harassment (Angus, 2012). The Labor and Employment Discrimination Convention prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, including sexual harassment. Today, the 2011 Council of Europe Convention on Combating and Preventing Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) is the most effective way to combat the above-mentioned actions. It punishes written, oral, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior that is intended to cause or cause harm to human dignity by creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, abusive, or aggressive environment (Council of Europe, 2011). A similar definition is given by Council of Europe Directives 2002/73 / EC, 2004/113 / EC, and 2006/54 / EC and, in addition, rec-

ognizes the above-mentioned conduct as a form of discrimination due to the consent or rejection of the above behavior (Akhvlediani, 2020/Comte, 2022).

The International Labor Organization (ILO) adopted the Convention on Violence and Harassment on June 21, 2019, the first binding document directly related to the facts of violence and harassment in the field of employment (International Labor Organization, 2019). Although the Convention does not provide for the definition of sexual harassment, the definition of gender-based violence and harassment is violence and harassment of persons because of their sex or gender, or disproportionately affecting people of a particular sex or gender, and includes sexual harassment (Alaverdov, 2021). The Convention and its accompanying recommendation include the definition of violence/harassment, the definition of a worker, including non-standard contract workers, job seekers, volunteers, and interns; marginalized and vulnerable employees, who are most often victims of violence and/or at risk of violence (Bingham Center for the Rule of Law, 2012).

Verbal, non-verbal, and physical forms of sexual harassment are punishable by the international community. Each of them covers many aspects of behavior and there is no exhaustive list of them. Verbal communication includes using abusive words/terms, making inappropriate comments, asking inappropriate questions, using sexually explicit words, offering sexual intercourse, asking for sex, spreading gossip about sexual life, and other actions. Non-verbal sexual harassment includes sexual gaze/attention, genital display, pornographic demonstration viewing/printing, duplication of pornographic and/or sexually explicit photos/videos, surveillance of personal space, including changing rooms, etc. (Darwish, 1998). Physical sexual harassment is characterized by unwanted physical contact: squeezing, shaking hands, getting stuck in a corner, friction, rolling and/or hanging, hugging, hugging, and kissing/trying to kiss. Touching intimate parts and/or parts of the body and other actions. The existence of a punishable act needs to face even one of the acts committed in any of the above forms. As the most important sign of the existence of the composition of the action, the reluctance of sexual harassment, its definition is quite difficult due to the multifaceted nature of the issue and requires an individual approach (Kharebashvili, 2020). An important sign of sexual harassment is reluctance, which includes the case when the act is committed compulsorily, or when a person voluntarily commits an act that is reasonably offensive and degrading to him. It is also important to anticipate the undesirable action of the perpetrator. At this time, a test of subjectivity (the standard of reasonable perception by the victim (often a woman)) and objectivity for sexual harassment must be met, which includes the subject's attitude to the action and the third party's perception of the action. They use it with it. Another element essential to the existence of action is the result. The fact of sexual harassment affects the physical and mental health of the victim. A person can take single or multiple actions that are inherently offensive, degrading, intimidating, and degrading. In many cases, the victim tries to ignore the fact of what happened, not to talk about what happened, which ultimately affects his self-esteem and personal well-being. They find it difficult to continue their professional activities, lack motivation, find it difficult to adapt to a new work environment, try to avoid communication with employees or even work, and do not continue their studies. There are frequent cases when the victims refuse to even have contact with people who are in close contact with them. It should also be noted that in cases of sexual harassment, the victim is both a woman and a man, therefore, there is no gender mark in international acts, but in most cases, the object of the above action is a woman and in most cases, the action is motivated by gender (Conte, 2022).

As for the Georgian legislation: at the initial stage, the Labor Code of Georgia declared discrimination as a punishment, which included sexual harassment in the field of employment, and in 2019 several legislative changes were made: the Labor Code, the Code of Administrative Offenses, The Law of Georgia

on Gender Equality and the Organic Laws on the Public Defender, which specified the scope of sexual harassment, detailed the composition of the punitive action and defined the relevant sanction. The Law of Georgia on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination is in line with the Istanbul Convention ratified by Georgia in May 2017 ("Sexual harassment is a form of violence against women" - Article 36 of the Convention) and emphasizes the gendered nature of sexual violence (Parliament of Georgia, 2014). The Public Defender of Georgia under the recommendation of February 13, 2018, stressed the importance of amending the Labor Code and taking into account the legal definition of sexual harassment, to further determine the existence of sexual harassment without finding a partner and responding to violations in a short time. An amendment was made to the law stating that harassment in the workplace (including sexual harassment) is a form of discrimination, namely, unwelcome conduct based on any sign of discrimination against a person, aimed at or causing harm to his or her dignity and intimidating, hostile, degrading, to create an environment that is degrading or offensive (Dzamashvili, 2017). Sexual harassment is the behavior of an unwanted sexual nature towards a person, which aims and/or causes damage to his / her dignity and creates a terrifying, hostile, humiliating, degrading, or abusive environment for him/her. For this law, sexual conduct is the utterance and/or use of such sexual phrases, the display of genitals, and/or any other non-verbal physical behavior of a sexual nature. This legislation covers all the main elements of sexual harassment that are enshrined in international instruments: the form of behavior (sexual nature), reluctance, and consequences. It should be noted that the Labor Code, on the one hand, obliges the employer to respond and prevent the facts of sexual harassment and discrimination, and on the other hand, defines the possibility of his responsibility for inappropriate response and/or inaction to the above facts. Cases of sexual harassment are liable as actions committed during the contractual, pre-contractual period, for which liability is possible even after the termination of the contractual relationship. The main thing is to observe the one-year statute of limitations of the request provided by the Code of Civil Procedure.

Article 166[1] of the Code of Administrative Offences of Georgia provides for liability for sexual harassment in public spaces. Responding to this administrative misconduct is the responsibility of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which means that the legislature obliges the state to protect the interests of both the victim and the public (Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Georgian SSR, 1984).

It should be highlighted that the Criminal Code of Georgia provides criminal liability for prosecution - illegal surveillance of one's close relatives, personally or through a third party, or establishing unwanted communication by telephone, electronic or other means, or any other intentional act. Since it can cause mental suffering and/or a well-founded fear of violence and/or destruction of property against the person or family members, which forces the person to make significant changes in lifestyle or creates a ground to change it significantly. Accordingly, each case must be considered and considered individually, and if there are signs of a crime, an appropriate investigation must be conducted and the perpetrator must be held criminally liable. Thus we can claim that the definition of discrimination does not exhaustively list the signs, therefore the definition of both discrimination and sexual harassment gradually develops and becomes more diverse.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT A CRIME OR AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFENSE

Article 40 of the Istanbul Convention states that parties shall take all necessary legislative or other measures to ensure that any form of sexual misconduct, whether verbal, non-verbal, or physical, which

is intended to cause or is detrimental to human dignity, in particular intimidating, hostile, or degrading. Be subject to criminal or other legal sanctions by creating an abusive or aggressive environment. The above document shows that it is up to the states to consider this action as a criminal offense if they impose administrative/civil legal liability on it. Amendments to the Civil Procedure Code of Georgia allow victims of discrimination or, in some cases, the Public Defender to seek redress and/or termination of discriminatory actions (Parliament of Georgia, 1997). Consequently, sexual harassment in the workplace was regulated by Georgian law, and sexual harassment in the public sphere was regulated by public law and punished by the Code of Administrative Offenses - thus, it was subjected to stricter protection and defined as actions against the individual and society. It is incomprehensible that such unequal treatment of sexual harassment by the legislature between the above two acts of sexual harassment, given the fact that harassment in the workplace is often more systematic, with the victim being subject to official harassment and largely gender-based. Considering the factual circumstances, the facts of sexual harassment in public space often involve a single act and the offender and the victim are strangers to each other. Given all the above, it would be good if the responsibility for sexual harassment in the workplace was tightened. As far as criminal liability is concerned, Georgia is one of the countries that does not declare sexual harassment as a criminal offense but criminalizes the crime of prosecution, which may also be committed by the employer against the victim.

Unlike Georgia, the Finnish Penal Code criminalizes sexual harassment, it states that if one touches another person with the purpose to commit a sexual act will be charged with the act of sexual harassment, and he or she can be fined or even imprisoned for about six months. Criminal liability for the above crime is also established by the German Criminal Code. Some countries have criminalized harassment at their place of employment under their legislation. Although some countries do not criminalize sexual harassment, in practice they consider it a hate crime and thus try to punish the perpetrator, here we can apply this to the UK legislation. European laws, which criminalize the above action, focus on dignity and morality (Khuroshvili, 2020). Thus, considering all of the above-mentioned legislation and amendments according to the Istanbul Convention, countries are free to decide which legal act declares sexual harassment punishable, the main thing is for them to declare the act illegal, the main purpose is to recognize this action as illegal.

EVIDENCE STANDARD AND PROBLEMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT: CASES AND PRACTICES

Most cases of sexual harassment are not known to the public and law enforcement, given that victims often blame themselves for what happened, or shy away from talking to others about it. These and other reasons that arise in practice lead to problems of punishing sexual harassment. Georgian court practice regarding the punishment of harassment is quite scarce, the Public Defender has repeatedly appealed to the employer and asked to protect the victim and take appropriate measures to eliminate the facts of sexual harassment in the workplace. The Public Defender of Georgia, in his 2021 report on the protection of human rights and freedoms in Georgia, mentions labor relations as the most vulnerable area to discrimination, as well as the problem of sexual harassment in the workplace and in receiving medical care. One of the most well-known cases in Georgian court practice is "Tamar Samkharadze v. Shalva Ramishvili", alleging sexual harassment in the workplace (Public Defender of Georgia, 2021). According to the plaintiff, she was sexually harassed by his immediate superior for years, which was reflected in

the comments of sexual content on the victim's appearance, dress, age, sex, and personal life, which the plaintiff allegedly created a hostile work environment. She was promised to be promoted in exchange for a sexual relationship. The court found the fact of sexual harassment and the decision was based on a secret audio recording. As for the burden of proof, the Georgian legislature imposes the burden of proving the existence of sexual harassment on the plaintiff, and the burden of proving its absence on the defendant (Public Defender of Georgia, 2020).

There are many cases when the victims do not feel like speaking about their experience, trying to forget the memories of sexual harassment. Here we can apply to the case of Q v. In the Wild Log Homes, the victim periodically gave inconsistent testimony, which the Human Rights Tribunal found to have been caused by the victim's emotional state, and the victim's condition was questioned, which cast doubt on the reality of the fact. "Because in cases of sexual harassment, there is often each word opposes another there is no wide range of evidence, it is critical to assess the credibility of the parties.

Some factors that determine the credibility of the parties are:

- Behavior: whether a person's statement can be considered true or false;
- Motive for falsifying the fact: whether the person has a reason for lying;
- Persuasiveness: whether the evidence is convincing at first glance and whether it is essential;
- Confirmation: Are there any witnesses and/or other evidence that would support the testimony of the party;
- Past Behavior: Does the potential abuser have a history of such unwanted sexual behavior?

Canadian human rights tribunals use a multi-stage credibility test to check the reliability of the information provided by a witness. First of all, the information provided by the witness is considered a separate, independent piece of evidence, and attention is paid to factors such as the witness's memory, accuracy/ambiguity, and how credible his or her narrative is.

In addition to the victim in the case, there may be audio-video recordings, written evidence - personal correspondence information, explanations of third parties, expert opinions, and expert testimonies. The court may also use a "similar fact evidence standard", for example, in one case alleging that all alleged victims were young, independent women who had applied for similar vacancies; they had complained of sexual harassment independently. Against an abuser who was not known, though his physical and professional characteristics were described equally. Accordingly, the tribunal did not dispute the identity of the perpetrator and the company. Contrary to the standard of proof of such facts, we can consider the so-called "me too" (me too) evidence obtained in the United States. The credibility of such evidence depends on many factors, including how close it is to the circumstances of the victim's case. Thus, "me too" evidence, per se, is not excluded evidence and is used to substantiate the harasser's conduct, even if it did not specifically occur in the victim's presence (Akhvlediani, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The problem of combating discrimination peculiarly manifests itself not only in the legal but also in a broader socio-political context. A significant problem is that discrimination in the modern world is usually latent, but at the same time, there are noticeable statistical disparities between different ethnic and racial groups in terms of income, professional composition, education, and participation in the exercise

of political power, etc. The reasons for these disproportions may be different, not necessarily associated with deliberate discrimination, but more often with spontaneous processes of social stratification. But inequalities can be interpreted by public opinion as injustice, and hence the desire for a broader interpretation of discrimination follows (Alaverdov, 2021). At the same time, the latency and hard-to-prove discrimination are pushing international organizations and national authorities to lower the standards of proof. The response rate to sexual harassment is low because the victim's silence poses the biggest problem in practice due to his or her experience, fear, close relationship with the abuser, the influence of the abuser, desire to maintain a family, economic downturn, job loss. It is difficult to identify the victim and persuade him to defend his rights against the background that most of them either do not know about their rights or do not want to report what happened due to the fear of retaliation by the harasser. In addition, it is worth highlighting that, society is evolving. Harassers are trying to find new leverage and new ways to make their actions unnoticed by outsiders/law enforcement. Employment problems around the world are contributing to the aggravation of this problem. The only way to combat sexual violence is to improve international and domestic law and to raise the awareness of all members of the community, from schoolchildren to the elderly.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Discrimination: Human rights and freedoms restriction and/or different treatment of a person or social groups based on any sign.

Ethnical Discrimination: Based on perceived ethnic differences, which results in various forms of ethnic fines.

Human Rights: Dignity and freedom protection rules without any discrimination.

Public Defender Office: Public and state body office created to defend human rights.

Racial Discrimination: Based on perceived racial differences, which results in various forms of racial fines.

Religious Discrimination: A prejudice against someone (a job seeker or an employee) because of his (her) religious beliefs; the restriction of people's rights based on their religious affiliation.

Sexual Discrimination: A violation of the equality of rights and equal opportunities of people based on sexual and gender differences.

United Nations Documents: Documents include the resolutions of decision-making bodies such as the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council, which guide the parts of the UN Secretariat and agencies that make up the UN system.

Workplace Harassment: Actions, suggestions, or hints of a sexual nature that occur without your consent and desire.

Chapter 11
Middle East:
Who Will Dominate in the Region – A Case of China

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ABSTRACT

Given the Great Silk Road and other megaprojects, China's position on the world stage in general is expanding. An area where the Sino-US confrontation could create a deplorable situation in the Middle East is China's attempts to introduce new global digital infrastructure and communication standards. The pandemic has affected global consumption and demand volumes. Presumably, China and its partners primarily want to assess the situation, how trade and tourism are changing on the planet in the face of a global pandemic. It is also interesting to see how the countries participating in the One Belt One Road initiative will continue to jointly invest directly in ongoing projects beyond their borders. The aim of the chapter is to assess China's influence based on analysis its policies in the Middle East region and its implemented and planned trade and business projects as well as an assessment of the results we might expect in the long run amid increased competition between global actors in the oil region.

INTRODUCTION

China's influence in the Middle East has grown over the past decade. It is an important international actor in the oil region against a backdrop of long-term US dominance that is clearly in question. European politicians and experts point to the future security challenges in the Middle East and China's potential role in this project. However, China is particularly wary of the problems in the region, and its goals and vision are vague. It is therefore difficult to determine what impact China's activism may have on the dynamics of ongoing political processes in this difficult region in the medium to long term. The emergence of China in this space has led to an increase in geopolitical competition. Naturally, the Chinese factor should be well understood when assessing their position in Europe and the US Middle East.

Europe needs to control China's growing influence on the dynamics of the ongoing political processes in the region, especially in areas such as the arms and surveillance technologies trade.

In this case we can claim that China's main interest in the Middle East is in meeting its growing demand for energy and its One Belt One Road (BRI) initiative. Since 2015, China has been the largest importer of crude oil in the world, with almost half of its demand for energy coming from the Middle East. The Middle East is important for the future of the BRI as a strategically important crossroads of trade and sea routes connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa, intending to engage China at the center of global trade networks. Currently, China's economic relations with the region are directed towards the Persian Gulf countries due to their dominant role in energy markets. Here it is worth saying that the main document of the Chinese government on international cooperation in the economic sphere is aimed at increasing China's influence and greater activity in the Middle East region and its involvement in the one-belt-one-way project (Fulton, 2019). The governments of the oil region countries have the ambition to modernize their states and try to use Chinese technologies and artificial intelligence to build smart city infrastructure, develop health services and introduce renewable energy technologies. Also to acquire modern air military equipment (England and Kerry, 2021).

It is noteworthy that China has long neglected such an important aspect as brand equity. Our research aims to identify the aspects that lead to the creation of Chinese brand capital and to study China as the country of origin of the brand. The research relies on a qualitative approach to understanding the Chinese vision of branding. The results of the research confirmed that a separate Chinese company is working to build a strong brand capital for which it is steadily developing product quality through joint ventures and co-branding. Our analysis confirms that today China, as a country of brand origin, is no longer an obstacle to building strong brand capital. We discussed the two main areas of research - geographical origin and brand value - on the example of Huawei and Lenovo. Research has shown that some Chinese brands are growing steadily and the strategy of many Chinese companies today is already focusing on brand building and believes that this is the way to success and sustainable competitive advantage. This is evidenced by the cases of Chinese technology giant companies, which had a positive impact on the capital of the Chinese brand.

Chinese technology companies are expanding their operations around the world, selecting and favoring them. Their subsequent pattern of behavior will have a significant impact not only on how other companies engage in global markets but also on how the image of Chinese business will acquire in the eyes of the world (Zaagman, 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

In recent years, several important studies have been published on China's role in the Middle East economy and its growing importance as a geopolitical actor. Nasser M. Al-Tamimi studied China-Saudi Arabia relations extensively, from 1990 to 2012, and tried to find out if it was a strategic alliance or a marriage of convenience. This paper, published in 2013, broadly reflects China's goals and aspirations to gain a foothold in the oil region. Thomas Blaubach's book also raises questions about China's interests in the Middle East. In particular, he refers to the growing share of Chinese technology in the Middle East and sees it as both a threat to the country's sovereignty and a significant economic opportunity. Published in 2021, this paper is the latest study of China's economic and business activity in the oil region and fully describes China as a growing influence in the region as an economic giant.

The Fulton study (2019) also highlights China's growing influence in the oil region. The researcher concludes that this activation was due to the weakening of US influence and the withdrawal of its military forces from the region. The study, led by Camilla Lons, which focuses on the geopolitical and geoeconomic perspective of cooperation between China and the countries of the oil region, is a project of the Council of Europe and was published in 2019.

With the expansion of Chinese technology companies in the world, the business model they follow is gaining importance. This will have some impact not only on the approach of individual companies to global markets but also on how Chinese businesses present themselves around the world. Much has been written about the achievements of brand companies, and their strategies in shaping the relevant corporate culture. Noteworthy in this regard is a study by The Lenovo Way by Executives (2014) by Tin Tao, David de Kremer, and Wu Chongbo (Huawei: Leadership, Culture, and Connectivity (2016)), which shows how each company achieved a global reach. Good luck.

We have also reviewed many important studies that clearly show the changes that have led to China's growing role in the region. A review of the presented scientific and analytical sources reveals the dominance of China as an economic giant in the Middle East amid declining Western influence.

BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE (BRI) - A NEW INITIATIVE FOR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

BRI's framework for cooperation with the Middle East is related to energy resources, infrastructure construction, trade, and investment. This document has little to do with security cooperation. Beijing has repeatedly stated that its activities in the region do not include geopolitical goals. In this way, he wanted to avoid confrontation with the West and establish a neutral relationship based on bilateral agreements with all the countries of the region. Including countries in conflict with each other. Analyst Degan Yun notes that China has its vision for establishing a multipolar order in the Middle East, which will be built on a balanced and partnership relationship between countries where China promotes stability in the "developing world." This is much more realistic for China than the Western approach (Degan & Mehmet, 2017).

The Western model of international cooperation differs from Chinese standards in ensuring good governance, sound infrastructure, the rule of law, and human rights. Degan notes that for China, economic development and the supply of public goods are more important for peace and stability, but not for democratic reforms. The Chinese model of managing the economy, which is in fact like authoritarian capitalism, is more acceptable to Arab countries, which view cooperation with China as an alternative to the West. China does not demand human rights, governance reform, and accountability in exchange for investment. Advanced Chinese surveillance technologies are easily acquired by countries in the oil region, making it easier for authoritarian regimes to exist. China is likely to have a significant impact on Europe's economic and security interests in the Middle East. By offering an undemocratic model of development, China has become a competitor to the Western democratic model in the region, both in terms of investment and promotion of modernization.

Beijing is likely to fight to maintain a neutral position, as it would be an optimal position for a volatile region if the USA accelerates its apparent exit from the Middle East Region - something that has become noticeable in recent years. This trend is forcing China to pursue its interests. China may be avoiding more involvement in political processes in the Middle East and increasing security conditions, but it may face the fact that it has no choice in the matter. Meanwhile, the escalation of the situation between the rival

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countries may lead to China's involvement in disputes that are not related to its main goals. Perhaps China today is content to maintain a more stable position and role in the postmodern world. It is already trying to deepen political intervention in the Middle East and take small steps in terms of involvement in the security framework. However, it is still unclear how far China will go in this direction (Lons et al.,2020).

BALANCE OF GEOPOLITICAL FORCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The modern Middle East - this area is the tensest zone in world politics, where conflicts have become commonplace for 70 years. The security architecture of the region is conditioned by a special international policy, which outlines the balance of power of the European type, multipolar controversy, and the medieval religious world order.

The configuration of political forces in the region is determined by many centers with equal political and economic potential. There are great contradictions between them, which makes conflicts inevitable. That is why there is constant tension and war in the region, the countries of the region are in search of a permanent balance and therefore the focus of global actors. The West spares no diplomatic and military effort for stability and peace in the region to be able to export resources from the world energy hub. The situation - "all against all" - is constantly maintained in the Middle East.

The largest and most influential power in the Middle East is a bloc of Sunni states led by Saudi Arabia, which is a leader in the region with economic and military potential. The goal of the bloc policy is clear: to maintain the status of a major exporter of oil, to influence energy prices, and, most importantly, to present itself as the world spiritual center of Islam (Kosachi, 2015). To do this, Saudi Arabia needs to maintain a strong regional position.

Saudi Arabia's main rival is Iran. Its impact has been somewhat diminished by the sanctions imposed. It is true that in 2016, Saudi Arabia ranked fourth in the world in terms of defense spending (Tian et al., 2017), but Iran has a military advantage. Iran's position with Arab countries strengthened after the Islamic Revolution of 1978-1979 when Iran formed a Shiite political bloc (Alabbasi, 2015). As a result of the all-out Sunni-Shiite confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, several hotspots appeared on the map of the Middle East - Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon, and Syria - respectively, supporting politically close forces. Lately, Iran has been forced to deal with international pressure and lose to its rival. In 2015, Saudi Arabia formed an Islamic military-political bloc of 34 Sunni states, effectively forming a coalition against Shiite forces in the Middle East. However, since the Arab Spring in 2015, the political reality has shifted in Iran's favor. The economic effect of falling energy prices has harmed people's attitudes (Aydin, 2016). According to experts in The Economist, civil unrest and chaos have been exploited by a special wing of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps ("KUDS") in Iran, which has brought pro-Iranian forces to power in the four major capitals of the Middle East - Baghdad, Beirut. In Damascus, San Diego. Saudi Arabia has been under siege by Shiite countries (The Economist, 2015).

Iran's success in regional policy was facilitated by the Comprehensive Action Plan adopted in 2015, which called for the phasing out of sanctions on Iran and which was categorically opposed by Saudi Arabia and especially Israel. As the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Qatar escalated significantly in 2017-2018, Qatar has been trying to strengthen its position for decades. Qatar has a strong economy. It has close diplomatic relations with the United States, which has a large military base in Qatar. Qatar shares wealth from Iran's North / South Shield gas field. It also has good relations with Israel and Turkey. Qatar Al Jazeera has started broadcasting, which is by far the most influential international Islamic news

broadcaster. During the Arab Spring, Qatar pursued effective policies like Iran, gaining influence in several countries (Libya, Egypt, Yemen, and Syria). This has strained his relationship with Saudi Arabia. In 2017, Saudi Arabia persuaded allied Arab countries to declare a diplomatic blockade on Qatar, which further strained the situation and forced Qatar to move closer to Iran (Fisher, 2017).

However, Middle East policy is not limited to the Sunni-Shiite confrontation. Turkey is another influential player in Middle East politics. After coming to power in the early 2000s. With a gradual concentration of power in the hands of the Justice and Development Party and President Erdogan in the country, Turkey has embarked on a course of increasing its regional and international role. Of course, this has complicated Turkey's relations with its neighbors. On the one hand, this is due to the close good-neighborly relations with Iran in the economic field, on the other hand, due to political ambitions in the region, Turkey tries to limit Iran's influence (Svistunova, 2016). For these reasons, Ankara needs to develop positive relations with the Persian Gulf countries, and especially with Saudi Arabia, but because of its ambitions in the Islamic world and, for example, its line in the Syrian conflict aimed at supporting the Turkomans, serious problems with relations with the Sunnis arise. In addition, Turkey is an active member of the North Atlantic Alliance, which also has several consequences on its relations with the countries of the region. Serious attention is paid to the Arab-Israeli conflict, which has been going on for about 70 years, in which the interests of global actors are at the forefront of Middle East politics. According to some experts, the conflict has long since exhausted itself and is slowly disappearing, but sometimes enters an active phase. However, even this approach cannot be considered correct. Over the years, the scale of the conflict has changed significantly, from the Arab-Israeli conflict to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Israel's main opponent, the League of Arab States, is almost incapacitated today because of the great controversy and antagonism among its members. Its main rivals were Iran (which initially had no connection to the conflict) and the Lebanese organization Hezbollah, which is supported. Israel, for its part, is actively involved in Middle East politics, has its interests in energy markets, lobbies for pipelines that supply Middle Eastern hydrocarbons to European markets, forge strategic partnerships with Turkey, finds common ground with Saudi Arabia, and speaks Saudi Arabia. With a strategic partner, the United States.

Finally, the last and most important actor in the international relations system of the Middle East, without which it is impossible to present a modern regional policy, is the United States. Due to its strategic position and its interest in the oil and arms business, the United States has always expressed an active interest in the region, which has been particularly acute during the Cold War.

Washington's behavior changed slightly. Instead of using enormous resources and global influence to ensure a just and stable world order in the Middle East, Washington still prefers to take the position of either side of the conflict that is most in its national interest.

The main result of this policy is to deepen the conflicting relations between the main centers of power and to strengthen the conflict potential of the region as a whole. The clearest example in this regard is the Syrian conflict. Washington's tough stance on President Assad's regime, which is an ally of Iran and an opponent of Saudi Arabia, the civil strife that began against the backdrop of the Arab Spring, lasted seven bloody years. Much of Syria has been devastated and emptied, with large numbers of refugees fleeing their homes and fleeing to Europe, where civilians have been replaced by various radical groups willing to use chemical weapons against the rest of the population to cast a shadow over Bashar al-Assad. This was observed all over the world in April 2017 in Hannah Sheikhun. After Obama's weak and inconsistent course, many, including in the United States, especially among the military, believed that President D.C. Trump would have taken a more proactive stance in the Middle East and if he had

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not solved the problem he would have made at least significant progress in resolving regional problems. However, the first year of Trump's presidency showed that such expectations were premature. On the contrary, Trump, with the broad support of the most radical Republicans, has done his best to sabotage the only significant achievement of the previous administration - which is a nuclear deal with Iran. This only exacerbated the regional conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia (Stevenson, 2017). Trump's support and his promise to supply $ 100 billion in weapons to the Saudis during the Qatar-Saudi conflict not only endangered the security of the entire Arabian Peninsula but also contributed to the consolidation of Qatar and Iran (DW, 2017).

China, a new player, today looks at the region differently and seeks to increase its political and military participation. On the one hand, China, like Russia, wants to reduce US influence in the Middle East, but it is unclear what the outcome of the competition between the two big countries will be. We have to say that at the very beginning the Middle East was of little importance to China's foreign policy. As for today, as the global forces have shifted their position, their ambitions expanded westward. China has strong strategic interests in the Middle East due to the high oil demand. It is noteworthy to mention that China now imports more oil than the United States (Citrinowicz & Yellinek, 2021). Thus, over the last fifteen years, China has gradually changed its aspirations. He established military partnerships with the United Arab Emirates to jointly develop advanced military technologies. In addition to China making large investments in the region, the growing proliferation of Chinese weapons in the Middle East could lead Beijing to a confrontation with Moscow, as Russia is a leader in the arms trade.

FROM ECONOMIC INTERESTS TO POLITICS AND SECURITY

Today, China is the number one partner of 15 Arab countries. He is actively involved in naval missions against pirates as well as large-scale rescue operations (Libya in 2011 and Yemen in 2015). China has also played a mediating role in the crises in Syria and Yemen, albeit very cautiously. Interesting is the fact that China has reached a nuclear deal with Iran. It has two special envoys to countries in the Middle East in the conflict zone. The deployment of a Chinese military base in Djibouti and a port in Pakistan underscores China's military presence at critical points in the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab al-Mandeh Strait. China believes the United States is still ready to take responsibility for the security of the oil region. Accordingly, he did not intervene to neutralize the escalation at local crisis points. But we must not forget that beyond the principle of non-interference, China was collaborating with Russia to protect the Syrian regime (Frodman, 2021). And yet the Middle East is not a priority of China's foreign policy. Whether more involvement is needed to protect China's economic interests in the region - In response to this question, some Chinese experts say that China should abandon the image of a free rider and increase its military presence in the region. Beijing is ready to challenge US dominance in the Middle East and other parts of the world, Degan writes. In this regard, the One Belt One-Way Initiative promotes both global trade and foreign relations as well as economic space beyond Washington's control. The United States remains the dominant foreign power in the oil region and will not allow China's military presence in the East to increase (Fulton, 2019).

Arab countries are facing elections. China's willingness to invest heavily in infrastructure and public services has raised high expectations in developing Middle Eastern countries. Gulf countries have been actively involved in the BRI project to pave the way for Chinese business. According to Dr. Nasser Al-Tamimi, many perceive China as a good economic and political opportunity to diversify its foreign strategy

Figure 1.

Top 15 crude oil exporters to China, 2018 ($bn)
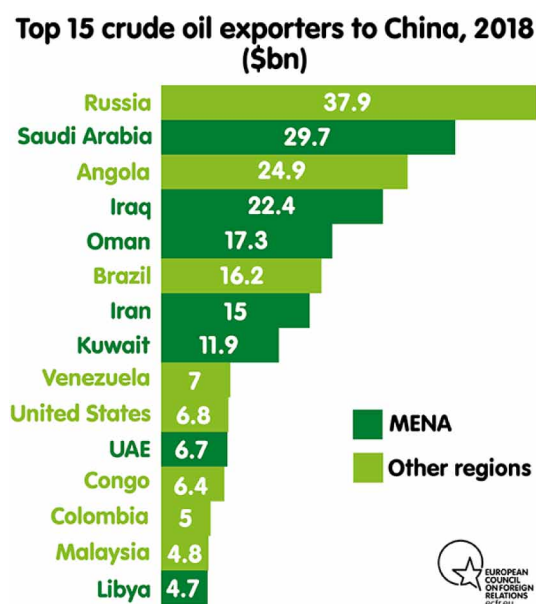
amid declining U.S. influence (Naser, 2013). However, after the United States expressed concern about the potential impact on the security of the expansion of technological cooperation between Israel and China, some Israeli companies canceled their contracts with Chinese firms (Larin, 2018). While many countries in the Middle East support the principle of non-interference. This principle will soon become a major weakness of China. The lack of political interest draws the country apart from the Middle Eastern countries. China has presented its ambitious approach to the region in two official documents. These are: "Vision and Action for the Merger of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" and "China's Policy in the Arab World" (Naser, 2013). The document names five priorities for cooperation in developing relations with the BRI countries: political coordination, facility linkages, ongoing trade, financial integration, and people-to-people contacts. These cooperation priorities are a roadmap for the development of China's relations with the Middle East.

Thus it is obvious that China remains a major buyer of oil and natural gas in the region. China accounts for 40% of oil imports to the Middle East as well as liquefied natural gas exports. It is expected that China will increase its energy imports dramatically. China fears that under the influence of Washington, Gulf countries may suspend oil exports to China. This circumstance pushes China to expand cooperation with Iran. However, due to US sanctions, China is still dependent on the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf.

The growing cooperation of Chinese technology giants Huawei, ZTE, and Hikvision with developing countries is causing concern in the US and Europe and trying to prevent these countries from introducing Chinese technologies. Alternatively, the West offers an initiative such as the Clean Network Initiative. Middle Eastern countries have to choose between Chinese and Western technology, with fierce competition from China and the US making the future of next-generation 5G technology unclear to these countries. In particular, this is due to real risks or simple political considerations. Countries hosting Chinese technologies and infrastructure projects need to develop a realistic vision of China's global goals and economic interests in order to assess the expected goodness and security risks. This primarily

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applies to the Middle East and North African countries. They will be involved in the navigation of the Chinese megaproject (BRI). In this way, China seeks to bring the Eurasian-African economy into one space through various infrastructure and energy projects (Blaubach, 2021).

TRADE, INVESTMENT, CONSTRUCTION, AND TECHNOLOGY BRANDS

The oil region is a major area of infrastructure contracts for Chinese firms. The Gulf Vision Development Program provides good opportunities for further collaboration on major infrastructure projects. Ports and industrial parks play a key role in this direction, as links in the chain between China and the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, as well as the Red and Mediterranean Seas. In the summer of 2018, Beijing said this would be an important feature of its economic presence in the Middle East. The port of Khalifa in the United Arab Emirates, the port of Dukman in Oman, the port of Jizan in Saudi Arabia, the port of Said in Egypt, and the port of Ain Sokhna in Djibouti are important parts of this great project. Chinese brand companies are also represented in reconstruction projects in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. According to the International Monetary Fund, in 2017, trade between China and the Gulf countries reached $ 197 billion. Since 2016, China has become the largest investor in countries in the Middle East region (Sanders, 2016).

It should be noted that Chinese companies are also trying to gain a foothold in the Middle East market in terms of the economic use of nuclear energy. The first significant potential customer is Saudi Arabia, which is interested in using commercial nuclear reactors as an internal energy source. China Nuclear Engineering Group Corporation has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Saudi Arabian Sea Water Dispensing Company, which uses nuclear reactors. As early as September 21, 2018, China adopted the Draft Atomic Energy Act, which aims to support its huge nuclear industry in a significant increase in its share of the global nuclear export market, including in the Middle East. China and Saudi Arabia have been cooperating in the construction of a uranium compound plant, indicating that Saudi Arabia is considering using its civilian nuclear program for military purposes. The facility is being built with the help of two Chinese companies in the desert, near the northwestern city of Ula, Saudi Arabia, at a safe distance from Iran. However, competition in the nuclear market could lead to conflict between the two superpowers.

Artificial satellites, as a digital part of the Silk Road project, are also an important priority for China in the region. In the Middle East, the Chinese satellite navigation system BeiDou is used in the fields of telecommunications, maritime security, and agriculture. Chinese telecommunications companies are collaborating with Arab countries to build Huawei 5G networks, as well as participating in solar, wind, and hydropower projects. This is especially true in the Persian Gulf countries, where energy diversification is a priority in development projects. The increase in trade was followed by an increase in the participation of Chinese financial institutions throughout the region.

Dubai has branches of China's four largest banks, as well as a currency swap center since 2018, which has handled nearly $ 7 billion worth of transactions in Chinese yuan. Other cities in the Middle East are also attracted to major Chinese commercial institutions and banks. Chinese society is also growing. More than 300,000 Chinese live in the oil region today and more than 4,200 Chinese businesses operate here (Fulton, 2019). Among them are Chinese brand companies, world leader - aircraft manufacturer DJI, artificial intelligence firms Megvii, SenseTime, and iFlytek 002230.SZ, surveillance camera seller Hikvision 002415.SZ and e-commerce conglomerate Alibaba Group BABA.N. They are forced to recon-

sider the new reality in the region. JD. com, one of China's largest online retailers, heading to the Middle East, following a partnership agreement with Namshi, a fashion and lifestyle platform. Chinese brands such as Baleno, Dodogogo, Latit and Mo & Co will now be sold on the Namshi platform. Beijing-based JD.com had a revenue of 745.8 billion yuan ($ 114.97 billion) a year.

As for Namshi, it was founded in 2011 and is based in Dubai. This platform provides support for JD.com logistics, warehousing, marketing, and content creation in the region. The Namshi platform sells over 800 brands and has customers across the Middle East.

China has established comprehensive strategic partnerships with Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, and Turkey. This wave of economic diplomacy indicates that Chinese leaders are increasingly favoring the Middle East as an important area for their political and strategic goals. Beijing offers more status quos to the United States than to isolated states. During a visit to the United Arab Emirates in 2018, Xi Jinping noted that the United Arab Emirates is a central pillar in China's Middle East policy (Lonsi, 2020).

The share of the Chinese arms trade in the Middle East has increased. China's success was large because the United States was unable to negotiate trade agreements in areas such as military aircraft and ballistic missile systems due to congressional control. Chinese companies can easily supply complete missile systems and related services without political consideration. Middle Eastern countries typically favor the United States in terms of arms purchases because of advanced technologies. However, China's decision to sell the planes only to countries such as Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates implies that it maintains the status quo and does not sell military equipment to non-state actors or revisionist states. This poses a significant problem in the Middle East, in the long run (Bordachev, 2018).

THE DIGITAL AGE IS CHANGING CHINA'S APPROACH TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Modern China is far more digital than its competitors. It is the largest investor in digital technology in the world, consumed by one-third of the world. With its huge domestic market and rapid commercialization of digital business models, China has a special advantage. The countries of the oil region want to use digital technologies and keep up with the times. Three giant Chinese Internet companies operating in the global marketplace - Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent, or BAT - are creating a multidisciplinary digital ecosystem that encompasses all aspects of consumer life.

The Chinese government actively supports digital innovations and companies. Helps to carry out experiments. It also helps investors, developers, and even more so consumers. China's digital transformation is striking and has a profound impact on its economy. It will not be a surprise if China has a serious impact on the world's digital landscape as well. Its digital globalization is now taking off through mergers and acquisitions (M&A), investments, export of new business models, and technology partnerships. At a rapid pace, China is trying to move to the forefront to control the world's digital frontier in the coming decades. Given the development of the country and the pace of introduction of digital technologies so far it is only in the middle of a global package. In the Digital Acceptance Index, China ranked 50th out of 131 countries (2016), a figure that pushes China to become a major digital player in the world. This is well seen in its activity in the Middle East.

China has neglected such an important aspect as brand equity. However, many Chinese companies seek to build strong brand capital through product quality growth, joint ventures, and co-branding (Alaaeldine, 2013). Today Lenovo and Huawei are at the top of the rankings as successful Chinese global brands.

Lenovo has more than 52,000 employees worldwide and ranks 226th on the list of 500 global companies. Although Lenovo is huge in this respect, Huawei is a real giant, with more than 180,000 employees it ranks 83rd on the ranking list. 60-70% of the income of these companies is generated by overseas businesses (Zaagman, 2017). With the expansion of Chinese technology firms around the world, the organizational model they have chosen will have a significant impact not only on the approach of individual companies to global markets but also on how Chinese businesses present themselves around the world.

The international success of Chinese companies is largely due to the companies' policies in the global and regional markets. An important role here is played by the strategy, for which the priority question is: how the company perceives its brand, what identity it gives to it and how it defines the geography of the brand. Is it a global company or a Chinese company with international business? These two Chinese technology giants have different strategies at the international level, which is reflected in their characteristics. Lenovo is a truly global company in many ways. Huawei is a Chinese company doing business overseas. Lenovo is a company with a distinctly global identity. Often referred to as "wolf culture", a brutally aggressive approach: "The wolf culture at Huawei means that everyone in the company is fiercely competing with each other, so the company will be better able to fight and compete with external threats." With Huawei, all businesses seem to "It's around the company's headquarters in Shenzhen, and for the company's overseas business, it favors sending employees abroad en masse because it does not trust local staff." If people work at Huawei and they are not Chinese, despite their rank and salary, they have very little Real authority, even if they are in their own country.

In the Middle East, the staff of Chinese companies is largely Chinese, and their working conditions are also middle-class, although it should be noted that they do not want to hire local staff, despite the terms of the contract. When we reviewed the specifics of the activities of the two technology brands, it was revealed that despite their strategy, they still prefer the Chinese staff and explain this by their qualifications, pay terms, and language barrier. Thus, it should be highlighted that this approach creates the image of China using a U.S. security umbrella in the format of its BRI initiative to shift its focus to economic projects. China's trade, investment, and aid are valuable to Middle Eastern countries because it contributes to the region's development and stability (Naser, 2013).

The COVID-19 pandemic is the first global problem to weaken American leadership. The international liberal order was disrupted and the influence of the transatlantic nucleus in the post-Covid world was weakened. It is still unknown whether the new leaders are ready to take responsibility for the formation of new world order, the need for which has been exacerbated by the Ukraine crisis. China is considered a major competitor to world leadership, although attitudes towards it are different in the international community. Many countries are likely to reassess their relationship with China shortly. Many are trying to quickly shift the balance of power between China and the West. The Chinese and Americans increasingly value their global competition as a zero-sum game. Experts She Gangzeng and Brandon Friedman question whether "one belt one way" will be able to develop China's economic and geostrategic interests in the post-crisis world. The global pandemic has called into question the goals of large-scale projects to advance China's economic and geostrategic interests (Lonsi, 2020) and has also significantly worsened Sino-US relations, which are likely to affect the countries' traditional partner relations. Especially on the introduction of global digital standards and the future of communication and infrastructure projects. Middle Eastern countries maintain important and long-term security ties with the United States.

The pandemic has affected global consumption and demand. Likely, China and its partners will primarily want to assess the situation as trade and tourism on the planet change amid a global pandemic. It is also interesting to see how the countries involved in the One Belt One Road Initiative will continue

to invest directly in ongoing projects beyond their borders. In the wake of the crisis caused by COVID -19, global demand for digital and communications technologies can only increase, even if the pandemic outcomes are sustained in the short and medium-term.

CONCLUSION

For China and other global actors interested in the Middle East region, the key question is whether competition is the best way to pursue their interests or, conversely, to work together to develop and stabilize the oil region. There is no consensus on this issue in Washington or other capitals. BRI (One Belt and Road Initiative) - and with other megaprojects in mind, China is expanding its position in the international arena, and its strengthening increases the risk of conflict in the Middle East. China is trying to establish a new model of "digital authoritarianism" and to impose global technical standards acceptable to this model of governance. The threat of digital authoritarianism to the Middle East should be discussed in the context of large-scale implementation of Chinese technologies or infrastructure projects, as it is very easy to upset the balance of interests and start irreversible destructive processes in the region. The interests of global actors in the oil region are predominantly asymmetric and the likelihood of global conflict is high. Consequently, the economic and political unstable situation in this region only contributes to the flourishing of political Islam, which shows an uncompromising and hostile attitude towards other civilizations and cultures. It is in the Middle East that a large number of terrorist organizations are concentrated. Of course, this is a critically important challenge for the West, which will be used by its competitors to achieve their own goals.

China could become a dominant financial, technical and economic partner in MENA (the Middle East and North Africa) and is taking bold steps, both economically and politically. BRI member states, with weak power or capabilities, will be unable to counter China's undesirable moves. Beijing's economic and political influence will grow where Huawei, ZTE, Hikvision, and other Chinese tech companies are established. China will be able to set new digital norms. China is trying to promote this model and increase its technological influence abroad. Through its digital infrastructure, China is trying to impress its trading partners. The main message behind this policy is to impose strict controls on data flows, or "cyber sovereignty" - and its benefits over Western cyber norms. It is obvious that China is focused on economic expansion rather than political modernization. Beijing does not care what the ruling regime is in the country as long as the business is profitable. In the future, countries in such oil regions may be less likely to comply with Western demands if they have the support of China. More involvement, more communication, and more investment are needed to strengthen and radicalize political Islam. The passive role is chosen by the West, first the US and then the EU over the last 10 years, which has undermined international security and contributed to the dominance of giants such as China and Russia in the Middle East. I think it is time for the leading Western powers to develop a new realistic strategy for Middle East policy and to balance the bold reactionary policies of aggressive Eastern actors in the oil region to avoid a new global conflict in the post-pandemic perspective.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

China: The official name of the country is the People's Republic of China (PRC), it is located in East Asia and is considered the world's most populous country since it has a population of more than 1.4 billion.

Digital Age: A period in human history characterized by a global shift from a traditional industry established by the Industrial Revolution to a digitized, computerized industry based on the transfer of information.

MENA: Is a geographical region that unites the countries of the Maghreb and the Middle East. Most of the MENA countries are also part of the larger region called the Great Middle East.

Middle East: Transcontinental region centered on Western Asia and Egypt. The region includes the following countries: Egypt, Turkey, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Yemen, and Oman.

Oil Trade: Is the process of trade connected with the oil business.

One Belt One Road: It is the initiative to connect Asia with Africa and Europe through land and sea routes to deepen regional integration, promote trade and stimulate economic growth.

Regional Policy: The activities of public authorities, which lead to the socio-economic development of the regions to develop the region's welfare.

Silk Road: The Silk Road wait is an ancient trade route that links the Middle East and Asia with the Western world. The name "New Silk Road" is used to describe a certain large scale.

Chapter 12
Reviewing the Employee Branding Process to Gain Firm Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT

Brands are more challenging to capture, sustain market share, and keep their customers loyal in a highly competitive marketplace. One of the evident approaches that a brand considers is the employee branding process that highlights, establishes, and handles long-term competitive advantage. The employee branding process model recognizes numerous foundations through which messages are conveyed and defines the sources of elements that translate the employee branding process. This chapter reviews a theoretical model of the employee branding process, which posits employee brand image that has been compelled through the posts an employee receives and the structure inside employees' personality that empowers and creates logic regarding messages. The model postulates the concerns of the employee branding process and designates a feedback hoop by which managers can observe this process. Moreover, some unexplored areas of the employee branding process are proposed, including job crafting, workplace civility, motivation, and the behavioral aspect of innovation during a pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

An organization may comprise views about team members, leaders, products, history, services, and many more, but each organization owns a repute. The repute is recognized as a brand and an influential, enigmatic, and synergistic dynamism more than a firm sells. In addition, a firm's repute can vigour to stimulate particular instinctive, perception, emotion, and intellect among the individuals who watch an advertisement, use products, and ultimately communicate with others regarding the firm. From an employee perspective, branding has prompted to disclose that officials are more interested in knowing how this practice can support them in accomplishing a competitive edge in the organization. In recent years, employee brand is a basis of vital competitive advantage and has become a foundation for arguments. Miles & Mangold (2004) expressed employee branding as "*development in which employees adopt the favoured brand image and are encouraged to plan the image to customers and other firms constituents*." Besides this definition, this thought delivered a vision of how firms possibly could accomplish a differential advantage by tactically applying the employee branding procedure.

The Employee Branding process empowers organizations to steadily provide their anticipated brand copy to its consumers by setting a dynamic positioning of customer minds and employees equally. It offers a competitive advantage to motivated employees to internalise the required brand image and transform that image to target customers/other employees. This study addresses the constructive outcomes likely to increase from operational employee branding. Moreover, some new domains are highlighted through an inclusive model for a thoughtful employee branding process. This chapter gives attention to the meaning of employee branding, employee communication methods, the aspects that affect employee insights, and the advancement of an employee's brand image.

EMPLOYEE BRANDING PROCESS

Employee branding is a continuous process that emerges from the firm's mission and values and produces desired band image goals. These goals are communicated through internal and external sources by employees. The sources bring knowledge of brand image and psychological contract among employees. For example, designing proactive team-building culture or utilizing advanced management information systems based on artificial intelligence for task completion. The outcome is a well-defined and supportive employee brand image that impacts the consumer perspective to stakeholders' perspective, as presented in Figure-1.

Organization's Mission and Values

The overall purpose of an organization is expressed through its mission statement, which enlightens what the firm represents (Fairhurst, 1993). Mission postulates the complete purpose and determination of the firm. It replies to the question, "*Why are we here?*" Most researchers have intellectualized mission and vision as verbal gears which firms use to affect the behavior and attitude of their target audiences, predominantly employees (Kopaneva, 2019). A perfect example of a mission statement is a convincing version through which a firm constitutes itself as a representative. The firm recreates itself as an individual as an identifiable "*human-like motivations of purpose*" (Taylor & Van Every, 2010). Margolis (2011) states, "*When employees understand how their daily activities align with the organization's purpose,*

Figure 1. A conceptualization of the employee branding process
Reference: Miles & Mangold (2005)
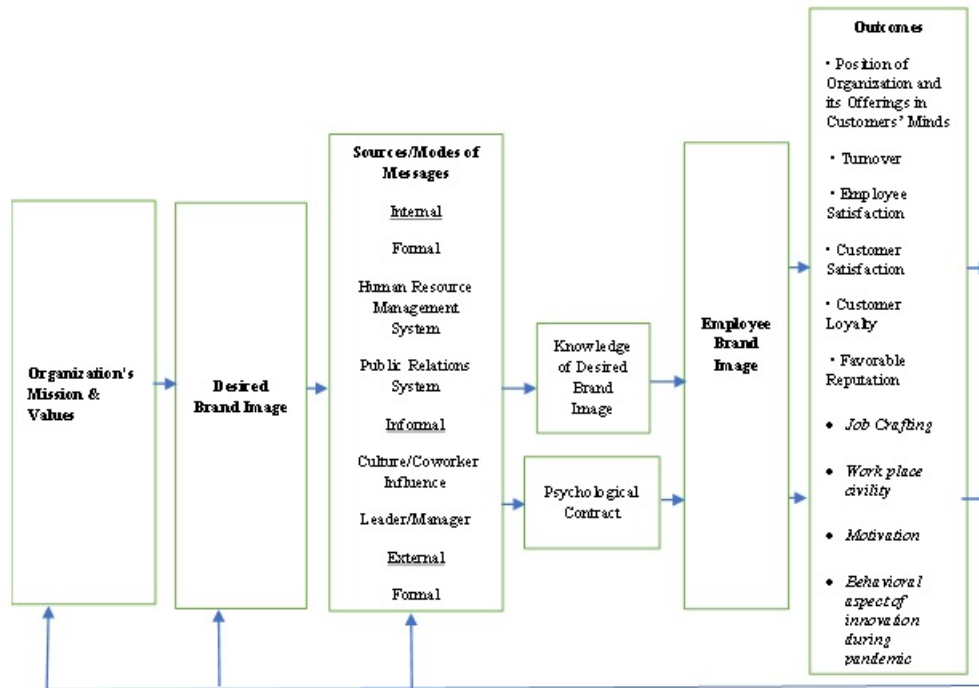
values and goals, then work becomes more meaningful.*" Mission statements are specific and concrete, a firm's differential advantage, and highlight accomplishments. Although well-known mission statements are common and sufficient to motivate the strategic search for the firm's goals and objectives, yet are exceptionally focused and prioritize the firm's resources and activities.

Many scholars have defined the term values in different ways. A few have stressed values as an internal state. Rokeach (1973) refers to values as a constant belief that an optimistic mode of conduct is socially or personally accepted. Workplace values guide and help the workforce to recognize the variance between wrong and right working approaches. The character of a values-based leader is anticipated to play by an effective leader who conveys to employees the significance of representing the valid values in their daily life and make them able to recognize how these values may affect their behaviour and activities.

Desired Brand Image

An image refers to the belief in customers regarding the merchandise being purchased (Lau & Phau, 2007). Brand Image raises beliefs and perceptions in the mind of customers regarding a particular product (Rubio, Oubiña, & Villaseñor, 2014). It is implanted in consumers' memory and revealed through consumers' buying behaviour. From a consumer perspective, brand image is grounded on the category of a specific brand. A brand would be in consumer's preference when it is progressively rooted in consumers memory (Fall Diallo, Chandon, Cliquet, & Philippe, 2013).

Consequently, a good brand image should be introduced and continuously be kept in the minds of the consumers (Lau & Phau, 2007). A strong brand needs to express the consumers' lifestyles, as implementing this, a firm has a good consideration of its consumers. A brand becomes an approach to appeal to gratitude and prestige through the strategic management of distinctiveness. Brand image is embedded in consumers' memory by brand associations' based on strength, uniqueness, and favorability (Mitra & Jenamani, 2020).

Sources of Message

Human Resource Management System

The Human Resource System amalgamates human resource practices "*espoused to be internally consistent and reinforcing to achieve some overarching results*" (Lepak & Snell, 2002). Theoretically, HRM systems and practices influence performance-related results (Wright & Boswell, 2002). Academic experts agreed that firms should be concentrated on systems, as workforces are instantaneously exposed to human resource practices (an interrelated set) rather than one particular practice at one time, and within the system, the unique influences of human resource practices are dependent upon the other practices (Boon, Den Hartog, & Lepak, 2019; Jiang et al., 2012).

Numerous conceptualizations about HRM systems are present, comprising a high level of performance (Huselid, 1995), involvement and commitment (Arthur, 1994). Within HRM systems, diverse levels can be notable: HR policies refer to a firm's identified intentions regarding HR activities that must be applied. However, HR activities imitate genuine human resource exercises (Wright & Boswell, 2002). Firms can also establish HR systems aiming at wide-ranging sub bundles or types of practices. For example, the one grounded on the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) model: Ability-enhancing practices (selection and training), Motivation-Enhancing practices (performance management and rewards), then Opportunity-Enhancing practices (participation and job design) (Jiang et al., 2012).

Culture/Co-Worker Influence

Organizational culture refers to established principles, assumptions, and values shared by associates (Schein, 1990). These shared values affect the organizational behavior as well as their members because they depend on the values to control their behaviors and decisions, which additionally create an impression on a firm's efficiency (Barney, 1986; Tsui, Zhang, Wang, Xin, & Wu, 2006; Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Organizational culture has been broadly explored in strategic management, corporate communications, and organizational behavior. Generally, organizational culture theory theorizes that firms' culture influences organizational members' behavior (Schein, 2010). Consequently, organizational culture appears like a basic organizational form to progress organizational affiliates' performance and job engagement.

Co-workers—consultants who serve in a similar branch of an organization can affect each other in numerous means. Firstly, through social learning, co-worker inspiration may take place. Through co-workers' interaction, consultants can learn about wrongdoing profitability and procedures for reducing the risk of detection or compelling misconduct. Secondly, through social utility, co-worker impact may happen, as a consultant's value through an accomplishment depends on the activities of his peers. Through interacting with co-workers, consultants could engage the office's social norms and culture to adapt their behavior. Positive co-worker behaviors, such as trust and mentoring, might reduce turnover,

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promote perceived organizational support, and increase practical commitment and job satisfaction (Ferres, Connell, & Travaglione, 2004).

Leader/Manager

Decades of research suggested that leaders are equally made or born. As discussed in psychology, the nature-nurture arises and contributes to that leader results from environmental and genetic impacts and inspirations. Exploration of twins revealed that a specific gene was associated with leadership role occupancy, which expressed whether somebody grasps a supervisory leadership status or not. Heritability, enlightened approximately 24% to 30% of leadership's inconsistency, is role occupancy, and the greater share of variance may be linked with environmental inspirations. Research grounded on gene-environment interaction theory recommended that enhanced social environments (supportive and warm) might fail the genetic inspirations on leader appearance.

In contrast, meager social environments (higher-conflict families and poverty-stricken) had the reverse influence (Barling & Weatherhead, 2016). This recommends that environmental aspects perform a great role in the primary advancement of leadership ability and achieving leadership status here. It has been projected that leadership growth is a development that can happen throughout the whole life span. This voyage has numerous developing phases from birth, over infantile, youth, and glowing into maturity (Liu et al., 2019).

Advertising and Public Relations

Advertising and public relations are non-personal mediums of messaging, distinctively from personal selling. Advertising involves conventional features that set it separately from other mediums of mediated communication. Excited sales tones from unbelievably coiffed speakers, contented households whistling annoyingly, attractive jingles at the kitchenette sink, unbearably good-looking models, awkwardly enthusiastic by chocolate confectionaries all spring to memories as advertising platitudes. Business experts consider advertising an effective marketing instrument to communicate convincingly to the masses of customers. Furthermore, it tends to sell is to be overplayed: its aptitude to encourage consumers to consider in terms of brands is the basis of its financial influence (Hackley & Hackley, 2021).

Customer Feedback

For decades, surveys conducted regarding customer satisfaction have been the most prevalent and traditional technique of attaining customer feedback. Generally, third-party dealers collect data, examine the results, and provide insights to target firms. Such services need active customer participation and additional cost/risk if the desired outcome is not met. Surveys are typically conducted yearly; however, it was observed that customers rarely raise concerns that happened a few months earlier (Hasson, Piorkowski, & McCulloh, 2019). Nowadays, a popular medium of collecting customer feedback is through e-marketplace (e-commerce); this approach could be helpful to customers to purchase products/services proficiently. As the usage increases in e-marketplace (e-commerce), feedback also varies (Christian & Utama, 2021).

The valued customer behavior pyramid presented that satisfied and repeated purchasing consumers are "good," but those who defend and promote the brand are "better,"; and those who give feedback

are "best" because they understand the future value of the product/service which strengthens the differential advantage (Robinson, 2013). Customer feedback could deliver a vision of what a business is doing, based on which marketing strategies could be designed that lead to customer orientation. The employees are encouraged to provide/listen to feedback that extends the future value for a loyal advocate brand community.

Knowledge of Desired Brand

Constantly a good brand image must introduce to be embedded in a customer's memory (Lau & Phau, 2007). Brand impression emerges in consumers' minds and the increased number of consumers who experiences that brand (Rubio et al., 2014). When a brand is embedded and its relationship is strongly unified, its image becomes more dominant and controlling for target consumers (Amron, 2018). Keller (2009) referred to brand image as "*consumer preferences and perceptions regarding a brand, as revealed in numerous types of brand relations kept in consumers' mind.*" Iversen and Hem (2008) expressed that brand image signifies consumers' representation involving all descriptions and assessments linked to the brand. It comprises information and ideas that a consumer has regarding diverse products attributes and dissimilar products (Lee, Lee, & Wu, 2011). Knowledge about the desired brand has shaped the rational image in consumer minds due to marketing communication, social effects, and consumption experience (Riezebos & Riezebos, 2003). Such aspects of consumers' memory affect consumers' attitudes to brand trust (Yang, Wang, Song, Chen, & Hung, 2011), and brand messages influence consumers' minds (Bilgin, 2018; Selnes, 1993). Moreover, earlier research explored that brand image likewise had significant influences on brand loyalty (Liu et al., 2019; Semadi & Ariyanti, 2018; Tran, Nguyen, Tran, Tran, & Huynh, 2019).

Psychological Contract

Firms have a noteworthy effect on the attitude and behavior of the workforce when they complete the terms of the psychological contract. In this condition, employees would be expected to reply and be treated well by displaying several valuable work results like encouraging behaviors inside and concerning their firms, staying with the firm, and showing more commitment (Lepak & Snell, 2002). The psychological contract is an unwritten consideration among the workforce and company. Social Exchange Theory (SET) has originated with the term psychological contract (Blau, 1964). It reveals critical unwritten prospects like fair compensation, career advancement opportunities, good working conditions, and others inreturn for satisfactory performance (Rousseau, Schalk, Schalk, & Schalk, 2000).

The psychological contract has been investigated in many domains; such as organizational identification (Zagenczyk, Gibney, Few, & Scott, 2011), workforce engagement (Bal, Kooij, & De Jong, 2013), turnover intentions (Collins, 2010), workplace commitment (Fontinha, Chambel, & Cuyper, 2014), inventive work behavior (Chang, Hsu, Liou, & Tsai, 2013), workforce performance (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012) and firm citizenship behavior (Turnley, Bolino, Lester, & Bloodgood, 2003).

Employee Brand Image

Brand image is an outcome of point of parity and point of differentiation. The brand image describes consumers' perceptions about brand association built on brand identity elements (brand awareness) stored

in consumer minds. It is formed by types of brand associations, which are comprised of non-product-related or product-related symbolic benefits, attributes, experiences, functions, and general brand attitudes (Sürücü, Öztürk, Okumus, & Bilgihan, 2019). The work of Miles & Mangold (2004) explained employee branding as the procedure through which workforces internalize the anticipated brand image and are inspired to plan the image for organizational constituents and customers. The employee branding process supports the firm in constantly providing its anticipated brand image to customers, thus equally solidifying a vibrant status in the customers' and employees' memory. When completed, it delivers a competitive advantage attained by workforces that have adopted the desired brand image and are well motivated to develop that image for other organizational constituents and customers.

Outcome of the Employee Branding process

Position of Organization and its Offerings in Customers' Minds

A competitive marketing tool is positioning that goes beyond image-making (Zineldin, 1996). Positioning is a procedure of founding and sustaining a distinguishing place and image in the marketplace for its product offerings or/and firm, so the prospect/target market appreciates and understands what the firm stands for concerning its challengers. Trout and Ries (1986) stated that: Firms are spending millions of dollars trying to alter customers' minds through advertising. When an individual's mind is made up, it is nearly difficult to change it. In a competitive market a "position" defines how consumers recognize the service's/product's or firm's enactment on particular attributes comparative to competitors (Kotler, 2007). Positioning plays a pivotal role in marketing strategy as it associates segment analysis, market analysis, and competitive analysis with internal-corporate analysis.

To gain prominence in the 21st century, firms have to offer value to their existing and potential customers that must be grounded on their needs/wants. Urban and Star (1991) summarized that firms need to recognize four critical points for good positioning resolutions. Firstly, "What dimensions do consumers use to evaluate competitive marketing programs – how many are there, and what should they be named?". Secondly, "How important is each of these dimensions in the decision process?". Thirdly, "How do the competition and firm compare on these dimensions?". Lastly, How do consumers make choices based on the information?". A positioning statement illustrates what has been done to the product/service vs. what the consumer's mind figured out about the product/service.

Turnover

Turnover intention denotes employees' thoughts/awareness regarding leaving the job (Akgunduz & Eryilmaz, 2018). The theories of stress, emotions, and coping job resources are primarily appropriate for understanding workforce turnover intention. Antecedents of workforce turnover intention are divided into nine classifications, which include: emotional labor, work attitudes, employee performance, job strains, leader/supervisor behaviors, human resources management practices, role stressors or inter role conflicts, individual attributes, and other firm's contextual aspects (Park & Lin, 2020).

Voluntary and involuntary turnover could be categorized as types of turnover. As Perez (2008) specified, turnover is often linked with job satisfaction. It is vital to differentiate involuntary turnover from voluntary turnover; if not, the approximation of such an association in terms of all leavers will be wrong. Voluntary turnovers form a substantial cost, equally in terms of indirect costs, including the

loss of social capital or the pressure on remaining staff, while direct costs comprise replacement. The study by Taylor (1998) further divides voluntary turnovers into dysfunctional and functional turnovers. Functional turnovers are the resignation of second-rate performers, while involuntary turnover defines the management's decision to force the employee to resign. Dysfunctional turnovers mention the exit of an active employee. However, dysfunctional turnover is categorized into avoidable turnover (affected by poor working conditions and lower compensation) and unavoidable turnovers (serious illness, family moves, and death), above which the firm has no impact.

Employee Satisfaction

Michael Porter distinguished that few organizations can attain technological dominance and distinguish products that are more familiar to customer needs and yield better-quality products than their competitors. Staffing is the first stage to realize this accomplishment, as satisfied and happy employees are known as productive employees. Ivancevich and Konopaske (2013) stated that human resource planning impacts employee job satisfaction significantly because this permits employees to contribute to making specific employment decisions and shaping their careers. Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2000) identified that comprehensive human resource planning could motivate and encourage employees, affecting their contentment, and contented employees are more productive. However, when defining organizational achievements in the service sector, employees satisfaction is also noteworthy because it is a part of their marketing mix. Improving employee satisfaction is serious because it is significant to improve firm operations as it retains profitable customers and raises long-term employee productivity (Kurdi, Alshurideh, & Alnaser, 2020).

Customer Satisfaction

Behavior and satisfaction have become one of the most prevalent areas of interest in management science as it was confirmed as a core element of success in a competitive market. Tam (2004) referred to customer satisfaction as "*an emotional response that results from a cognitive process of evaluating the service received against the costs of obtaining the service*" (Park et al., 2019). Numerous analytical research has established that keeping a loyal and satisfied customer base short of keeping loyal and satisfied employees is impossible. Customer satisfaction is mainly related to enhancing employee behavior and attitudes (Alshraideh, Al-Lozi, & Alshurideh, 2017). Keeping customers satisfied is one of the eventual goals that service firms seek due to the long-term advantages of keeping customers satisfied, such as sustainable profitability, positive word of mouth, and customer loyalty.

In marketing literature, customer satisfaction is a crucial factor that reveals a firm's overall efficiency. When customer experience is compared with customer expectation, it results in customer satisfaction. As a unidimensional variable, customer satisfaction measures general satisfaction with the service firms due to the cumulative judgment of all connections and touchpoints (El-Adly, 2019). Specifically, a Happy customer means his/her expectation is fulfilled. Satisfaction and loyalty are the significant essentials for implementing a genuine marketing concept. Satisfied customers are the individuals that repeat their purchase if the service provider meets/exceeds their expectations (Vasić, Kilibarda, & Kaurin, 2019). Today's firms track their customers' expectations, satisfaction, performance, and even for their competitors (Pakurár, Haddad, Nagy, Popp, & Oláh, 2019).

Customer Loyalty

Thakur (2016) enlightened loyalty as repeat purchases and a function of psychological procedures resulting from commitment. Customer loyalty would be led by higher customer satisfaction. Earlier literature established customer satisfaction as a significant factor of customer loyalty: for customers who are satisfied with the services offered by the firm, the outcome would be repeat purchase (Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016). Rychalski and Hudson (2017) found that customer satisfaction is significantly linked with consumer loyalty. Marketing scholars identified that firms with satisfied customers would lead to high customer loyalty (Rychalski & Hudson, 2017).

Kandampully, Zhang, and Bilgihan (2015) clarified customer loyalty into two forms: attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty identifies the psychological and emotional desires of the customer to repurchase the product and recommend it to other individuals (Baumann, Hamin, & Tung, 2012). Behavioral loyalty defines a customer's behavior to repeat purchase, as they prefer a specific service or brand. This thought comprises deep advocacy and commitment to customers' willingness to pay and to re-patronize more for a chosen service or product constantly in the upcoming days (Chai, Malhotra, & Dash, 2015). Høst and Knie-Andersen (2004) discuss that this approach does not offer any exact explanation of the presence of loyalty as of the relative objective measurement regarding customer loyalty. Agustin and Singh (2005) designate loyalty intention as specified by a feeling to achieve and improve a continuing association with the service provider, comprising repeat purchases and a more considerable portion of the wallet.

Customer loyalty has identified four phases: cognitive, affective, conative, and action loyalty (Oliver, 1999). Cognitive loyalty mentions customer preference in searching for a specific service or product in the market (Henrique & Matos, 2015). Cognitive loyalists' repeat purchase decisions at this phase are logical, as customers will sort numerous evaluations with other substitute services and products prior to finalizing a decision (Han, Kim, & Kim, 2011). Affective loyalty states a customer's optimistic attitude from accumulated earlier experience towards a service or product (Chen & Quester, 2015). This phase is more substantial than cognitive loyalty as customers previously have an experience regarding a service or product, which primes to an emotional attachment and an encouraging attitude (Fraering & S. Minor, 2013). Conative loyalty is considered an obligation to repeat the purchase of a particular service or product (Henrique & Matos, 2015). The three phases mentioned above are reliable with common definitions of attitude. However, Action loyalty is the ultimate loyalty phase, as it deals with actual customer behavior. In this phase, customers have both motivation and the intention to repurchase a product/service (Henrique & Matos, 2015). These four phases of customer loyalty equally define customer loyalty's attitudinal and behavioral features (Jin, Park, & Li, 2015; Tabrani, Amin, & Nizam, 2018).

Favorable Reputation

A well-intentioned corporate reputation shows that the organization has performed efficiently and that higher expectations from stakeholders have been considered (Barnett, Jermier, & Lafferty, 2006). It has been conceptualized as an attitudinal variable comprising knowledge-based (cognitive) and emotions-based (affective) components (Einwiller, Carroll, & Korn, 2010; C. J. Fombrun, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000). From affective and cognitive perspectives, corporate reputation is formed by the emotions kept by stakeholders and knowledge shared among them (Hall, 1992). According to attitude theory, Schwaiger (2004) additionally theorized affective and cognitive reputation as (likeability) affective and (competence)

cognitive. Thus, it is essential to differentiate the affective/cognitive facet of corporate reputation while investigating any stakeholder's personal experience (Raithel, Wilczynski, Schloderer, & Schwaiger, 2010).

A favorable reputation considers cognitive components such as appraisals based on previous employee performance (Schwaiger, 2004), and the affective component appears from kind consideration towards an organization and evaluates how the organization is appraised (Caruana, Cohen, & Krentler, 2006). Moreover, affective reputation is molded through attractiveness and sympathy (Thiessen & Ingenhoff, 2011). Shirin & Kleyn (2017) work concluded that a favorable corporate reputation is growing employees' constructive workplace behaviors such as commitment, job satisfaction, and work engagement. The Social Identity Theory (SIT) also outlined that workforce experience creates a sense of belonging when they describe themselves as those who serve a higher reputation firm (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989). Furthermore, A corporate reputation can be measured through six dimensions: leadership, vision, social and environmental responsibility, product quality, financial performance, emotional appeal, and workplace environment (Song, Ruan, & Park, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The Employee Branding procedure could be a crucial marketing channel for persuasive marketing performance. Two points would achieve a consistent and effective transfer of messages showing the firm's values and mission. Firstly, it enables the workforce to understand, recognize and understand the anticipated brand image. Secondly, it supports the psychological bond between the firms and a single employee. In a competitive marketplace, an affirmative employee brand is precarious. Lacking one, employing and retaining the most exemplary employees has become costly and challenging. Nowadays, firms want a leadership-bound and talented workforce that can run their business ahead of its time and present an impression that the organization is the optimal workplace for them. For an employee brand ambassador, preconditions like salary, organizational culture, communication, dealing, value packages, and weekly-pleased hours are critical for engaging employees in branding procedures.

Among all branding approaches, employee branding is an ultimate weapon that generates worthy storytelling deep-rooted for a sustainable market. Because employees create a perception of the firm in the market, their precise marketing intelligence could attract all prospective customers. In the age of digital media, a satisfied employee is the loudest speaker box because well-designed internal marketing communication tools can only respond to user-generated reactions. Based on the above arguments, job crafting, workplace civility, motivation, and behavioral aspects of innovation during a pandemic could be new areas for a robust employee branding process.

New Domains of Employee Branding

Job Crafting

Job crafting is an independently motivated task and designed procedure that defines proactive and self-initiated approaches to alter the features of an individual's job to better line up with personal goals, needs, and skills. The persons involved in job crafting learn to experience better approaches at the workplace, such as; a constructive work identity, improved task-related happiness, and enhanced workplace performance.

Workplace Civility

When an individual hears the term civility, the mind's initial answers are esteem, courteousness, patience, respect, and consideration. These are the aspects of employers searching for hiring employees, as they comprehend that these are essential qualities to communicate with other employees/co-workers in a constructive and dynamic mode. A courteous individual would be capable of knob disagreement effectually and proficiently. Likewise, an understanding individual would recognize logically to deal with a disruptive condition without dropping his tolerance.

Motivation

Motivation posits the reason of being an individual/creature to start, carry on, or dismiss a particular behavior at a certain period. Motivational situations are generally assumed as powers performing inside the agent that forms a temper to involve in goal-directed behavior. Often apprehended different mental conditions to contest with others, the robust situation merely defines the behavior.

Behavioral Aspect of Innovation during a Pandemic

Managers must enhance and develop trust with their juniors through a pandemic and the influence on employees and organizational aspects regarding innovation. Managerial behavior is acknowledged as utmost supportive by managers vs. juniors for improving and enhancing innovation enactment during a pandemic. It is significant to study the influence of numerous phases of organizational behavior on innovation and trust (team, individual or project, organization or business unit).

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Employee Branding Process: A continuous process that emerges from the firm's mission and values while producing an employee band image that builds the consumer perception to stakeholders' perception for a persistent employee brand.

Chapter 13
Linking Psychological Contract With Employee–Based Brand Equity

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ABSTRACT

For understanding the employment relationship, the attention has been paid by researchers to psychological contract. This chapter provides an overview about the development of psychological contracts highlighting the definition and contribution of different authors. The authors further reviewed antecedents and consequences of psychological contracts. Using social exchange theory, undetermined obligations make the social relationships which create psychological contracts. Psychological contract results in high work engagement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the authors reviewed employee-based brand equity, its antecedents and consequences, and how psychological contracts result in enhanced employee-based brand equity.

INTRODUCTION

In today's era of competition and technological development, organizations are going through frequent structural changes which can also result in changing employment relationship. These changes have drawn the interest of scholars to different types of employment relationship and psychological contracts (Delcampo, 2007). As organizations make changes through downsizing, outsourcing and restructuring, a new employment association is made which creates psychological contract. The literature on psychological contracts help in understanding the nature of work agreements and work environment (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). It serves as a central paradigm for analyzing and understanding exchange relationships. The work of Argyris (1960), Levinson (1962) and Schein (1965) can used for the development of

psychological contract who introduced this term. It can be defined as 'the expectations of an individual concerning the settings of a reciprocal contract between two parties.' It can also referred as the recipro-cal conventions between employee and employer about the exchange relationship (Rousseau, 1989). It is unwritten and more subjective and hence not shared by the parties involved in the exchange than a legal contract. It is a mental model of the obligations between two parties in which organization fulfill its promises and in return employees perform their duties well (Rousseau, 1998).

Psychological contracts can impact on attitude and behavior of organizational members. It can result in enhanced employee's commitment to the organization, their organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Robinson & Morrison, 2014), their in-role performance, job satisfaction and it will decrease their job stress, employee deviant behavior at workplace and turnover intentions. These outcomes of psychologi-cal contracts are related to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). If employees feel that they are getting more than promised, they will restore equity and involve in more positive behaviors at workplace (Ryan, 2011). If the organization is helpful and supportive then employee felt obligation to involve in positive behavior such as employee based brand equity.

To explain the relationship between psychological contracts and its consequences including employee based brand equity, the social exchange theory can serve as an effective mechanism. Psychological con-tracts increase employee based brand equity because employees feel to respond positive behavior of the organization and by involving in positive behavior, the employee increase his chance of being treated good in future by the organization (Deepa & Baral, 2020). Psychological contract create employment relationship between employee and employer to fulfill the brand promise. When organization fulfill its promise then this exchange relationship exists. Furthermore, psychological contracts is seen to predict brand related attitude and behavior such as employee based brand equity. When organization fulfill its promises, the brand equity of employees will be increased. This chapter investigates the antecedents and consequences of psychological contracts. This chapter also studies the antecedents and consequences of EBBE and finally it discusses how psychological contracts result in enhanced brand equity using the lens of social exchange theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Based Brand Equity (EBBE)

A brand represents the promise made by the seller to provide a precise form of benefits to the buyers and make them different from competitors (Aaker, 1996). It can be name, design, symbol or any other feature that differentiates one seller's goods or service form those of competitors. It consists of both functional and emotional characteristics. Brand is a most valuable intangible asset of any organization. Brand creates value for customers as well as for employees. Marketing scholars have focused of product brands and its impact on brand equity (Aaker, 1996). Brand equity represents the worth of a brand i.e., the social value of well-known brand that customer derives from the brand name (Erkmen, 2018). It is major indicator of the value of the brand. In order to get awareness of the relationship between the brand and the customer, brand equity plays a critical role.

In order understand both tangible and intangible features of a brand, brand equity is a notion that can be used. Its dimensions include brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and others linked to brand name and symbol (Washburn & Plank, 2002). Brand building efforts represent

the willingness to attain competitive advantage by building and upholding strong brands. Brand equity can be helpful in measuring these efforts. The brand's consistency, clarity, credibility and related brand investments is linked to the usefulness of a brand which is an indication to employees (Simon & Sullivan, 1993). With the help of internal brand management, the employees can grasp obligatory information for fulfilling the mutual goals of the organization. In order to impact the attitudes and behaviors of employees so that they meet organizational conditions, it is compulsory to provide them with right direction (Tavassoli et al., 2014). Thus, to contribute to organizational effectiveness and success and to provide benefit to the organization, internal brand management efforts are very important and they will enhance EBBE as well. However, the concept of treating employees as customers has progressed in internal marketing literature. The employees become internal customers now and they are considered as an important source for the company brand success (Wilden et al., 2006). Therefore, more understanding of EBBE helps in improving company's competitive advantage.

King and Grace (2009) introduced the idea of employee based brand equity. It represents the effect on employee's response to their work environment by having enough brand knowledge. It can be the value that brand provides to a firm through its effects on the employee's attitude and behavior (Tavassoli et al., 2014). There are three dimensions of employee brand equity including brand endorsement; brand consistent behaviors and brand allegiance (King et al, 2013). The degree to which an employee say positive things about the organization (brand) and also suggest it to others is referred to as brand endorsement. Employees who are intrinsically motivated hold a favorable opinion about the organization and involve in positive external communication. Behaviors of employees that are dependent on the brand values of the organization referred to as brand consistent behaviors. The intentions of the employee to stay with the firm in the future is referred to as brand allegiance. It shows the attachment and loyalty to the organization. It is the principal dimension of brand equity which is also known as brand loyalty. It helps in developing human capital in which employees' possess certain skills and knowledge which results in increased productivity. In order to provide brand promise to customers, employees are considered as brand ambassadors. A key to building employees brand involves communicating the brand values both internally and externally. Brand knowledge and role clarity for employees is positively related to communication and it will enhance employee brand equity. Through retaining productive employees, brand success will be increased (King & Grace, 2010).

An important point of difference is having the suitable level of brand knowledge (King & Grace, 2010). Employees have some brand knowledge before coming to the organization. EBBE shows the brand knowledge that employees already have by working in the market and they use this knowledge to become prosperous and successful (Erkmen, 2018). So, in order to deliver brand promise, it make employees to hold suitable brand information and knowledge. It shows the employee's mindset and reflect how employee think and act with respect to a brand (Wilden et al., 2006). Employee based brand building efforts can also results in EBBE and it is perceived as added value to employees.

Antecedents of Employee Based Brand Equity

Previous research have identified several antecedents and consequences of EBBE (Biswas & Suar, 2016). To study employee brand equity, brand commitment, brand knowledge and brand assets are seen as important predictors. The knowledge of a brand and its identification helps employees to provide the accurate brand promise such that employees become aware about the values of the brand and thus work in accordance with that brand promise (Xiong et al., 2013). However, employees become attached to

the brand emotionally and result in brand equity when they fully understand the brand values. Brand orientations and internal brand management are also seen to predicts EBBE (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010). The brand equity of the employees also be increased by loyalty, satisfaction and engagement of employees. Employee brand equity can also enhanced by enhancing employee satisfaction, by providing higher quality service and by saying positive things about the brand. Therefore, employees communicate positively about the brands of the company to the market and show positive behavior if they are loyal to their organization (Altaf & Shahzad, 2018).

Corporate social responsibility, trust, perceived organizational prestige, psychological contracts also predict employee based brand equity. Corporate social responsibility provides intangible benefits to the company including trust, organizational prestige and status. Corporate social responsibility helps to promote employee motivation by fulfilling an obligation (Biswas & Suar, 2016). An important predictor of EBBE is leadership as well. Company leaders take keen interest in EBBE to obtain the talent they need for the business. Leader's vision, action and attitude are likely to influence EBBE. The brand equity of employees can also be increased by brand specific transformational leadership and transactional leadership (Supornpraditchai et al., 2007).

Consequences of Employee Based Brand Equity

EBBE can result in a variety of outcomes including executive rewards, firm performance, financial/ non-financial performance and customer based brand equity and (Biswas & Suar, 2016). The EBBE benefits can be used to enhance customer satisfaction and financial performance (Poulis & Wisker, 2016). However, citizenship behavior associated with brand, employee satisfaction, retention, employee intention to stay with the organization and positive communication is associated with employee brand equity (King & Grace, 2010). Organizational citizenship behavior is an important element that contributes to organization wellbeing. EBBE is a new and effective predictor of OCB. It can be considered as a driving force in building OCB.

Employee based brand equity make employee loyal and stay longer with the organization and therefore result in increased organizational performance. According to (King et al 2012), employees who have brand endorsements, brand allegiance and brand consistent behaviors likely to increase organization performance. Brand equity shows the assets and liabilities related to a brand and it is the fundamental idea of brand management. EBBE results in opportunistic behavior in the organization which is based on seeking the personal gain and considered as negative behavior. On the other hand, trust is also an outcome of employee brand equity. It shows the disposition of employees to share views with colleagues. Brand equity helps in enhancing the trust among employees. As a result, the employees will be more engaged to the workplace. When employee high brand equity, they will be more inclined to deliver better service and accurate brand promise to customers. The understanding of EBBE results in other brand commitments such as value offered by the brand, organization fit and organizational identification

Psychological Contracts

This concept has been introduced in 1960s. Originally, the word psychological contract was given by Argyris (1960). According to Argyris (1960), it can be defined as perception, beliefs and values detained by two parties in an employment relationship. This shows that employment relationship is based on social as well as economic exchange. Psychological contract is the implied perception between employees and

employer in which employees exchange higher productivity in return for acceptable salaries. Therefore, an exchange of resources between two parties in order to satisfy each party' need is the core tenet of psychological contract.

Later on, the sequence of reciprocal opportunities among two persons (employee and employer) is termed as psychological contract by (Levinson, 1962). They focused on the role of reciprocity and expectations. Both tangible and intangible resources should be included in the exchange. A relationship is created on the basis of need's fulfillment in which the needs of organization is satisfied by employees if their needs are rewarded by organization. So, a relationship of expectation is created between employee and employer. The match between expectation and reality give rise to positive consequences such as commitment to the organization, job satisfaction, and citizenship behavior and job performance. Subsequently, Schein (1965) also focused on the matching of expectations between the member and its organization. According to Schein (1978), psychological contract is 'the sequence of accepted beliefs between an employee and the organization which is not written'. However, the outcomes of psychological contract whether it is positive or negative is determined by the agreement between both parties in terms of expectation and fulfillment. The literature on psychological contracts come from Rousseau (1989) which is a perception of exchange agreement between two parties. According to Rousseau (1989), 'it is the belief of an individual about a mutual reciprocal promise between two parties'. It evolves when one party trusts that a promise has been made for future returns and thus a future obligation is created to provide future benefit. So, she stressed on obligations rather than expectations. The focus on obligations in Rousseau' definition is similar to Blau's (1964) social exchange theory. Based on all these definitions, psychological contract is about expectations, opinions, promises and responsibilities.

Psychological contract is a promise based approach and schemas has a significant impact on contract (Rousseau, 2001). On the basis of contracts, schemas are developed. To understand differences in employee's view of psychological contracts, these schemas help. These also important to guide new employees and thus help in developing their psychological contracts. Schemas with horizontal and vertical shaping are made by psychological contracts. Beliefs regarding promises and obligations are at the basic level of complexity (Rousseau, 2001). With the passage of time, psychological contract evolve from discrete beliefs to more organized schemas consisting of many inter-related beliefs and they become ideology and norms at higher level of abstraction.

The concept of mutual and reciprocal obligations can be understand by viewing psychological contracts from employer perspective (Guest, 1998). For analyzing the employment relationship, psychological contract is a suitable tool. Reciprocal obligations between parties are focused in any employment relationship, so it is a two exchange. According to (Guest, 1998), it is not a theory nor a measure and it does not fit within conventional psychological analysis. However, it is a construct like commitment, satisfaction and leadership. It occurs in the form of person's belief at individual level. This is also different from implied contract which is an exchange agreement between others interpreted by a third party and from normative contract in which members share a common psychological contract with other party. The building block of psychological contract involves obligations arising from exchange of promises between parties (Robinson & Morrison, 2014). However, obligations can also stem from expectations but it is not necessary that all expectations are need to be promised. Psychological contract is a reciprocal exchange which is mutually understand by both parties (Coyle-shapiro & Parzefall, 2008).

(Rousseau, 2001) developed a framework to understand the psychological contracts. It is based on two dimensions; one is duration (short term and long term) and other is contingencies for performance reward (highly contingent, low or non-contingent). Based on these two dimensions, the resulting types

of contracts includes relational, balanced, transactional and transitional. The relational contract is a long term agreement based on mutual trust and rewards are performance based, through participation in the organization. The balanced contract involves long term dynamic employment arrangements based on accomplishments of the firm and opportunities for workers to develop their careers. Rewards to workers are based on performance to organization especially in face of market changes. The transactional type is an employment arrangements that are usually short term in nature and based on financial gains and. It includes restricted worker participation in organization with narrow duties. However, the transitional type is not an actual psychological contract form itself, but it is a cognitive state showing the results of organizational revolution and alterations. The relational side of contracts help to grow employee's expectations, so more demand is placed on relational psychological contracts. However, the elements of the relational and transactional contracts are interdependent and some are mutually exclusive others are not (Rousseau, 1998).

To operationalize, these four dimensions are further sub-divided into homogenous components:

1. Relational:
   a. Stability: it is the obligation of the employee to stay with the firm and perform their jobs well. On the other hand, employer offer constant remunerations and long term employment.
   b. Loyalty: Employees are committed to the organization, show loyalty and provide support to the firm. They work as a good organizational citizen. On the other hand, the employer is responsible for the security of employees and their families too.
2. Balanced:
   a. External employability: external labor market determines career development. Employees has to develop marketable skills. Worker's employability will be enhanced by employers within the organization as well as outside the organization.
   b. Internal advancement: Internal labor market also helps in career development. To meet the demands of current employer, employees has to develop necessary skills. Employer provide career development opportunities to its workers within the organization.
   c. Dynamic performance: in order to make firm competitive, employees need to perform more challenging and demanding goals which may also change in future. On the other hand, employers provide opportunities to continuously learn and grow and to perform according to the requirements.
3. Transactional:
   a. Narrow: Employees will only perform duties on a limited set for what he or she has been paid off. Limited involvement in organization by the workers has to be offered by employer with little or no training for development.
   b. Short term: Employees work for a limited time and less obligations and commitment with the firm. Similarly, employer offer no future commitments and offer employment for a limited time.
4. Transitional:
   a. Mistrust: employees will not trust the firm because the firm does not show its intentions and send inconsistent and mixed signals. Employers also withhold information from its employees and firm also mistrust the employees.

b. Uncertainty: Employee is ambiguous about its commitments to the organization. On the other hand, employer measure that the employee is uncertain by his future commitments to the employee.
c. Erosion: employees expect decline in the future because he received few returns in the future from his or her contributions as compared to the past. Employer also destroy quality of work by reducing employees' wages and benefits.

Antecedents of Psychological Contracts

The antecedents of psychological contract are evident from social exchange theory. Based on SET, undetermined obligations make the social relationships. Social exchange contracts are clearly evident from different researchers including (Argyris 1960; Levinson, 1962; Blau, 1964). Social exchange is different from economic exchange based on certain dimensions such as specificity of obligations, time frame and norm of reciprocity. Economic exchange is that in which obligations are precise, occurs for a limited time and there is a formal contract to fulfill the obligations. Whereas, social exchange involves unspecified obligations, reciprocation is informal between parties which creates trustworthiness and exchange occurs for a long term. Social exchange theory helps to study how social exchange relationships develops. The SET is strongly linked to psychological contract (Blau, 1964). Both of these believe that exchange relationships are based on both tangible and intangible resources involving the custom of reciprocity. Each party to the agreement bring some obligations and expectations that they will also get something in return. Psychological contract helps to emphasizes on important unwritten prospects such as fair rewards, career development opportunities, suitable working conditions in exchange of good performance as compared to written agreement between organization and its employees (Cullinane & Dundon, 2006). However, a collective bond is also created between two parties during the exchange.

Psychological contracts have evolved with three other constructs of social exchange including leader-member exchange (LMX), perceived organizational support (POS) and team member exchange (TMX). However, it is present in individuals as the perception of reciprocal obligations between two parties in an exchange relationship. It is strongly linked to LMX, POS and TMX. Psychological contract shows employee perceptions of what they get in form of compensation, rewards and support in exchange of performing job related obligations. However, LMX focus on quality of relationship between leader and subordinate, POS involves the support received from the organizations and TMX shows the relationship between team members. All these constructs represent the quality of relationship with leader, the organization and team members. So, these contracts also represent employment relationships that involve mutual obligations between two parties so they are closely linked to psychological contracts. In any organization, there are multiple exchange relationships formed by individuals, so they develop psychological contracts relating to each exchange partner. However, most of the research on psychological contracts shows that employees mostly advance only one psychosocial contracts with the organization.

Different factors can also predict psychological contract including involuntary job loss and organizational change including downsizing, re-structuring and mergers, and voluntary job change (Gallagher, 2008). All these factors can force individuals to adopt new beliefs regarding their jobs and careers. Job loss in individuals make them feel less secure in employment opportunities and therefore, they have high expectations of job insecurity. On the other hand, large scale changes in organization such as mergers, downsizing or re-structuring can also result in high job insecurity (Cavanaugh & Noe, 1999). If employees feel that organizations is not fulfilling its obligations, it can result in high job insecurity and

reduced commitment to the organization. The revision in psychological contract results from violation of obligations. Organization is more likely to be harmed by employees who have experienced high level unfulfilled obligations (Huy, 2012).

Trust is also very important in psychological contract. Trust is fundamental in creating a good relationship between employee and employer. Trust is especially important in relational contracts which involve a social exchange but it is not obligatory in short term economic exchanges (Atkinson, 2007). Similarly, effective communication is also important to get positive responses from employees on the psychological contracts. More effective communication also result in more positive perception of promises and commitments on employee's attitudes and behaviors. More extensive communication have positive benefits for both employees and organization (Guest & Conway, 2002). Communication enhances the promises associated with psychological contract and result in better outcomes for the employee such as employee performance, commitment, employee relations, well-being, motivation and employee trust (Conway & Briner, 2002). It is also evident from past research that managing the psychological contract is an essential job of management and it should be managed by HR managers and employment relations managers and therefore, it results in a range of positive outcomes within the employment relationship.

Consequences of Psychological Contracts

The psychological contract can be viewed as a central way of understanding the employment relationship (Schein, 1965). Two mechanisms are identified that connect psychological contract with outcomes. The first one is matching and it represent the give and take relationship between organization and its employees whether the expectations of organization match the employees' expectations in form of give and get. When there is little difference between organization and its employee expectations, there will be greater job satisfaction and productivity. The second mechanism is the degree to which exchange leads to need fulfilment. Schein also viewed psychological contract as extremely vigorous and repetitively renegotiated.

Psychological contract is also significantly related to workplace outcomes. It is a key predictor of employee's behavioral reactions. It can result in enhance employee engagement (Robinson & Morrison, 2014), high organizational commitment (Conway & Briner, 2002), high organizational citizenship behavior (Turnley et al., 2003), job satisfaction, employee well-being employee morale, and employee performance (Chen et al., 2008). When employees feel that organization is fulfilling its promises, then they will be more satisfied with job and involve in work resulting in more employee's engagement. Employee's engagement is very important for organizational success. However, psychological contract helps to promote employee's engagement at workplace. When employees consider that organization is gratifying its commitments, they feel dedicated and energized and will be more engaged in their work. Thus, the success of psychological contract is based on high degree of work engagement. The relationship between psychological contract and employee engagement can be studied with the help of social exchange theory. The custom of reciprocity is important in any exchange relationship and psychological contract is also based on sense of mutual obligation between the organization and employee. If organization fulfill its promises, then employees feel obliged to pay back to the organization. Through high level of work engagement, they can pay back to the organization.

Similarly, organizational represents the person's attachment to the organization and employee commitment to the organization will be likely enhanced when psychological contract is fulfilled (Cavanaugh & Noe, 1999). Organizational citizenship behavior is an employee's reaction to their esmployment relationship. It is a voluntary behavior that benefits the organization. Employees become more involved

in organizational citizenship behavior when they perceive a positive relationship with the employer. Employer fulfillment of obligations also result in increased organizational citizenship behavior (Ahmad & Zafar, 2018).

However, when companies fail to fulfill its obligations, it results on occupational health and stress symptoms such as enhanced job strain (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2013), increased emotional exhaustion, employee deviant behavior at workplace, turnover intentions leading to health related behavior such as absenteeism. Turnover intentions reflect that an individual will leave the organization after a specific time. When organization fulfill its promises then it will decrease the tendency of employee to leave the organization. If employee perceive a balance in the relationship and receive fair treatment as promised by the organization, they will likely to stay with the organization. However, turnover intentions is also negatively related with psychological contract. According to social exchange theory, when obligations related to psychological contracts are fulfilled, then employees feel that organization value their contributions and concern for their well-being and they get enough organizational support to perform their jobs well. So, it serves as an effective approach for understanding attitudes and behaviors across different types of employment contract (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994).

Psychological Contracts and Employee Based Brand Equity

Marketing managers and academics focus on employee based brand equity because it help them to search and recruit capable employees which focus on investing more resources in employment related branding strategies. On the other hand, companies fulfill their psychological contracts which enhances their brand among talents. The responsibilities of employer in form of training, personal growth and development of employees result in increased employee based brand equity (Biswas & Suar, 2016). Furthermore, psychological contracts is seen to predict brand related attitude and behavior such as EBBE.

Based on perceived satisfaction of the brand promise, psychological contract has been created by employee branding. This mutual association is possible when employee perceive that organizations is fulfilling its promises. It can be seen as an antecedent of employee's brand related attitudes and behaviors such as employee based brand equity (Deepa & Baral, 2020). When employees feel that organization is fulfilling its promises, then its brand equity will be enhanced. However, a positive relationship is found between psychological contract and employee based brand equity. Fulfilling psychological contracts of employees can results in satisfactory benefits in terms of employee based brand equity (Hasni et al., 2018).

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides insight into how psychological contracts are created using the lens of social exchange theory. Psychological contract is the mutual expectations between employee and employer concerning the exchange relationship. It is unwritten and more subjective and hence not shared by the parties involved in the exchange than a legal contract. If employees feel that their outcomes are more than promised, they will restore equity and involve in more positive behaviors at workplace. If the organization is helpful and supportive then employee felt obligation to involve in positive behavior such as employee based brand equity. The social exchange theory is used as a framework to explain the relationship between psychological contracts and its consequences including employee based brand equity. Psychological contracts increase employee based brand equity because employees feel to respond positive behavior of

the organization and by involving in positive behavior, the employee increase his chance of being treated good in future by the organization. This chapter discusses in detail how psychological contracts result in enhanced employee based brand equity using the lens of social exchange theory.

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Chapter 14

The Impact of Brand Experience, Service Quality, and Perceived Value on Word of Mouth and Repurchase Intentions

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ABSTRACT

This study proposed and tested a design model that integrates brand experience (BE), service quality (SQ), the perceived value (PV) on repurchase intentions (RI), and word-of-mouth (WOM) recommendations from retail-banking customers in an emerging market. The primary objective was to examine empirically the linkage between these concepts, which resulted in 12 hypotheses being postulated. The study also examines the mediating effect of loyalty on WOM and repurchase intention, with respect to the above-mentioned antecedents. A questionnaire was created using a structured survey of 180 retail-banking customers in Pakistan, and data was collected from those customers. The appropriate tests were employed to ensure the study constructs' validity and reliability. Hypotheses were tested using SmartPLS 3.0. The study findings support the proposed conceptual model, showing that BE, SQ, and PV have a significant effect on the RI and WOM recommendations of retail banking customers. Furthermore, loyalty mediates the relationships between the aforementioned antecedents, WOM, and RI.

INTRODUCTION

A brand is something that you own and can build on, that customers will continue to give value to long after they've bought and used it. A strong brand builds loyalty and loyalty builds long-term stickiness. A strong brand not only creates loyal customers who will purchase again, but also encourages word-of-mouth marketing, which in turn builds even more loyalty. In a world of hyper competition, a brand is what stands out from the crowd and ensures that your customers come back again and again. If you're looking to build a strong brand, you have all of the tools you need to do so in this guide. But it requires the right kind of attention to detail, for you have to think about every single interaction that your customer has with you and make sure that everything you do — both now and over time — is built towards building a strong brand.

Word of mouth is a complex phenomenon because people talk about brands in the context of their interaction with products such as consumer services. It is important to understand the relationship between WOM and product or service experience. Word of mouth has long been studied in marketing research. Various studies have shown that (WOM) is more significant than other tools of interaction in terms of organizational marketing (Bucklin, 2008). Organizations focus on meeting customers' expectations. Thus, once the organization succeeds in satisfying its customers, they become a source of effective communication and marketing for the organization. Therefore, organizations emphasize the need to manage this factor (Ennew, Banerjee & Li, 2000). Although most marketers see WOM as an old marketing tool, it's still the most effective and influential marketing strategy (Naz, 2014). Positive WOM from relatives, family members, friends, and colleagues are considerably more influential than other promotional strategies on different marketing media. The customer's purchase of a similar product more than once is called a repurchase intention. The key factors behind the purchase of products or services from the same organization are customer satisfaction, trust, and loyalty (Hong & Cho, 2011). Similarly, if customers are not satisfied, their level of trust and loyalty will not meet the objectives, leading to adverse results (Fauzi & Suryani, 2019). Various researchers have studied the concept of RI and the key factors affecting it (Law & Xiande, 2009). Most customer purchases are repeat purchases (Harun et al., 2020). Customers usually purchase the same products or services frequently from similar firms, and the majority items characterize a series of purchases instead of the purchase of a single item.

As much as banking is concerned, WOM is of great importance. It plays a significant role in the banking sector of developed economies (Flavia, Guinalı & Casalo, 2008; Zeithaml, 2015). Banks are customer-focused (Choudhury, 2014). And they work to integrate innovation into their services to meet emerging expectations. High-quality service makes customers loyal, urges them to spread positive WOM, and keeps them transacting with the same bank. It's essential for a bank to consistently improve its service quality. Satisfied customers may describe a particular bank's SQ to their family members, friends, fellow businessmen, etc. Their description greatly influences the person's perception of that bank, so more people may be tempted to deal with that bank to receive quality services. In developing economies, the main focus is on identifying the services to be offered to customers with low and average incomes (Kravets & Sandikci, 2014). The role of positive WOM and repurchase intention is significant in developing economies (Chandy & Narasimhan, 2015). Recent studies focus on positive WOM from retail bank customers in Pakistan and their intention to remain as customers (Duarte et al., 2018). Retail banks in Pakistan put their utmost efforts in creating a solid BE.

Once the bank succeeds in creating a good brand equity (BE), it will lead to emotional attachment with the bank, resulting in a high level of customer loyalty (Levy & Hino, 2016). The most significant

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and important aspect of marketing, the essence of survival for the banking industry, is service quality (SQ) (Anabila et al., 2020). Customers can always choose to switch to any other bank, but they will prefer and recommend the one that provides quality services (Lymperopoulos, 2016). A study also revealed that perceived value (PV) affects the attitudes and behaviors of retail bank customers (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Banks try to launch any offers that create value for their customers. In Pakistan, PV is important for customers. It can be a source of recommendation for positive WOM and repurchase intention. The current study suggests that when a bank impresses its customers with a good BE, SQ, and PV, this promotes positive WOM recommendations and repurchase intention (RI). Loyalty is the mediator in this study. If customers are not loyal, they will not recommend the organization via WOM and will have no repurchase intention. Loyal customers can effectively communicate positive WOM to attract new customers. Loyalty shows a significant impact on WOM. This study examines the effect of loyalty on WOM recommendation and RI with reference to BE, SQ, and PV.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Word of Mouth (WOM)

Word of mouth (WOM) is communication tool used to share the characteristics and qualities of any product or service. WOM can create a positive or negative impression of the product quality (Mangold et al., 2008). WOM works as interpersonal communication and is proven to be an effective source of communication (Mangold et al., 2008). WOM has a greater impact than traditional advertising. Although organizations use various advertising tools, WOM is considered the most effective form of advertising (Hogan & Lemon, 2016). WOM considerably influences the response of consumers regarding products or services (Rashedi & Siahi, 2020). WOM is an important factor in selecting a bank. WOM creates trust in consumers, which is a major factor in choosing a bank. WOM is effective not only in attracting new customers but also in retaining old ones (Hogan & Lemon, 2016). Positive WOM leads to trust and loyalty, whereas negative WOM causes loss of trust and confidence in a bank. Ultimately, it results to a decrease in the customer's interest in choosing a banking service (Qin & Kilenthong, 2016; Šperková, Škola & Bruckner, 2015). The research of Mehrad & Mohammadi, (2017) concluded that WOM is a competitive edge for Iranian banks to raise the number of customers. De Bruin et al (2020) found a positive relationship between consumer behavior and SQ in connection with the private banks of Germany. Chaniotakis (2008) investigated what influenced WOM in the SQ of banks in Greece. The research concluded that personal efficiency, price, and customer satisfaction are the basis of positive WOM in a selection of banks. Furthermore, Lucia-Palacios et al (2020) investigated the connection between customer satisfaction and WOM; they concluded that banks pay a lot of consideration to customer satisfaction as it determines positive WOM. Ultimately, positive WOM encourages customers to acquire the financial services of a particular bank. Therefore, positive WOM plays a very important role in uplifting the bank's business. From the above-mentioned studies, all of them have some similarities in terms of determining WOM. However, there are also some differences due to different assumptions about purpose or motivation for WOM. However, all the studies gave a conclusion regarding the destination or destination of WOM with different variables.

WOM is the primary resource of information for consumers on products and services (Hwang & Zhang, 2018). It is considered to be an effective method that can influence customers in acquiring products

and services. As it promotes trust, customers are motivated to use customer service and accept customer service standards (Krishnamurthy & Kumar, 2018). WOM is among the methods of marketing communication and is an essential part of marketing communication (Ahmadi, 2018). It is a word-of-mouth promotion that helps in the distribution of information. It uses perceptions, emotions, and personality variables in turn to promote or denigrate products or services (Yasir et al., 2020). WOM has also been actively used in brand management (Dost et al., 2019). WOM has a high potential to become a marketing tool of brand management (Wang et al., 2018). In addition, WOM has been identified for its potential in increasing sales through influencing customers to alter their purchase decisions. Moreover, WOM increases customer loyalty (Y. Yang et al., 2018). Finally, WOM makes a strong impact in shaping the advertising campaign of marketers. It can be important in creating loyal customers (Pourfakhimi et al., 2020).

Based on consumers' opinions and decision-making styles, it can be determined that WOM has a significant positive impact on consumers' attitude towards the product or service (Li et al., 2022). Based on the research of Çavdar & Erkip, (2022), WOM has a significant positive effect on banks and customers. In the study of Mukhopadhyay et al., (2022), it was concluded that in relation to private banking customers, WOM is an effective tool to build trust and brand loyalty. In addition, Zhang et al., (2018) researched how private banks create loyalty using WOM; the research concluded that customer satisfaction is an crucial element in creating positive WOM. Furthermore, Henseler et al., (2010) concluded that banks pay a lot of consideration to customer satisfaction as it determines positive WOM. Generally speaking, research has shown that one of the benefits or potential benefits of WOM is building brand reputation and strengthening consumer trust in particular brands or service provider (Rashedi & Siahi, 2020). Word of mouth is an effective tool for convincing consumers to accept a product or service. WOM can have a positive impact on both banks and customers by increasing perception of financial value (Hong & Cho, 2011).

Repurchase Intention

The prime objective of organisations is to satisfy their customers by providing quality products and services that can fulfil their needs and wants. Satisfied customers purchase these products and services again and again, making them loyal, and this customer behaviour is termed as repurchase intension (Habib & Aslam, 2014). Many researchers have studied the concept of repurchase intension (Curtis, 2009), and they came to the conclusion that there is a direct relationship between customer satisfaction and RI (E. Malik et al., 2020). The positive relationship between customer satisfaction and RI is a generalization of the matter (Meng & Sego, 2020). Customer satisfaction is the only variable that has a sound impact on the customers' RI (Manzoor, Baig, Hashim, et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction makes the customers loyal, and loyalty tends to manifest itself in RI in retail banking in Pakistan (Chinomona & Dubihlela, 2014). There is stiff competition in the banking sector in Pakistan. Banks launch a variety of services that bring convenience to customers in executing their banking transactions (Zhang et al., 2018).

However, banks are facing negative reputation due to poor customer service and long queues (Tian et al., 2022). Customer loyalty is directly related to repurchase intention (Nguyen et al., 2019). RI plays an significant role in the success of a firm. Thus, it is essential for the firms to get strong customer satisfaction (Kazancoglu & Demir, 2021). A study conducted by Lee & Charles, (2021) states that the repurchase is related to customer satisfaction since satisfied customers prefer the same brand over other products. Satisfied customers have more positive attitudes towards the company and tend to spend more

money with it. Also, their loyalty is higher (Curina et al., 2020). According to the behavior of customers, they are going to make repurchases despite high prices that they have to pay. An increase in the price of product by 10% has a negative impact on the consumer's shopping behavior (Wilson et al., 2019). The study conducted by Ilyas et al., (2020) states that in terms of satisfaction with the product, customer will be more likely to make repurchases. Therefore, it can be said that customer satisfaction makes the customers loyal and therefore they tend to repurchase the product. The study conducted by Trivedi & Yadav, (2020) states that customer satisfaction plays a significant and very important role in the product choice, and satisfied customers prefer the same brand over other product. The study conducted by Sullivan & Kim, (2018) states that satisfaction with service is an important factor for repurchasing, and therefore it is stated that satisfied customers prefer to buy from their existing brand than any other company. A study conducted by Pandiangan et al., (2021) stated that product or service quality is a significant factor that affects repurchase intentions.

Brand Experience

Customers' attachments to particular brands result from their continuous use and the performance of those brands. The BE refers to customers' feelings or responses after having used a brand for a while. Alloza's (2008) study defines the BE as customers' perceptions when they use that brand: its brand Image (BI), advertising, and the product quality. The BE can also be defined as customer's conversations about the brand, wherein they share the brand with other people and obtain information regarding promotion strategies and market positions, among other things (Araujo et al., 2020). With respect to a specific brand, customers create an image about their perceptions, beliefs, and feelings about it, which is called brand equity (Sürücü et al., 2019). Several researches have been conducted relating to WOM marketing, BE and repurchase intensions (Sallam, 2015). Brands that can satisfy customers more effectively create brand attachment (Satisfaction, 2013).

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between BE and WOM.
H2: There is a significant positive relationship between BE and RI.

Service Quality

The quality of service is the level of service that meets the customers' expectations. It is a competitive advantage since it is capable of increasing the profit margin and giving rise to business growth. The quality of service is particularly important in the service sector. The organization that provides excellent services beats its competitors and gains an edge, thereby expanding its market share. Similarly, poor SQ affects the organization's growth (Caceres & Paparoidamis, 2007). Chi et al (2020) says that SQ is an important antecedent of WOM. As SQ is paramount for positive WOM, it should be assessed properly (Chenet, Dagger & O'Sullivan, 2010). According to Herhausen et al (2020), SQ positively affects WOM. A Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1985) give the principal factors that determine service quality. The five dimensions of SQ developed by A Parasuraman and Zeithaml (1985) are tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. SQ is vital in the banking sector in developing countries like Pakistan (S. A. Malik et al., 2020). Banks provide a variety of services. When banks provide quality services to their customers, they gain maximum market share. Quality services not only retain existing customers but also attract new customers through positive WOM from existing customers (Lassar et al., 2005). Competition between the banks in Pakistan is high. Each bank is in a race to provide better

services than its competitors. It is crucial in this highly competitive scenario to sustain a high level of SQ (Manzoor et al., 2021). Thus, banks should try to identify the key factors that satisfy the customer (Park & Kim, 2022). The SQ problems in the banking industry of developing countries like Pakistan differ from the problems in developed countries (Manzoor, Baig, Malik, et al., 2020). SQ is an significant component for customers in Pakistan (Zafar, Asif, Hunjra & Ahmad, 2012). The connections between SQ and WOM can be stated as:

H3: There is a significant positive relationship between SQ and WOM

H4: There is a significant positive relationship between SQ and RI

Perceived Value

Generally, PV is the customer's anticipation of the efficiency of any product or service. Customers interpret the benefits of a product or service. They develop a mindset regarding the quality and its associated benefits through the continuous use of that particular product or service. PV has two parts: (1) the utility gained by the customer from the product or service and (2) the price paid for the purchase of that product or service (Arora & Manchanda, 2022). It defines the extent to which the customer's prerequisite needs have been met (Johnston & Kong, 2011). Customer PV significantly influence customers' purchasing intentions (Solakis et al., 2022). The PV affects the customer's attitude significantly. PV also has a significant role in WOM. In the service industry, the impact of PV on WOM creates a source of business growth and new customers. When the customers get maximum satisfaction from a particular service, they become effective marketers of the service (Z. Yang & Peterson, n.d.). PV plays a significant role in customer loyalty (Akbar & Parvez, 2009). PV is critical when selecting a bank in a developing country like Pakistan (Lewis & Soureli, 2006). Customers avail of various bank services. Banks focus on fulfilling the expectations of customers by giving them optimal service quality. Thus, banks opt for various technologies to improve their SQ and make it more convenient for customers (Pooya et al., 2020). Good SQ impresses the customers and urges them to give positive WOM recommendations. WOM recommendations from retail bank customers in developing countries like Pakistan are effective sources for attracting new customers. The relationship between PV and WOM can be stated as:

H5: There is a significant positive relationship between PV and WOM

H6: There is a significant positive relationship between PV and RI

Loyalty

The consistent use of a particular product or service means the customer is loyal. Therefore, the firm has succeeded in satisfying the customer's expectations about the product or service. Repurchase means a customer has purchased the same product or service again and again (Jenneboer et al., 2022). This type of customer loyalty becomes a continuous source of benefits for the firm (Hallowell & Hallowell, 2012). Once the firm achieves this milestone, it minimizes its marketing and advertising costs. Loyalty is a customer attitude that encourages them to repurchase (Curtis et al., 2011). Research studies suggest that when the customers are fully satisfied with the performance of the product or service, the chances of them switching are very small. So, it can be said that customer satisfaction is essential for customer loyalty (Bowen et al., 2005). Therefore, it can be suggested that the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty is positively associated. In this research, the direct effect of BE, service quality, and PV of WOM are under examination. In this study, the impact of BE on loyalty is depicted (Zehir

Figure 1. Conceptual framework
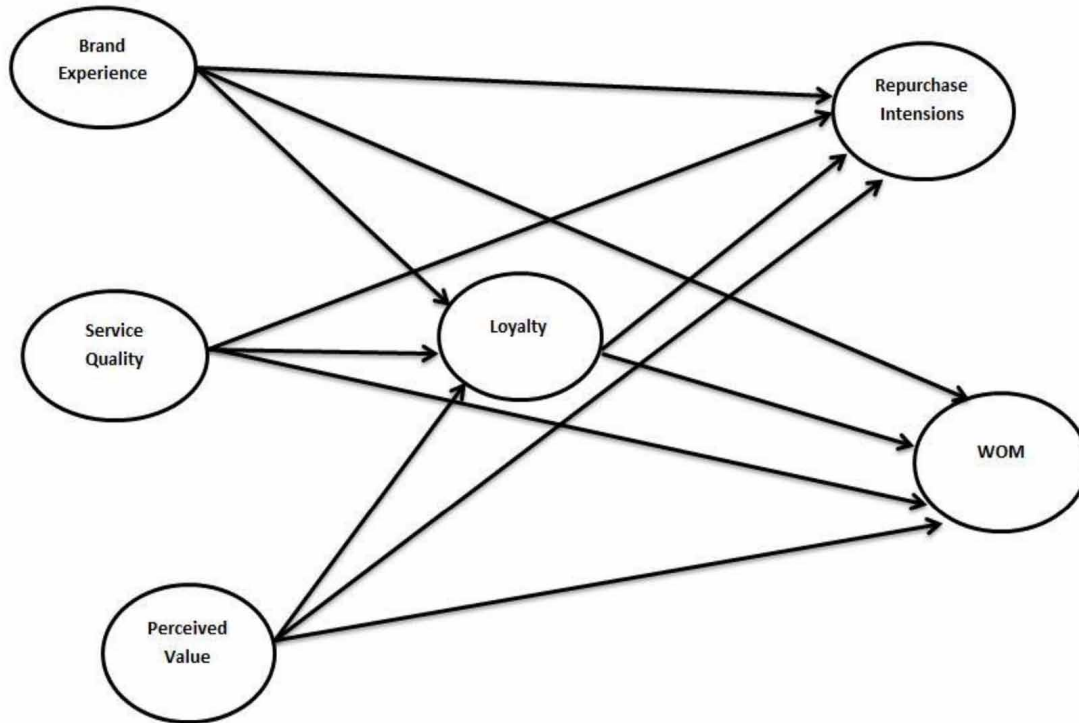
& Kitapçı, 2011). Excellent SQ creates a positive relationship between SQ and customer loyalty for the bank (Kheng, 2010). The relationship between PV and customer loyalty has been established (Z. Yang & Peterson, n.d.):

H7: Loyalty act as a mediator in the relationship between BE and WOM

H8: Loyalty act as a mediator in the relationship between BE and RI

H9: Loyalty act as a mediator in the relationship between SQ and WOM

H10: Loyalty act as a mediator in the relationship between SQ and RI.

H11: Loyalty act as a mediator in the relationship between PV and WOM

H12: Loyalty act as a mediator in the relationship between PV and RI

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the current research, retail banking customers were approached via a self-administered online questionnaire. The questionnaire included two portions. The first portion contained questions regarding the biographic characteristics of respondents. The second portion contained questions about independent variables: BE, SQ and PV (dependent variable: repurchase intention and WOM; mediator: loyalty). Even though 204 questionnaires were distributed to customers drawn from a list obtained from different banks, 180 acceptable responses were received. Considering the limitations of data collection, the current study used a convenient sampling technique. Survey questionnaires were distributed among respondents. SPSS

Table 1. Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	163	90.6	90.6	90.6
	Female	17	9.4	9.4	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Table 2. Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	73	40.6	40.6	40.6
	26-35	35	19.4	19.4	60.0
	36-45	50	27.8	27.8	87.8
	Above 46	22	12.2	12.2	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

and PLS Smart 3.0 were used to perform required data calculations. Validity of constructs analysis was determined for the validation of an instrument.

The sample included of males (N = 163; 90.6%) and females (N = 17; 9.4%); (See Table 1). The age was divided into four categories; (I) 18-25 years (N = 73, 40.6%) (II) 26-35 years (N = 35; 19.4%) (III) 36-45 years (N = 50; 27.8%), and (IV) Above 46 years (N = 22; 12.2%), (see Table 2). The level of education was also categorized into four groups; (I) Intermediate (N = 04, 2.2%) (II) Bachelor (N = 110; 61.1%) (III) Master (N = 63; 35%), and (IV) MPhil (N = 03; 1.7%), (see Table 3). The income was categorized as; (I) Less than 50,000 (N = 12, 6.7%) (II) 50,000-100,000 (N = 24; 13.3%) (III) 100,000-150,000 (N = 92; 52.1%), and (IV) Above 150,000 (N = 52; 28.9%), (see Table 4).

Measures

The questionnaire survey is made up of 21 items chosen to validate the hypotheses. Three items were chosen for SQ (Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1991), five items for BE (Brakus et al., 2009), three items for PV Sweeney & Soutar, (2001), five items for loyalty Mols & Mols, (2006), two items for WOM

Table 3. Level of education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Intermediate	4	2.2	2.2	2.2
	Bachelor	110	61.1	61.1	63.3
	Master	63	35.0	35.0	98.3
	MPhil	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Table 4. Income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 50,000	12	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Between 50,000 & 100,000	24	13.3	13.3	20.0
	Between 100,000 & 150,000	92	51.1	51.1	71.1
	Above 150,000	52	28.9	28.9	100.0
	Total	180	100.0	100.0	

Parasuraman, (1996), and three items for RI (Curtis, 2009). Customers' perceptions of each of these factors were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale,

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Measurement Model

This study's data was gathered using a survey questionnaire. The following factors were studied: BE, SQ, PV, loyalty, WOM, and RI. First, the reliability and validity of reflective measurement models were evaluated. We use the PLS-algorithm shown in the figure 2. According to our assessment of statistic reliability, all indicators have outer loadings greater than 0.70 (fig. 2 & table 5).

According to Bagozzi & Yi, (1988) reflecting measurement models have CR values of 0.885 or greater shown in table 5, indicating that construct measures are internally consistent. Table 6 shows that all of the extracted (AVE) values are more than 0.50, indicating that the measures are convergently valid.

Discriminant Validity

We used CFA to assess construct validity prior to testing the hypothesis. Table 6 shows the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement scale, which can be used to assess reliability. We used two evaluation methods to determine the discriminant validity of the all the items. We began by examining the indicator cross-loadings, which revealed that no opposite construct had a higher-loaded indicator. The AVE values of all variables should be more than 0.70. According to Table 6, all of the values exceeded the basic criteria, indicating that the construct used in this study was reliable. According to both methods of analysis, the majority of constructs have discriminant validity.

Testing Hypothesis

This study uses the bootstrapping option to find the t-values. All calculated values of bootstrapping are shown in fig. 3.

BE, service quality, and PV of word-of-mouth and RI are thought to have an impact. Table 7 displays the findings that support hypotheses. BE has an effect on WOM, according to Hypothesis 1; however, our results show that BE has a significant positive effect on WOM, proving Hypothesis 1 (t-value=4.313, p-value=0.000). Hypothesis 2 asserts that BE has an impact on repurchase intent. According to the

Figure 2. PLS-algorithm
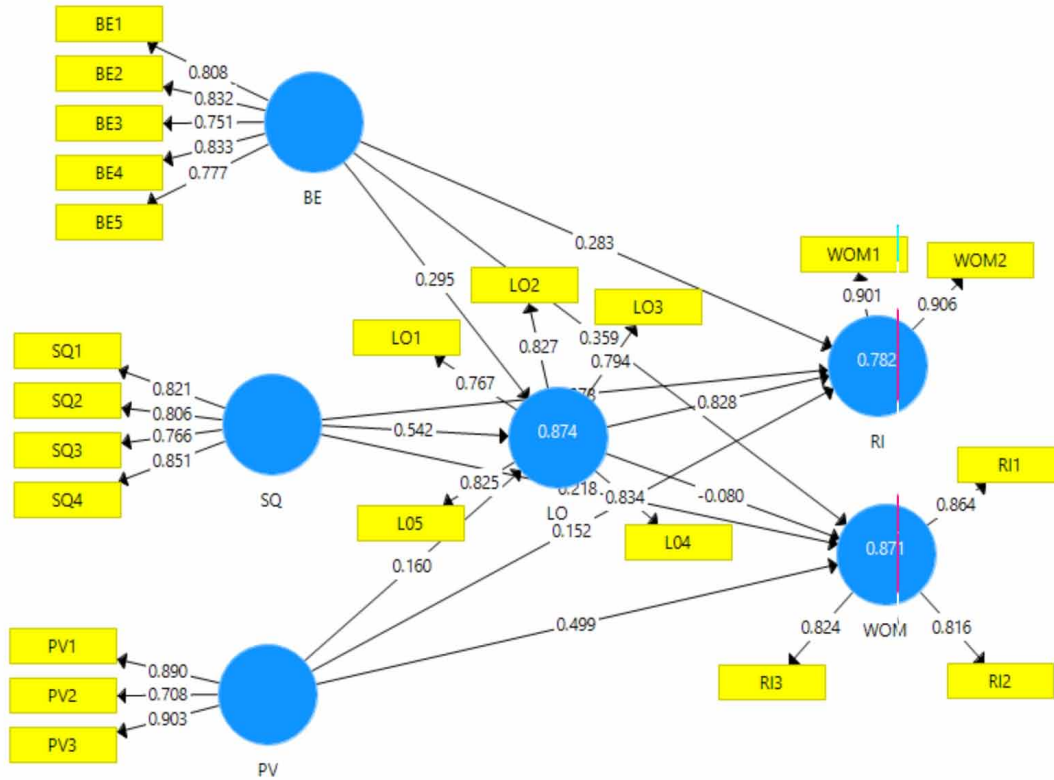
findings, BE (t-value=2.426, p-value=0.016) has a significant positive impact on repurchase intention. As a result of the findings, hypothesis 2 is supported (table 7). The t-values (5.172, 3.568, 2.089, and 2.439) and p-values (0.000, 0.000, 0.000, and 0.000) in hypotheses 3, 4, 5, and 6 indicate that all of these hypotheses are correct.

Loyalty is thought to mediate the relation between BE, SQ, perceived value, word of mouth, and RI (H7, H8, H9, H10, H11, and H12). In hypotheses 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, the t-values (1.579, 7.134, 9.106, 2.641, 3.750, and 2.575) and p-values (0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.009, and 0.000) show that loyalty mediates the relationship between BE, SQ, PV, WOM, and RI, supporting all of the hypotheses in table 7.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study is to examine the impact of BE s, SQ and PV on WOM and RI, as well as the mediating effect of loyalty. The current study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it points out the relationship between BE and WOM in the sense of retail banks' emerging market customers. Although it has been recognized that financial-services branding poses specific challenges, financial-services brands generally lack energy, saliency and emotional appeal (Mohamed & Musa, 2012). It also has been stated that customers' emotional experiences in retail banks affect WOM and RI (Mukerjee,

Table 5. Evaluation results of measurement model

Constructs	Items	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Brand Experience	BE1	0.808	0.860	0.899	0.641
	BE2	0.832			
	BE3	0.751			
	BE4	0.833			
	BE5	0.777			
Service Quality	SQ1	0.821	0.828	0.885	0.659
	SQ2	0.806			
	SQ3	0.766			
	SQ4	0.851			
Perceived Value	PV1	0.890	0.783	0.875	0.703
	PV2	0.708			
	PV3	0.903			
Loyalty	LO1	0.767	0.869	0.905	0.656
	LO2	0.827			
	LO3	0.794			
	LO4	0.834			
	LO5	0.825			
Repurchase Intention	RI1	0.864	0.775	0.899	0.816
	RI2	0.816			
	RI3	0.824			
WOM	WOM1	0.901	0.783	0.873	0.697
	WOM2	0.906			

2018). The current findings suggest that retail-banking customers' BE s in a developing market affect both WOM and RI. The sensory experiences of bank customers also have been developed to generate brand trust and loyalty (Manzoor, Baig, Usman, et al., 2020). In addition, the current study defines the relationship between service-quality WOM and RI. Given that banks have recently undergone radical changes

Table 6. Discriminant validity

	BE	LO	PV	RI	SQ	WOM
BE	0.878					
LO	0.851	0.845				
PV	0.805	0.834	0.839			
RI	0.811	0.854	0.765	0.824		
SQ	0.787	0.903	0.806	0.715	0.812	
WOM	0.864	0.838	0.897	0.829	0.830	0.801

Figure 3. Bootstrapping
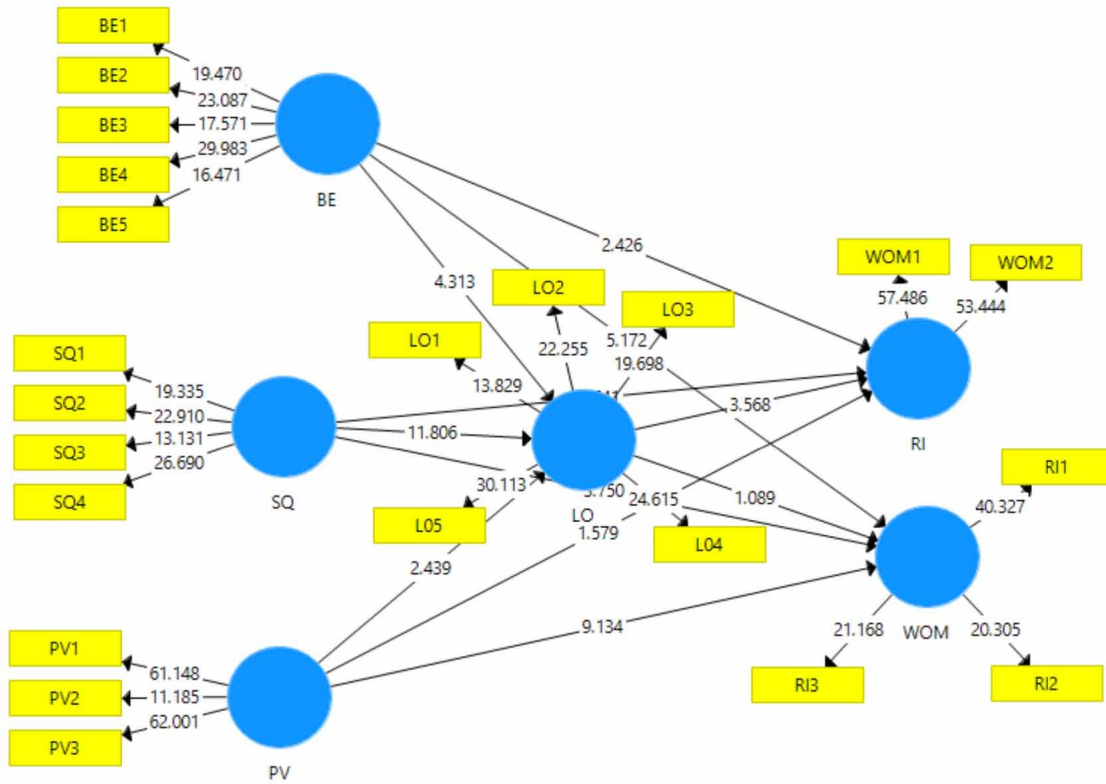
Table 7. Hypothesis relationships

Hypothesis	Path coefficients	t-value	p-value	Expected impact	Decision
H_1	0.295	4.313	0.000***	+	Supported
H_2	0.283	2.426	0.016***	+	Supported
H_3	0.359	5.172	0.000***	+	Supported
H_4	0.828	3.568	0.000***	+	Supported
H_5	0.180	2.089	0.000***	+	Supported
H_6	0.160	2.439	0.000***	+	Supported
H_7	0.152	1.579	0.000***	+	Supported
H_8	0.365	7.134	0.000***	+	Supported
H_9	0.454	9.106	0.000***	+	Supported
H_{10}	0.378	2.641	0.000***	+	Supported
H_{11}	0.218	3.750	0.009***	+	Supported
H_{12}	0.178	2.575	0.000***	+	Supported

Notes: Path coefficients: ***p, 0.001-0.009=Significant

in regulations, structure, and technology and it has become more indispensable to ensure excellence in banking services (Suki, 2018). Aside from RI, organizations that excel in providing services can benefit from higher profits (Chinomona & Maziriri, 2017). Third, the current study shows that retail-banking customers' PV in the emerging market can increase customers' WOM and RI. Consumers have been shown to draw inferences about value from quality and costs (van Ooijen et al., 2017). Banks must take customers' value into account and offer appropriate prices to prompt customers to make WOM recommendations. Fourth, the study demonstrates that loyalty partially mediates the relationship in the area of BE, service quality, perceived value, and influence on WOM and repurchase intention. To promote WOM recommendations, banking providers need to foster customer loyalty, in addition to managing BE, service quality, and perceived value. In fact, it has been discovered that customers express loyalty through recommendations (Kasiri et al., 2017), and loyalty has become very important in the banking industry because of the intense competition (Ngo & Nguyen, 2016). Banks will need to be more aggressive in order to foster customer loyalty (such as the introduction of loyalty cards like those of retail stores). Bank marketing planners must focus on intangible elements that help build long-term customer relationships in order to stimulate RI and WOM among banking customers.

CONCLUSION

The proposed conceptual model has been proven. The findings suggest that BE, quality of service, and PV are essential predictors of both WOM recommendations and RI. Results have broadened the knowledge about the relationship among BE, service quality, perceived value, WOM, and RI in the banking context. Furthermore, the current study shows that in emerging markets, retail banks would participate in positive WOM recommendations and RI if they were impressed by the BE, SQ and perceived value. Moreover, loyalty acts as a mediator for WOM and, therefore, RI, so banks can greatly improve WOM recommendations and RI by continuing to focus on loyal customers.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study contributes to the literature in a number of ways, it has several limitations. The first limitation of this study is that it only looked at the effect of three antecedents and one mediator on WOM and RI. Several other antecedents and mediators may have an impact on retail bank customers' WOM and RI. Second, the current study was conducted using responses from customers in an emerging economy. Retail banking customers in developed economies may respond differently to the administered questionnaire. Third, the current study found only positive customer recommendations from WOM, and the impact of negative WOM was not considered. Many researchers are encouraged to conduct research on specific types of WOM. The effects of various factors on WOM and RI can be investigated, and the research could concentrate on customers from a variety of service businesses, such as retail stores and mobile telephone services. It is also possible to conduct a comparative survey of consumers from different geographical areas regarding their ability to participate in WOM recommendations and RI.

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Chapter 15
A Conceptual Action Plan for Reducing Environmental Pollution Through Sustainable Clothing Purchase Intention and Behavior:
A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Environmental pollution caused by apparel production and consumption is rapidly capturing public attention and has formed positive intentions towards sustainable apparel purchasing; however, this increase in interest and positive intentions has not resulted in the increase of actual purchase behaviors towards sustainable apparel. The purpose of this review is to identify and explain all of the major drivers and barriers of sustainable apparel consumption. This study systematically reviewed 33 empirical studies on sustainable apparel purchase intention and behavior from 2016 to 2020. The review found and described a variety of prevalent motivations, facilitators, and barriers influencing purchasing decisions about sustainable clothing and suggesting potential reasons for documented inconsistencies in purchase behavior. All these factors are grouped and discussed in two categories that are product-related attributes and individual-related attributes.

INTRODUCTION

Consumers' demand for products and services has tremendously risen worldwide over the past decade, contributing to environmental degradation and significant environmental harm (Chen and Chai, 2010).

Some of the severe effects on the environment are climate change, increased waste generation, pollution, and a reduction in biodiversity (Chen and Chai, 2010). Many countries throughout the world have started to recognize these hazards and have begun to work towards mitigating the adverse effects of their business practices on the climate. Such perceptions and environmental concerns and the society have contributed to the formation of "sustainable consumption and sustainable development" which underlines the need to support sustainable development and promotes such developments that significantly reduce adverse effects on people and the environment (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). Sustainable consumption is a mode of consumption that, for today and future generations, is consistent with environmental protection (Connolly and Prothero 2008).

A survey conducted by Nielsen (2015) of 30,000 people worldwide, the survey showed how sustainability plays an increasingly important role in decision-making for consumers, and 45% of responders indicated they supported products with less or no environmental effects. Similar considerations arise from European studies showing that consumers agree that their purchases of products and services lead to mitigating climate change (Guinebault, 2018). Coming towards sustainable apparel, the number of consumers who agree to purchase sustainable apparel has risen in recent years, although there is no evidence showing the increase of purchasing sustainable apparel purchase behaviors (Gazzola et al., 2020). This demonstrates that environmental concerns play a minor role in consumer buying behavior and that consumers often ignore the environmental consequences of their purchases (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). Academic literature has used different terms for apparel like "sustainable apparel", "organic cotton", "environmentally friendly apparel", "eco-fashion", "green clothing", "transferable clothing" and so on to explain consumer sustainable purchasing behavior. The authors in this paper have used the term "sustainable apparel" which is easy to understand and most familiar among academicians and marketers.

Several frameworks for sustainable apparel consumption have been suggested, most consumers still have an intention-behavioral gap with regards to sustainable consumption even though they claim to be pro-environmental, they have no impact on sustainable apparel, in particular, when it comes to purchasing (Rausch and Kopplin, 2020). Similarly, Joshi and Rahman (2015) cited that 30% of UK consumers indicated their concern for the environment, but barely converted their concerns into sustainable purchases, so it is noticeable that there is a gap between consumers' intention and actual purchase behavior. It means consumers' positive attitude towards sustainable apparel products does not really translate into actual purchases. It is important to analyze why pro-environmental consumers have a weaker effect on their sustainable purchasing behavior; variables such as price and product availability, and social factors among others may be likely contributing to the difference between consumers' intentions and purchasing behavior. With the passage of time, surveys and market research studies included several factors that hinder sustainable purchase behavior and purchase intention respectively, for example, lack of knowledge, lack of environmental concerns, economic factors, unattractive appearance and exposure to fashion trends and higher prices, perceived effort and time to be the significant elements towards sustainable apparel purchase behavior (Blazquez et al., 2020; Canan Saricam, 2019; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018; Chaturvedi et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2016; Kong et al., 2016; Matthews, 2017; Perry and Chung, 2016; Wei and Jung, 2017; Wiederhold and Nova, 2018). After proper analysis of such factors and other causative factors are determined, efforts can be made to deal with these issues and to enable consumers to openly purchase sustainable apparel products.

There is extensive research on consumers' environmental consciousness and perception and studies on consumption habits and non-consumption behavior, also a huge amount of research is conducted regarding sustainable products in general (Albloushy and Hiller, 2019; Ha and Kwon, 2016; Klerk et al.,

2019; Pensupa et al., 2017; Rausch and Kopplin, 2020). Whereas the knowledge of factors influencing consumer's purchasing behavior towards sustainable apparel is still scarce. Moreover, no detailed research has been done on the wide variety of variables and their effect on sustainable purchase behavior. Up to date, no literature review on intention-behavior contradictions in the sense of sustainable purchase behavior of apparel has been identified by the authors, while empirical studies have been found linked to different dimensions of sustainable consumption. The current inconsistency of intention-behavior and a lack of adequate explanation of it, together with the lack of a literature review to deal with this problem, encouraged the authors to study the existing literature on the uncertainty of intention-behavior of consumers in the sense of sustainable apparel purchasing behavior. Furthermore, environmental damage (pollution, resources reduction, etc.) and subsequently increased focus on producing sustainable products by companies has made it important to recognize factors affecting consumers' buying behavior, which delivers further impetus for the current research. The assessment of current studies will identify several factors that inspire or impede consumers' sustainable purchasing behavior. Furthermore, these factors and obstacles will help clarify the various explanations behind the variance in attitude and the factors responsible for such inconsistent behavior.

This review also provides theoretical and managerial implications. Theoretically, it illustrates a systemic view of sustainable apparel purchase behavioral studies and tried to understand the feasibility of the results for varying market levels of growth. Thus, the review attempts to contribute to sustainable apparel literature through the description of the most influential areas in the field of study and the comparison of existing studies in these fields. Managerially, this SLR draws together the results of current research and provided recommendations for sustainable apparel purchasing behavior methods and practices. In addition, the authors dig out the different factors that have a huge influence on the buying behavior of consumers towards sustainable apparel. These factors should be considered by managers, fashion designers and marketers in the future.

The rest of this SLR is arranged as, detailed review of literature on sustainable apparel purchasing behavior and perceived intention-behavior inconsistency followed by an overview of the methodology. The next sections comprise research findings, discussion, implications and conclusion of the study.

METHODOLOGY

The review is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), a repeatable method incorporating all previous relevant studies on a single topic or research issue. The main objective of conducting this SLR is to gather, summarize and assess evidence in a certain research area. This is done to recognize any empirical gaps in current studies, enabling more research to be conducted and agreeing for more analysis and a better understanding of the research being tackled (Testa et al., 2020). For this purpose, the authors followed the suggestions for conducting a good SLR, suggested by (Joshi and Rahman, 2015; Testa et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2017). These recommendations have defined that a three-phase analysis should include its preparation, execution and reporting. Each stage has sub-elements that are recognizing the SLR questions, framing a review protocol, categorizing exclusion and inclusion, go through the selection techniques and strategy, revising quality assessment and data extraction.

Scope

This research provides an overview of the empirical studies reported in prestigious scholarly journals from 2016 to 2020 on consumers' sustainable apparel purchase behavior. This timeframe (2016 to 2020) was chosen because previous research on sustainable purchasing behavior prior to 2016 was included in the literature review by (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). In addition, Testa et al. (2020) published a literature review and included studies from 2000 to 2018, focusing on identifying and classifying all major green consumption drivers. The review of studies that fall within the above-mentioned timeframe will also provide an overview of current research findings. This SLR is aimed at two-folded: at first, to review current empirical studies and find the different factors influencing purchasing intention and behavior towards sustainable apparel products, and second, to explain the reasons behind the intention-behavior gap concerning the purchase of sustainable apparel products based on the aspects considered. The authors, therefore, reviewed the literature, targeted the studies to only empirical papers, available in peer-review journals from 2016 to 2020.

Review Protocol

Kitchenham and Charters. (2007) proposed that the search algorithm should be framed in terms of the research questions and objectives as it is essential to include all major fields and keywords to classify them simply. Therefore the authors include adjectives that are "green", "eco", "organic", "sustainable", "environmental" and "pro-environmental" allied to the domain "purchase intention", "intention", "consumption", "behavior", "purchase behavior" and on the other hand "apparel", "cloth", "clothing" and "fashion". The authors agreed to include different synonyms for each context so that be comprehensive and avoids the possibility of missing important articles. Consequently, the subsequent procedure was launched on ISI Web of Science, Emerald insight, Elsevier and Google scholar for high impact papers:

("Green" OR "sustainable" OR "environmental" OR "pro-environment" OR "Eco" OR "organic") AND ("purchase" OR "consumption" OR "consumption" OR "buy") AND ("behavior" OR "intention") AND ("behavioral intention"). At first, the authors collected total 57 articles.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The collection of publications is the critical phase of a systematic review and concentrates on the most important studies to enhance the effectiveness of the study. In accordance with the following stages recommended by Joshi and Rahman (2015) and Testa et al. (2020), inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied that is practical and methodological screening. At first, the authors omitted the articles through peer-review and found several articles whose content does not meet our research study scope. Our SLR focuses mostly on studies that describe different factors that influence customer purchasing intention and actual buying behavior towards sustainable apparel. Table 1 demonstrates the conditions for inclusion and exclusion. The primary articles were further analyzed by abstracts and comprehensive review in case of any doubt.

Table 1. Articles inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
Published articles from 2016 to 2020	Books, memories, and unpublished articles
Articles published in peer-review journals	Duplicate articles
Articles that mainly focused on purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel	Articles that are beyond the research area
Articles that investigated numerous factors influencing consumers' purchase intention and behavior of sustainable apparel	
Articles using questionnaire-based surveys as a methodology	
Articles published in English	

Selection Criteria

Since our intention is to structure previous studies' findings on the challenges, motivations, and other variables of sustainable apparel purchasing intention and purchasing behavior, the authors only included papers in which the effect of external factors on the purchasing intention and purchasing behavior of sustainable apparel products has been investigated. For the same purpose, the authors concentrated only on papers that included a questionnaire-based methodology to test hypotheses based on relationships between variables. In this scenario, to simplify the findings and eliminate inaccessible and non-replicated findings of individual studies, the authors decided to classify which of the assessed variables resulted as significantly impacting. The authors therefore only had to concentrate on quantitative studies which provided comparable results.

Out of total 57 articles, 3 were duplicates and were subsequently deleted using the Mendeley application. The inclusion/exclusion criteria were used for the remaining 54 papers, aiming at the title and abstract of each article. The aim of this phase was to exclude non-useful findings and thus eight studies due to their study abstracts, titles, and keywords were removed. Doing so resulted in a total of 46 studies for further review. The next step was to review the full text of the remaining studies to assess if there were unclear or insignificant studies. A total of 13 studies were eliminated upon reviewing their complete text. As a result, the authors agreed to review 33 key papers, which formed subsequent steps in this stage of SLR. The selection criteria for articles are displayed in Figure 1.

DATA EXTRACTION AND ANALYSIS

Extracting and analyzing necessary data from the collected papers is one of SLR's essential steps and thus following the appropriate steps the authors precisely documented all information from the 33 studies. The authors created the classification grids in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and inserted the data which the authors extracted from each paper individually. The data extracted consist of authors' name and year published, name of the journal, findings of the study, theories used (if any), sample population and sample size, geographical scope, type of survey, and variables investigated. Upon completing the entire classification process, the senior authors reviewed the entire classification grid sheets for confirmation and further suggestions.

Figure 1. Steps followed for selection of articles
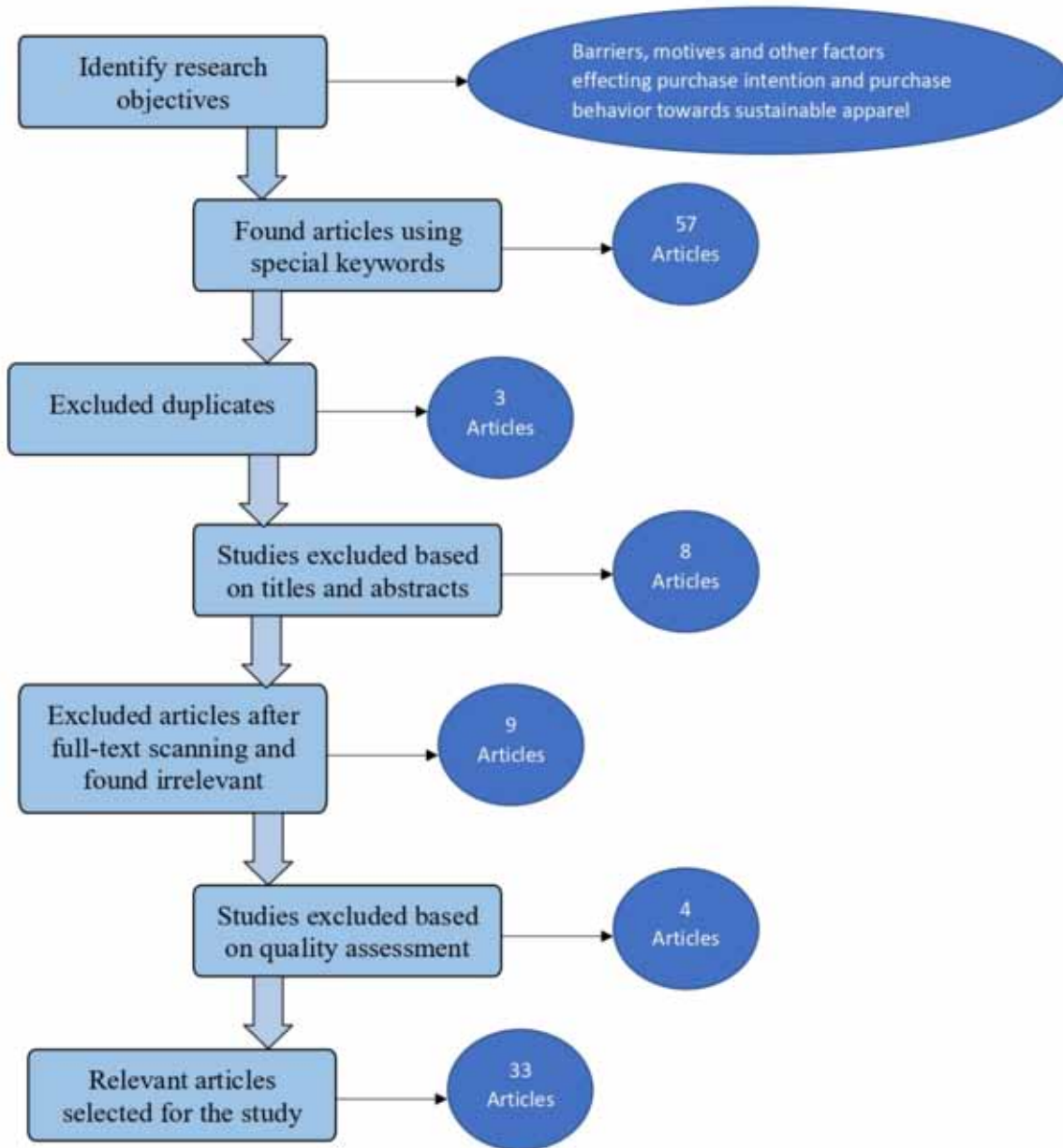
Sources Overview of the Publications

A total of 33 empirical studies were eventually preferred as the key papers ensuring the quality appraisal. The papers collected for this review consist of a total of 20 journals. As can be seen from Table 2 the highest number that is 5 articles were retrieved from the journal "sustainability" followed by "journal

Table 2. Journals from which the articles are retrieved

Journal	No of articles
Sustainability	5
Journal of Fashion Marketing & Management	4
Int journal of consumer studies	4
Journal of Global Fashion Marketing	2
Journal of Retailing & Consumer Services	2
Young Consumers	2
Int Journal of Sustainable Society	1
Global Business Review	1
Int Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	1
Journal of Brand Management	1
Int Journal of Retail & Distribution Management	1
Qualitative report	1
Journal of International Consumer Marketing	1
Fashion and Textiles	1
Int Journal of Innovative Technology & Exploring Engineering	1
Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal	1
The Journal of Design, Creative Process & the Fashion Industry	1
Journal of Cleaner Production	1
Fashion Practice	1
Int Journal of Clothing Science & Technology	1

of fashion marketing and management" and "International Journal of consumer studies". Table 2 demonstrates the journals from which the key papers were selected.

Chronological View

Regarding the year of publication as listed in Figure 2, it is very clear that the quantitative approach evaluating consumer purchasing intention and behavior towards sustainable apparel has developed steadily since 2016 with remarkable growth in 2018 and 2019. The amount of papers in the year 2020 is incomplete in the meantime the authors started this SLR in November 2020: this means that the seven studies were presented during the first nine months of 2020, making it easy for the final total of the 2020 releases to exceed the high of seven studies. Nevertheless, the study shows that the amount of research conducted on the consumers' purchase intention and behavior towards sustainable apparel has steadily increased researchers' interest.

Research Methodologies

The methodology is the backbone of any research, in the same way, that several methodologies including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods have been used in research covering consumers' purchase

Figure 2. Number of publications year wise from 2016 to 2020
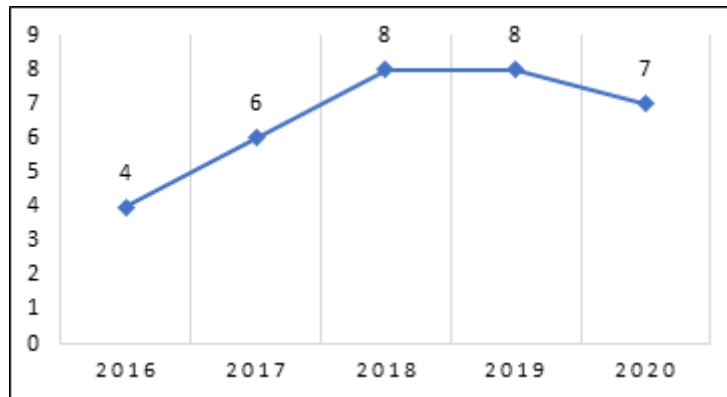
intention and behavior towards sustainable apparel. Concerning methodologies, the distributions of included studies are shown in Figure 3. Among 33 studies the majority number of studies that are 28 studies applied the quantitative approach and most of these were based on a survey approach while 3 studies have used a qualitative approach and 2 studies have used mixed-method.

Figure 3. Research methodologies used
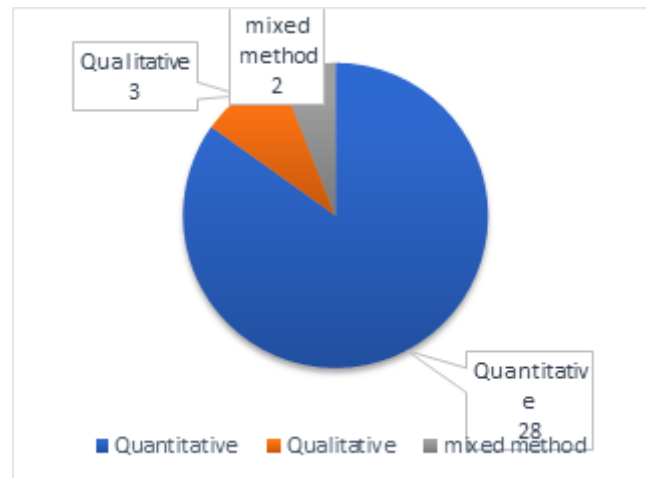
Coverage of Research Regions

The geographical distribution as mentioned in Figure 4 indicates a high proportion of research conducted in the region of Asia and America. Most of the studies in the Asian context are conducted in China (7) and India (6). However, the USA accounts for most of the American studies are a total of 9 studies while in the European context there is a lower distribution of studies that is a total of 4 studies. Apart from that several studies are found conducted in the cross-culture context and have investigated consumers'

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Figure 4. Studies conducted country wise
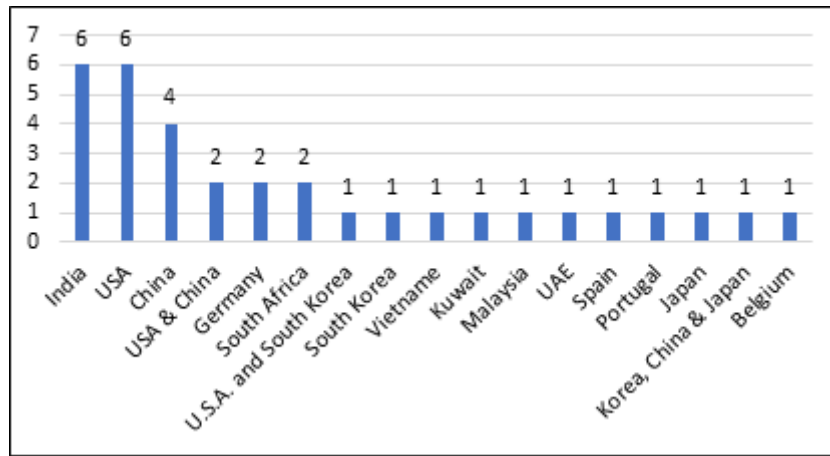
purchase intention and their purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel, like USA and China, USA and South Korea, and Korea, China, and Japan.

Theories/Models Adopted by Studies Regarding Sustainable Apparel Purchase Intention and Behavior

As displayed in Table 3 the authors found a total of eight (8) theories/models covering the research focusing on consumers' purchasing intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel. The authors further revealed that most of the studies that are a total of 15 in number have applied the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) individually while in some studies the Theory of Planned Behavior is used jointly with Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Schwartz Theory of Basic Values, Social Identity Theory, and Norm Activation Theory.

The authors come to know from the studies included in this review Theory of Planned Behavior has been widely applied in research regarding consumers' purchasing intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel. Theory of Planned Behavior developed by Azen (1991), is a popular model of choice; it is parsimonious and has been used to demonstrate how choice behaviors are related to values, beliefs, attitudes, and intentions.

Only two studies that are (Albloushy and Hiller, 2019) and Lang and Wei (2019) have applied the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to investigate the consumers' purchase behavior of sustainable apparel. However, Rausch and Kopplin 2020 and Wiederhold and Nova (2018) have combined Theory of Reasoned Action, and Theory of Planned Behavior and contributed to the literature significantly. Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) developed Theory of Reasoned Action and has been used across-the-board attitudinal research to understand and measure consumer's buying behavior.

In addition, Dhir et al. (2020) applied the attitude-behavior-context (ABC) theory. The ABC theory implies that an individual's actions can be seen as a cumulative outcome of the attitude he/she possesses and the situations he/she faces (Guagnano et al., 1995). It means that customers exhibit behavior because they intend to receive some expected benefits and that such behaviors only shaped when individuals develop a positive attitude towards them, under the influence of contextual factors (Dhir et al., 2020)

From the literature, the authors found only one study that used the theory of consumption values in the context of sustainable apparel purchase behavior (Wei and Jung, 2017). The Theory of Consumption Values aims to understand why individuals decide to purchase or not to purchase a particular product(s), why they go after a specific product type over an alternative, and why they decide for one brand over another (Sheth, Newman and Gross 1991).

A single study by Taljaard et al. (2018) has combined the Norm Activation Theory, and Theory of Planned Behavior to explain the essential motivational aspects that contribute to sustainable apparel purchase. According to Schwartz (1977), Norm Activation Theory is an important behavioral theory for understanding the altruistic motivations of consumers. The model has been a part of pro-environmental and analytical support since its creation throughout the last four decades (Setiawan et al., 2020). In addition, TBP is jointly used with Social Identity Theory by Valaei and Nikhashemi (2017) in the sustainable apparel context. The authors revealed that Social Identity Theory failed to contribute to the literature which focuses to investigate consumers' purchase intention and purchase behavior of sustainable apparel. Social Identity Theory proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1986) recommends that individuals experience shared identity based on their involvement in a group, such as cultural/racial and sexual category. Social identity leads an individual to classify himself/herself and other relevant groups into "us" versus "them."

Last but not least Value-attitude-behavior model and Theory of Planned Behavior both were used by Su et al. (2019) have significantly contributed to investigate consumers' consumption of sustainable apparel products. Homer and Kahle's (1988) stated that the value-attitude-behavior model incorporates the interactions among values, attitudes, and behaviors by presenting a hierarchical control of beliefs in which the impact should potentially flow from abstract to mid-range attitudes to precise behaviors.

Based on the author's review and theories used in these studies among them the Theory of Planned Behavior has been applied the most, thus it is evidence that Theory of Planned Behavior can better predict consumers' purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel. It is noteworthy that eight studies were conceptual and theory/model was used. These eight studies have contributed significantly to the literature focusing on consumer's purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study reviewed the most relevant studies conducted from the year 2016 to 2020 on the topic of consumer purchase intention and their behavior towards sustainable apparel. Consequently, the authors found various factors affecting consumer's purchase intention and their behavior towards sustainable apparel. All of these factors as mentioned in Table 4 were identified to either motivate or demotivate consumers from purchasing sustainable apparel. A full overview of all these factors is further discussed in the following sections. The authors subsequently categorized these factors into two extensive groups as mentioned in Table 4 that is product-related factors and individual-related factors.

Product-Related Factors

The authors found 7 factors in 33 articles related to sustainable apparel product attributes. The significant product-related aspects that affect consumers' purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel are the price, sustainable apparel knowledge, availability, label information, quality, trust and brand.

Table 3. Theories/models used in the articles

Theories/Model	References	Total
Theory of Planned Behavior	(Blazquez et al., 2020; Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018; Chi et al., 2019; Chi and Zheng, 2016; Han, 2018; Jalil and Shaharuddin, 2019; Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Khare and Varshneya, 2017; Kong et al., 2016; Lenne and Vandenbosch, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2019; Nilssen et al., 2018; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018; Sreen et al., 2018)	15
Theory of Reasoned Action	(Albloushy and Hiller, 2019; Lang and Wei, 2019)	2
Theory of Reasoned Action, and Theory of Planned Behavior	(Rausch and Kopplin, 2020; Wiederhold and Nova, 2018)	2
Theory of Planned Behavior, and Schwartz Theory of Basic Values	(Su et al., 2018)	1
Theory of Planned Behavior, and Social Identity Theory	(Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017)	1
Theory of Planned Behavior, and Norm Activation Theory	(Taljaard et al., 2018)	1
Experiential Self-Theory	(Fu and Kim, 2019)	1
ABC theory	(Dhir et al., 2020)	1
TCV	(Wei and Jung, 2017)	1
No theory applied	(Byrd and Su, 2020; Jung et al., 2020; Khare et al., 2019; Kong and Ko, 2017; Neumann et al., 2020; Oh and Abraham, 2016; Sufia, 2020; Varshneya et al., 2017)	8

Sustainable Apparel Price

When making a buying decision, price is an important factor to consider. Individuals behave solely in terms of the greatest value to themselves, and at the point of purchase, they set aside their concern for environmental safety in favor of lower prices that suit their limited budgets (Wiederhold and Nova, 2018). The authors found five studies (refer to Table 4) that reported that higher prices of sustainable apparel have outweighed ethical concerns and increased the intention-behavior gap towards sustainable apparel purchasing. Consumers' less financial power and higher prices for sustainable apparel were found to intensify the impact of price and create a barrier to sustainable apparel purchasing (Sufia, 2020; Wiederhold and Nova, 2018). On the other hand, Oh and Abraham (2016) discovered that individuals with relatively high levels of environmental knowledge are more likely to pay a premium for sustainable apparel. It has therefore been observed that price does not matter to environmentally conscious consumers as compared to less environmental conscious consumers. It is thus clear that price have great impact on consumers' purchase intention before purchasing sustainable apparel. Therefore manufacturers should design price in such a way that it could attract the consumers towards sustainable apparel.

Table 4. Factors affecting purchase intention and behavior towards sustainable apparel

Product-related factors			
Variables	**Relationship**	**References**	**Total studies**
Sustainable apparel price	+	(Nilssen et al., 2018; Oh and Abraham, 2016; Sufia, 2020; Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017; Wiederhold and Nova, 2018)	5
Sustainable apparel knowledge	+	(Khare and Varshneya, 2017; Lang and Wei, 2019; Oh and Abraham, 2016; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018)	4
Sustainable apparel availability	+	(Khare et al., 2019; Sufia, 2020; Wiederhold and Nova, 2018)	3
Label information	+	(Byrd and Su, 2020; Dhir et al., 2020; Oh and Abraham, 2016)	3
Sustainable apparel quality	+	(Nilssen et al., 2018; Sufia, 2020; Wei and Jung, 2017)	3
Sustainable apparel trust	+	(Dhir et al., 2020; Neumann et al., 2020)	2
Sustainable apparel Brand	+	(Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017)	2
Individual related factors			
Variables	**Relationship**	**References**	**Total studies**
Subjective norms	+	(Blazquez et al., 2020; Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018; Chi et al., 2019; Chi and Zheng, 2016; Han, 2018; Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Khare and Varshneya, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2019; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018; Sreen et al., 2018; Varshneya et al., 2017)	12
Attitude	+	(Blazquez et al., 2020; Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018; Chi et al., 2019; Chi and Zheng, 2016; Dhir et al., 2020; Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Lang and Wei, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2019; Oh and Abraham, 2016; Rausch and Kopplin, 2020; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018; Sreen et al., 2018; Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017; Varshneya et al., 2017)	15
Environmental concern	+	(Albloushy and Hiller, 2019; Lang and Wei, 2019; Rausch and Kopplin, 2020)	3
Environmental knowledge	+	(Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chi et al., 2019; Rausch and Kopplin, 2020; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018)	4
Perceived behavioral control	+	(Blazquez et al., 2020; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018; Chi and Zheng, 2016; Han, 2018; Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2019; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018; Sreen et al., 2018)	8
Perceived consumer effectiveness,	+	(Chi et al., 2019; Chi and Zheng, 2016)	2
Man-nature orientation	+	(Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Byrd and Su, 2020; Sreen et al., 2018)	3
Perceived behavioral control	-	(Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chi et al., 2019)	2
Subjective Norms	-	(Lang and Wei, 2019; Rausch and Kopplin, 2020)	2
Attitude	-	(Han, 2018; Neumann et al., 2020)	2
Perceived consumer effectiveness	-	(Neumann et al., 2020)	1
Perceived environmental concern	-	(Dhir et al., 2020)	1

Sustainable Apparel Knowledge

"Sustainable apparel knowledge refers to an individual's knowledge about the apparel products in related to the environment and awareness of the impact that consumption of apparel products has on the environment" (Lang and Wei, 2019). From Table 4 the authors found two studies that reported a significant and positive relationship between sustainable apparel knowledge and purchase intention towards sustainable apparel (Lang and Wei, 2019; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018). In addition, Lang and Wei (2019) stated that sustainable apparel knowledge is considered a key factor in shaping consumer behavior. Individuals who are aware of the environmental effects of apparel products express a greater concern for the environment and are much more willing to protect it, such as minimizing their consumption of conventional apparel and increasing sustainable apparel (Lang and Wei, 2019). Contrariwise, Khare and Varshneya (2017) found a positive but insignificant relationship between sustainable apparel knowledge and purchase behavior. In conclusion, the authors conclude that the more knowledgeable consumers regarding sustainable apparel have greater intentions toward sustainable apparel purchasing while those who tend less knowledge have less intentions toward sustainable apparel purchases.

Sustainable Apparel Availability

"Perceived availability refers to the degree to which a consumer feels he or she can easily obtain or consume a specific product" (Khare et al., 2019). Perceived availability has recently gained attention for sustainable consumption for example in the context of sustainable apparel, three studies as mentioned in Table 4 have found sustainable apparel availability a significant factor that influences consumers' purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel (Khare et al., 2019; Sufia, 2020; Wiederhold and Nova, 2018). In addition, Sufia (2020) mentioned in her study that individuals are persuaded that the availability of sustainable apparel in conventional markets is one of the main motivators for purchasing sustainable apparel. Thus it is clear that the absence of sustainable apparel limits the purchases. Let's say, if a consumer has a greater intention towards purchasing or consuming sustainable apparel, the desire could be disrupted by low or lack of availability of the products, which increases the gap between the consumer's attitude/intention and actual purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel. Hence, it is evident that lack of sustainable apparel availability is a barrier towards the purchase behavior.

Sustainable Label Information

Eco-labeling gives customers more information about the product's sources and manufacturing methods (Byrd and Su, 2020). From Table 4 only two studies have found a significant and positive relationship between label information of sustainable apparel and purchase behavior of sustainable apparel (Byrd and Su, 2020; Oh and Abraham, 2016). While only a single study found the effect of label information on purchase behavior toward sustainable apparel was not related (Dhir et al., 2020). As a result, having an eco-label on sustainable apparel is important with the intention to increase consumers' awareness and purchasing behavior toward sustainable apparel products. Based on the findings, it is understandable that accurate info must be given straightforwardly and easily by product labeling to increase customer intention and promote more sustainable apparel purchases.

Sustainable Apparel Quality

"Product quality means to incorporate features that have a capacity to meet consumer needs (wants) and gives customer satisfaction by improving products and making them free from any deficiencies or defects" (Akrani, 2013). Confirming the importance of consumer perceptions of sustainable apparel quality the authors from the Table 4 found three studies stated that consumers are willing to pay even higher prices for sustainable apparel if they believe it is of high quality (Nilssen et al., 2018; Sufia, 2020; Wei and Jung, 2017). Since high quality is one of the most important characteristics that consumers consider when purchasing apparel, it is therefore important that sustainable apparel brands incorporate a better quality into their apparel designs (Sufia, 2020). Additionally, Sufia (2020) mentioned that perceived high quality of sustainable apparel has a significant positive effect on customer purchasing intention and purchase behavior toward sustainable apparel, while perceived poor quality has a negative impact. As a result, it is reasonable to conclude that effective and sustainable apparel product characteristics, combined with good product quality, have a positive impact on consumers' long-term purchasing decisions. Therefore marketers and manufacturers should focus on sustainable apparel quality as compared to conventional apparel so that consumers may differentiate or compare the quality while making purchase decisions.

Sustainable Apparel Trust

In the context of sustainable products, trust is defined as "a belief or expectation about the environmental performance of such products" (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). Trust is a strong predictor of positive marketing results, including loyalty, consumer satisfaction, and purchasing intention. From Table 4 the authors found only two studies where the influence of trust on consumer purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel was significant (Dhir et al., 2020; Neumann et al., 2020). Additionally, the authors revealed that lack of consumers' complete trust in sustainable apparel was a major obstacle to purchasing sustainable apparel. Based on the findings we can conclude that sustainable apparel should be design in such a manner that can gain the consumers' trust for example the manufacturers should provide enough information about the product in the form label, good quality and affordable prices. Although the authors found only two studies regarding consumers' trust toward sustainable apparel and purchase behavior, therefore, more studies need to conduct in the relevant area.

Sustainable Apparel Brand

In the context of sustainable products brand image well-defined as "a whole range of impressions, conceptions and apprehensions towards a brand in the consumers' memory which is correlated to the sustainability and eco-friendly concerns" (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). Consumers typically have subjective favorite brands that they choose over sustainable brands; similarly, consumer confidence in sustainable apparel brands is a significant purchasing criterion that affects their sustainable apparel purchase behaviors (Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017). From Table 4 the authors found only two studies that reported that brand image has a positive and significant effect on consumers' sustainable apparel purchasing behavior (Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017). Nonetheless, due to the importance of brand image in the marketing contexts, this factor has received relatively little scholarly attention, especially in the case of sustainable apparel products, and thus additional research in this field is encouraged.

Individual Factors

From the review, the authors found 7 factors in 33 empirical studies related to individual behavior towards purchasing sustainable apparel. The key drivers that influence consumer's purchase behavior towards sustainable purchase are the attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, environmental concern, environmental knowledge, consumer effectiveness and man-nature orientation. These variables are further discussed in detail below.

Attitude towards Sustainable Apparel

Ajzen, (1991) defined attitude as: "the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question." Based on the systematic review for the variable namely "attitude" the authors reveal that (refer to table 4) that seventeen (17) studies have investigated the relationship between attitude, consumers' intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel. Out of these, 15 studies found a positive and significant relationship between attitude and intention towards sustainable apparel while the indirect influence of attitude on purchase behavior through purchase intention was also found significant (Blazquez et al., 2020; Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chang and Watchravesring-kan, 2018; Chi et al., 2019; Chi and Zheng, 2016; Dhir et al., 2020; Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Lang and Wei, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2019; Oh and Abraham, 2016; Rausch and Kopplin, 2020; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018; Sreen et al., 2018; Valaei and Nikhashemi, 2017; Varshneya et al., 2017). Only two studies found an insignificant relationship between attitude and purchase intention towards sustainable apparel (Han, 2018; Neumann et al., 2020). From the findings, it is thus clear that attitude is a strong predictor of purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel. In conclusion, it can be believed that the more positive consumer's attitudes towards sustainable apparel the greater will be the intention towards sustainable apparel purchasing.

Subjective Norms

Subjective norm or social norm refers to the level of social pressure that influences an individual to perform or not perform a certain action or behavior (Maichum et al., 2016). Subjective norm is a variable of the Theory of Planned Behavior developed by (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norm is evaluated and verified in the different sustainable contexts. In the context of sustainable apparel, the authors in this review (refer to Table 4) found that fourteen (14) studies have investigated the relationship between subjective norms, purchase intention and purchase behavior of sustainable apparel. Out of these, 12 studies found a significant and positive relationship between subjective norms and purchase intention while an indirect influence of subjective norms as it influenced intention that further affected purchase behavior (Blazquez et al., 2020; Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018; Chi et al., 2019; Chi and Zheng, 2016; Han, 2018; Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Khare and Varshneya, 2017; Nguyen et al., 2019; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018; Sreen et al., 2018; Varshneya et al., 2017). Whereas two studies found that subjective norms have an insignificant relationship with purchase intention towards sustainable apparel (Lang and Wei, 2019; Rausch and Kopplin, 2020). Additionally, the authors indicate that social and reference groups, particularly friends and those close enough to consumers, have a greater impact on consumers' sustainable apparel purchase decision-making process. To summarize, subjective norms have a positive effect on consumer purchasing behavior toward sustainable apparel.

Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavior control (PBC) refers to the individual's level of difficulty to perform a behavior based on the individual's power and capacity (Ajzen, 1991). PBC a construct of the Theory of Planned Behavior has been investigated in different sustainable contexts while in the context of this review the authors have found from Table 4 that ten (10) studies have investigated the relationship between PBC, purchase intention and purchase behavior. Among these, eight (8) studies found a positive and significant relationship between PBC and purchase intention while an indirect effect of PBC on purchase behavior through purchase intention towards sustainable apparel (Blazquez et al., 2020; Chang and Watchravesringkan, 2018; Chi and Zheng, 2016; Han, 2018; Joshi and Srivastava, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2019; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018; Sreen et al., 2018). Conversely, two studies were found to have a negative relationship between PBC and purchase intention towards sustainable apparel (Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chi et al., 2019). It is concluded that that perceived behavioral control positively influences purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel.

Perceived Environmental Concern

"Environmental concern (in some cases referred to as ecological effect) is an individual's extent of concern and emotional attachment towards environmental issues, environmental threats, and environmental protection, respectively" (Rausch and Kopplin, 2020). As shown in Table 4, three (3) studies reported a positive and significant relationship between environmental concern, purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel (Lang and Wei, 2019) (Rausch and Kopplin, 2020) (Albloushy and Hiller, 2019). However, there was a single study that found no correlation between environmental concern and purchasing intention (Dhir et al., 2020). The authors thus conclude that consumers who have concerns about the environment have positive intentions towards the purchase of sustainable apparel while those who have less environmental concern tend lesser purchase intention towards sustainable apparel.

Environmental Knowledge

Environmental knowledge can be defined as "a general knowledge of facts, concepts, and relationships concerning the natural environment and its major ecosystems" (Fryxell and Lo, 2003). In previous studies, an individual's knowledge about environmental issues has been identified as a significant predictor of environmental-friendly behaviors. From Table 4 it is shown that three studies found environmental knowledge positively and significantly influenced consumer's purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel (Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Chi et al., 2019; Sandhya and Mahapatra, 2018). Environmental knowledge was also found to indirectly influence consumer's purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel as it significantly affects consumer's intention which further determined consumer purchase behavior (Rausch and Kopplin, 2020). Thus it is clear to say that consumers with environmental knowledge have shown a greater likelihood to purchase sustainable apparel compared to those consumers who don't have the knowledge.

Perceived Consumer Effectiveness

Perceived consumer effectiveness is defined as "consumers' evaluation of the extent to which their consumption can make a difference in the overall problem" (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). As can be seen from Table 4, two studies found a significant and positive relationship between perceived consumer effectiveness and purchase intention towards sustainable apparel (Chi et al., 2019; Chi and Zheng, 2016) while only one study reported that perceived consumer effectiveness and purchase intention towards sustainable apparel were not related (Neumann et al., 2020). Due to the scarcity of empirical investigation in this area, however, further empirical investigation is warranted.

Man-Nature Orientation

Man-nature orientation has been defined as an ability of an individual to live in harmony with nature (Kluchhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961). From Table 4 the authors found three studies showing a positive and significant relationship between man-nature orientation and purchase intention towards sustainable apparel (Bong Ko and Jin, 2017; Byrd and Su, 2020; Sreen et al., 2018). These findings suggest that consumers put a priority on living in accordance with nature and a desire to consider and address environmental issues. This is a positive indicator since respondents perceive themselves to be a part of nature rather than separate from it, implying a willingness to make purchasing decisions for apparel products made in a sustainable manner.

IMPLICATIONS

The review provides theoretical and practical implications discussed below in detail.

Theoretical Implications

This review is the first among others that reviews the intention-behavior gap in the sense of sustainable apparel purchasing, along with different motivations, attitudes, and obstacles influencing the purchase intention and purchase behavior of sustainable apparel. This review highlighted several motivations and obstacles to sustainable apparel purchasing and provided potential explications on the incoherence found with the aim to purchase intention and purchase behavior of sustainable apparel. It also gives an overview of existing research, since it relies on the results of many previous studies. Furthermore, it introduces key concepts that can be used as independent variables in future research to explore their effect on sustainable apparel purchases.

Unexpectedly, the authors discovered not any systematic review paper until the write-up of this review, which discussed the intention-behavior gap in the sense of sustainable apparel purchasing behavior, despite the fact that there are empirical studies that concentrate on different aspects of sustainable apparel consumption. Different factors (drivers and barriers) have been identified by authors in this review based on the results of several studies carried out in different cultures and contexts. The worthiness of these factors can be evaluated in future research in a variety of nations, generational contexts (generations X, Y, and Z), and demographic contexts. Additionally, the same variables can be examined in a variety of sustainable products with relation to consumer purchase behavior. Additionally, future research studies

may suggest alternative models and frameworks within their own observations, using the current study's findings as a starting point. Last but not the least, the authors in this paper have mentioned different theories and models that previous researchers have used. Among these theories and models, the authors clearly mentioned which theory or model would be better for which type of analysis or research background. The theories and models mentioned could help the future researchers among these theories they can easily understand and select the appropriate theory or model for their studies.

Practical Implications

This review has a considerable amount of managerial significance. It provides policymakers and marketing professionals with information on the main forecasters of sustainable buying behavior towards sustainable apparel. Marketers will do well to consider the drivers and obstacles to sustainable apparel purchasing as this review allows them to adapt their product range to promote sustainable apparel purchase behavior. The review also has significant implications for policymaking for example the results indicate that environmental concerns and knowledge are the primary drivers of consumer interest in sustainable apparel products. Consumers are usually doubtful of manufacturers' environmental promises and find sustainable apparel products difficult to recognize. Environmental education should therefore provide the consumers with information on how to distinguish sustainable apparel products from conventional products.

The review suggests for marketers and manufacturers have to focus on the factors which hinder or drive the consumers' intention and behavior to purchase sustainable apparel products as these factors have significant effects on both purchase intention and purchase behavior. For example for the factor "quality" the review suggests to manufacturers that consumers prefer sustainable products with good functional characteristics. Thus, manufacturers or marketers should not only effort for the apparel sustainable characteristics but also on functional characteristics of the sustainable apparel.

CONCLUSION

Major environmental issues and environmental resource degradation pushed modern civilization to concentrate on the environmentally-conscious production and consumption. Similarly, conventional apparel manufacturing is particularly seen as troublesome from an environmental and social perspective. As a result, the concept of sustainable apparel is introduced to include a variety of similar alternatives. However this is a fairly recent development in the apparel context, empirical studies show that most consumers do not purchase sustainable apparel products, despite having a positive attitude or intentions to purchase. This paper reviews the need for such a systematic review of the available literature in order to ascertain the different factors which could possibly affect consumers' purchases and give a shape to the intention-behavior gap. For this purpose, the authors carried out a research of 33 empirical studies on consumer sustainable apparel purchasing behavior in order to identify significant influencing factors.

The authors revealed that consumers have favorable intentions towards sustainable apparel purchasing while they do not translate it into actual purchases (intention-behavior gap). The authors previously mentioned the reasons behind the intention-behavior gap and categorized them into two groups that are product-related factors and individual-related factors and these are found as the key factors towards the purchase of sustainable apparel.

Product-related attributes that affect consumers' purchase intention and purchase behavior are sustainable apparel price, knowledge, availability, label information, quality, trust and sustainable apparel brand. All these factors are significant contributors to the purchase intention and purchase behavior of sustainable apparel. Therefore these factors should be focused by manufacturers and marketers to develop the consumers' intention and behavior and increase the purchase of sustainable apparel.

Individual factors like perceived environmental concern, perceived behavioral control, man-nature orientation, perceived environmental knowledge, perceived consumer effectiveness and subjective norms appeared as key drivers which affect consumers' purchase intention and purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel. Politicians, government agencies, marketers and manufacturers should take these factors into consideration, since these factors are the most significant factors that customers perceive when making purchasing decisions for sustainable apparel.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study also has certain boundaries, like other studies. The authors have tried in their selection of papers to be highly systematic and precise, but some deficiencies are still to be addressed in future studies. The described factors can have different effects on individuals' purchase behavior towards sustainable apparel with different social and cultural backgrounds. Additionally, the review did not consider the influence of demographic factors; however, future research may examine this dimension in the context of sustainable apparel purchases. Since the study focuses exclusively on empirical studies, researchers are recommended to include conceptual papers alongside empirical studies in future analyses.

The study deliberately omitted low-ranking publications in order to obtain generalized outcomes, this selective approach was intended to include only peer-reviewed studies of high quality. However, the exemption probably dropped out some relevant contributions to this relevant area that future research might address.

Finally, almost all of the empirical papers concerning sustainable apparel purchases were found to be contingent on self-reported attitudes and behaviors of the individuals. Future research may examine the real behaviors of consumers to see how they are actually behaving towards sustainable apparel purchases.

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Glossary

Banking and Insurance Corporation: Financial institutions.

Brand Allegiance: Denotes an individual's intention to remain with their employer in the future.

Brand Association: Brand association is defined as ''the positive or negative state of mind about the brand in the consumers and employee's thoughts. These feelings create a memory in the user's mind. It is also served as an information collecting tool to achieve brand differentiation.

Brand Awareness: Brand awareness is defined as ''information stored in the consumer's memory related to the product or services which they use to differentiate the chosen brand from the other brands.

Brand Citizen Behavior: It is the behavior which is usually undocumented and beyond the norms hitherto compatible with the organizational behavior.

Brand Citizenship Behavior (BCB): Employee behavior toward brand citizenship is described as volunteer efforts that extend beyond the scope of the job in the domain of demonstrating brand ownership.

Brand Commitment: It is an emotional association of employees with the brand that regulates their behaviors and attitudes towards the achievements of organizational goals.

Brand Endorsement: Indicates an individual's willingness to advocate positively about the organization.

Brand Equity: This is the value (Positive) a firm generates over a long time by offering consistent quality to its customers. This value is treated as an intangible asset of the firm. The brands with higher brand equity are more recognizable in the market.

Brand Experience: Brand experience is defined as a consumer's sensual, interactive, and emotional interaction with the brand.

Brand Image: Brand image is defined as reflection or perception or about the brand which could be positive or negative.

Brand Knowledge: The extent up to, the employees of an organization are aware of organizational brand promise and trained to outperform.

Brand Loyalty: It is sheer confidence of customers on brands' products as compared to its rivals. It acts as a driver of customer enthusiasm for a repeat buying experience.

Brand-Consistent Behavior: Indicates behaviors that are usually non-prescribed but consistent with the organization's brand values.

China: The official name of the country is the People's Republic of China (PRC), it is located in East Asia and is considered the world's most populous country since it has a population of more than 1.4 billion.

Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE): This is the value of the organization directly attributed to its customers. The customers become loyal to certain brands and they afford the brand resonance.

Digital Age: A period in human history characterized by a global shift from a traditional industry established by the Industrial Revolution to a digitized, computerized industry based on the transfer of information.

Discrimination: Human rights and freedoms restriction and/or different treatment of a person or social groups based on any sign.

Employee Branding Process: A continuous process that emerges from the firm's mission and values while producing an employee band image that builds the consumer perception to stakeholders' perception for a persistent employee brand.

Employee Satisfaction: Employee satisfaction refers to the extent to which the employee is satisfied with his or her work and the role he or she performs in the organization.

Employee-Based Brand Equity (EBBE): This is the value of the organization attributed to its employees. It is the contribution made by the performance of the employees within the firm and usually, this is an outcome of the internal brand management process.

Ethnical Discrimination: Based on perceived ethnic differences, which results in various forms of ethnic fines.

Evasive Hiding: Portrays a situation where a 'knowledgeable employee' tends to hide the knowledge by providing irrelevant and incorrect information.

Financial-Based Brand Equity (FBBE): This type of brand equity is related to additional cash inflows to the company as an outcome of the brand's worth. Such brand equity is contributing to stock prices and incremental sales revenue.

H-Factor: The H-factor signifies the human factor here when employees think that organization is taking them like humans in every respect. They are taken care of thoroughly by their organization, they enjoy a sense of comfort and protection. Thus, H-factor entices employees to perform up to the mark in the delivery of brand promise.

Human (H) Factor: It defines a thorough understanding of employees' capabilities, traits, and barriers in order to improve job performance through organizational design and structure.

Human Rights: Dignity and freedom protection rules without any discrimination.

Humble Leadership: It means leader is a humble personality and leader treats everyone with respect and take care of employee's emotions.

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB): It is basically behavior of employee that is used to generate innovative ideas. Behavior of making innovation in a product or in a procedure of attaining goals. It means someone knows how to do thing in a unique way.

Internal Brand Management (IBM): This is a corporate strategy and a process, where the

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employees are trained and motivated to deliver the brand promise, rather, they are expected to live the brand promise.

Knowledge Dissemination: It is defined as the degree to which an employee interprets the brand information shared by the firm in a meaningful and pertinent manner.

Knowledge-Hiding Behavior: Denotes an intentional attempt by an employee to block the access to requested knowledge by other individuals.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX): It is basically a strong two-way relationship between leader and the one who follows the leader. LMX is the trust bonding between leader and member/follower, who trust each other and work with each other with greater interest and pave a path for goal orientation.

Market Performance of the Firm: The way a particular firm is performing in the industry, in this chapter, means if the customers of the firms have future purchase intentions, if they are willing to pay a premium price and if they have a brand preference of the firm. It means the firm is performing up to the mark.

MENA: Is a geographical region that unites the countries of the Maghreb and the Middle East. Most of the MENA countries are also part of the larger region called the Great Middle East.

Middle East: Transcontinental region centered on Western Asia and Egypt. The region includes the following countries: Egypt, Turkey, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Yemen, and Oman.

Oil Trade: Is the process of trade connected with the oil business.

One Belt One Road: It is the initiative to connect Asia with Africa and Europe through land and sea routes to deepen regional integration, promote trade and stimulate economic growth.

Openness: It refers to an employee's openness to exchanging information, understanding what is happening, and appreciating. However, it also entails being responsive to and expecting various working methods, assessments, and feedback.

Playing Dumb Behavior: Indicates a kind of deception when an individual request to seek some knowledge or information from his colleague and pretends falsely that he does not know that piece of information.

Positive Employee Word of Mouth (WOM): Positive word of mouth refers to an employee's positive attitude regarding his or her organization's products and services, as well as educating others about the brand's greatness and functionality.

Public Defender Office: Public and state body office created to defend human rights.

Racial Discrimination: Based on perceived racial differences, which results in various forms of racial fines.

Rationalized Hiding: Indicates an attempt to block access to requested knowledge by explaining the reasons for failure to share relevant knowledge.

Regional Policy: The activities of public authorities, which lead to the socio-economic development of the regions to develop the region's welfare.

Religious Discrimination: A prejudice against someone (a job seeker or an employee) because of his (her) religious beliefs; the restriction of people's rights based on their religious affiliation.

Role Clarity: The clarity of the employees of any organization about their roles and responsibilities which they are expected to perform. They are more satisfied with their jobs, and they contribute more valuably to the organizations when their role clarity is high. Their behavior is more responsible when they are clear about their particular role in the organization.

Sexual Discrimination: A violation of the equality of rights and equal opportunities of people based on sexual and gender differences.

Silk Road: The Silk Road wait is an ancient trade route that links the Middle East and Asia with the Western world. The name "New Silk Road" is used to describe a certain large scale.

Supervisory Humor: It is quality of Leader/ Supervisor to make communication in such a way that amuse and engage employees with work.

United Nations Documents: Documents include the resolutions of decision-making bodies such as the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council, which guide the parts of the UN Secretariat and agencies that make up the UN system.

Workplace Harassment: Actions, suggestions, or hints of a sexual nature that occur without your consent and desire.

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