



THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

Exploring the Role of Employer Brand Equity in the Labour Market:
Differences between Existing Employee and Job Seeker Perceptions

By
Sultan Alshathry

A thesis submitted to The University of Adelaide Business School in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Business)

May 2015

Contents

Contents	ii
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures.....	viii
List of Acronyms	ix
Abstract.....	x
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1. Purpose of the Thesis	1
1.2. Background to the Research	2
1.3. Research Problem	6
1.4. Justification for the Research.....	9
1.5. Contribution to Knowledge	12
1.6. Research Sample.....	14
1.6.1 Research design	14
1.7. Organisation of the Thesis	15
1.8. Chapter Summary	17
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	19
2.1. Introduction.....	19
2.2. Employer Brand: An Emerging Human Resource Marketing Concept	19
2.2.1 Employer brand: evolution and definition	19
2.2.2 Employer branding: extant knowledge	22
2.2.2.1 Symbolic-instrumental framework	22
2.2.2.2 Organisational and job attributes	24
2.3. Branding and Brand Equity in a Consumer Context	28
2.3.1 What is a brand? What does it do for a company?	28
2.3.2 How brands work in a consumer context.....	29
2.3.3 Concept of brand equity.....	30
2.3.3.1 Services v. goods branding	31
2.3.3.2 Models of brand equity: a review	33
2.3.3.3 Effect of brand equity on consumers	40
2.4. Employer Brand Equity in Current Research	42
2.4.1 Job seekers' employer knowledge	43
2.4.2 Employer brand equity in recruitment	46
2.4.3 Employer branding framework.....	48
2.5. Employee Attraction and Retention.....	50
2.5.1 Employee attraction	51
2.5.1.1 Initial attraction stage.....	52
2.5.2 Employee retention	53
2.5.3 Influential factors on employment customers' perceptions.....	55
2.5.3.1 Job content	56
2.5.3.2 Work context.....	57
2.5.3.3 Corporate social responsibility	58
2.5.3.4 Corporate reputation	59
2.6. Chapter Summary	60

Chapter 3: Conceptual Model and Hypotheses Development	62
3.1. Introduction.....	62
3.2. From Product/Service Branding to Employer Branding.....	62
3.2.1 Employer brand equity and its elements.....	63
3.2.1.1 Familiarity with the employer brand	64
3.2.1.2 Employer brand associations	65
3.2.1.3 Experience with the employer	66
3.2.1.4 Employer brand loyalty	67
3.3. A Conceptual Model for EBE.....	67
3.3.1 Relationships among the EBE elements	68
3.3.2 Antecedents of EBE.....	71
3.3.3 Consequences of EBE.....	77
3.4. Chapter Summary	79
Chapter 4: Research Design.....	81
4.1. Introduction.....	81
4.2. Research Objectives and Questions	81
4.3. Research Approach	83
4.4. Research Hypotheses	83
4.5. Research Method	85
4.5.1 Online survey	86
4.6. Development of Research Instrument.....	87
4.6.1 Measurement scales of EBE antecedents.....	87
4.6.2 Measurement scales of EBE outcomes	90
4.6.3 Operationalisation and measurement of EBE elements.....	91
4.7. Survey Content and Order of Questions	95
4.8. Instrument Validation	95
4.8.1 Expert opinion.....	96
4.8.2 Pilot testing	97
4.9. Main Data Collection.....	99
4.9.1 Procedure	99
4.9.2 Employer brands selection.....	100
4.10. Sampling	101
4.10.1 Target population.....	101
4.10.2 Sampling frame.....	102
4.10.3 Sampling method	103
4.10.4 Sample size	103
4.11. Data Analysis Strategy.....	104
4.12. Chapter Summary	105
Chapter 5: Study Results (Measurement, Reliability and Validity)	106
5.1. Introduction.....	106
5.2. Preliminary Analysis.....	107
5.2.1 Data cleaning and preparation	107
5.2.2 Respondents' profiles	109
5.3. Structure Equation Modelling (SEM).....	112
5.3.1 SEM model assessment	112
5.3.2 Assessment of measurement models	116
5.4. Congeneric Models for Measurement Constructs (Employee Sample).....	116
5.4.1 Familiarity with the employer brand	117
5.4.2 Employer brand associations	117

5.4.3 Experience with the employer brand	118
5.4.4 Loyalty to the employer brand	119
5.4.5 Corporate reputation	121
5.4.6 CSR	122
5.4.7 Job content	122
5.4.8 Work context	123
5.4.9 Intention to stay	124
5.5. Reliability and Validity (Employee Sample)	125
5.5.1 Multi-collinearity and singularity	127
5.5.2 Common method variance	130
5.6. Congeneric Models for Measurement Constructs: Job Seeker Sample	131
5.7. Reliability and Validity (Job Seeker Sample)	134
5.8. Chapter Summary	136
Chapter 6: Study Results (Path Model and Multi-group Analysis)	138
6.1. Introduction	138
6.2. Path Model Specification	138
6.3. Full Path Model Estimation	139
6.4. Test of Conceptual Model and Hypotheses Support (Employee Sample)	139
6.4.1 Assessment of model fit	140
6.4.2 Path testing and hypotheses support	140
6.4.3 Model re-specification and final model	144
6.4.4 Multi-group analysis (Employee Sample)	147
6.5. Conceptual Model Test and Hypotheses Support (Job Seeker Sample)	149
6.5.1 Assessment of model fit	150
6.5.2 Path testing and hypotheses support	151
6.5.3 Model re-specification and final model	153
6.5.4 Multi-group analysis (Job Seeker Sample)	155
6.6. Chapter Summary	158
Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusions	160
7.1. Introduction	160
7.2. EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Construct	160
7.2.1 EBE in attraction and retention contexts	162
7.3. Key Antecedents for EBE	164
7.3.1 Building internal EBE	165
7.3.1.1 Effect of corporate reputation on elements of EBE	165
7.3.1.2 Effect of job content on elements of EBE	166
7.3.1.3 Effect of work context on elements of EBE	167
7.3.1.4 Effect of CSR on EBE	168
7.3.2 Building external EBE	169
7.3.2.1 Effect of corporate reputation on elements of EBE	170
7.3.2.2 Effect of CSR on elements of EBE	171
7.3.2.3 Effect of job content on elements of EBE	172
7.3.2.4 Effect of work context on elements of EBE	174
7.4. Antecedents of EBE: Comparing Internal and External Perspectives	175
7.4.1 Internal v. external EBE: antecedents' roles in the labour market	177
7.4.2 Multiple approaches for building EBE	178
7.4.3 New ways of segmenting the labour market	179
7.5. Summary of Contributions	180
7.5.1 Theoretical contributions	180

7.5.2 Practical implications.....	183
7.6. Limitations of the Study	186
7.7. Directions for Future Research	187
7.8. Chapter Conclusion.....	189
Appendices.....	191
List of Reference	213

List of Tables

Table 1-1: Outline of the Thesis	16
Table 3-1: Summary of Study Hypotheses	79
Table 4-1: Proposed Relationships Between EBE Elements	84
Table 4-2: Proposed Antecedents of EBE	84
Table 4-3: Impact of EBE on Targets of Employer Branding	85
Table 4-4: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Corporate Reputation.....	88
Table 4-5: Items Used to Measure the Construct of CSR.....	89
Table 4-6: Items used to Measure the Construct of Job Content.....	89
Table 4-7: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Work Context	90
Table 4-8: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Company Preference	90
Table 4-9: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Intention to Stay	91
Table 4-10: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Familiarity with Employer	92
Table 4-11: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Employer Brand Associations	93
Table 4-12: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Experience with the Employer ...	93
Table 4-13: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Employer Brand Loyalty	94
Table 4-14: Results of Employer Brand Selection Stage for Data Collection (for Phase 2 participants)	101
Table 4-15: Target Population of the Study.....	102
Table 4-16: Sampling Frame for the Study Samples	103
Table 4-17: Number of Responses for Each Company in the Job Seekers Sample	104
Table 5-1: Respondents' Demographic Profiles	111
Table 5-2: Criteria Values Used for SEM Model Assessment	116
Table 5-3: Assessment of Familiarity Construct Measurement Model	117
Table 5-4: Assessment of Employer Brand Associations Construct Measurement Model	118
Table 5-5: Assessment of Experience with the Employer Construct Measurement Model	119
Table 5-6: Assessment of Loyalty to an Employer Brand Construct Measurement Model	119
Table 5-7: Assessment of Model for EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Construct.....	120
Table 5-8: Assessment of Corporate Reputation Construct Measurement Model	121
Table 5-9: Assessment of CSR Construct Measurement Model	122
Table 5-10: Assessment of Job Content Construct Measurement Model.....	123
Table 5-11: Assessment of Work Context Construct Measurement Model	124
Table 5-12: Assessment of Intention to Stay Construct Measurement Model	124
Table 5-13: Reliability Scores for Measurement Construct (Employee Sample)	126
Table 5-14: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for Convergent Validity	127
Table 5-15: Correlation Matrix with AVE (Employee Sample).....	129
Table 5-16: Chi-Square Difference Test for Discriminant Validity	130
Table 5-17: Single-Factor Test Outcome (Employee Sample).....	131
Table 5-18: Assessment of Measurement Models (Job Seeker Sample).....	132
Table 5-19: Assessment of EBE Multi-Dimensional Construct Measurement Model.	133
Table 5-20: Correlation Matrix with Cronbach's Alpha (α), Construct Reliability and AVE (Job Seeker Sample)	135
Table 5-21: Chi-Square Difference Test for Discriminant Validity (Job Seeker Sample)	136

Table 5-22: Single-Factor Test Result (Job Seeker Sample).....	136
Table 6-1: Assessment of Initial Research Path Model (Employee Sample).....	140
Table 6-2: Results of Hypotheses Tests (Employee Sample).....	143
Table 6-3: Chi-Square Difference Test for Model Comparison.....	145
Table 6-4: Assessment of Re-specified Path Model (Employee Sample).....	146
Table 6-5: Results of Hypotheses Tests for Re-specified Model (Employee Sample)	146
Table 6-6: Group Classification for Moderating Variables (Employee Sample).....	148
Table 6-7: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Length of Work Experience Groups.....	149
Table 6-8: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Length of Tenure Groups.....	149
Table 6-9: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Product vs. Service.....	149
Table 6-10: Assessment of Conceptual Structural Model (Job Seekers).....	150
Table 6-11: Results of Hypotheses Tests (Job Seeker Sample).....	153
Table 6-12: Assessment of Re-specified Path Model (Job Seeker Sample).....	154
Table 6-13: Results of Hypotheses Tests for Re-specified Model (Job Seeker Sample)	154
Table 6-14: Group Classification for Moderating Variables (Job Seeker Sample).....	155
Table 6-15: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Age Groups.....	156
Table 6-16: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Qualification Groups.....	157
Table 6-17: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Product vs. Service.....	157
Table 6-18: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Quality of Product/Service.....	157

List of Figures

Figure 2-1: Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller 1993, p. 7)	34
Figure 2-2: Dimensions of Brand Equity (Aaker 1991)	37
Figure 2-3: Customer Loyalty (Dick & Basu 1994)	38
Figure 2-4: Service Branding Model (Berry 2000)	40
Figure 2-5: Elements of Job Seekers' Knowledge (Cable & Turban 2001, p. 122).....	43
Figure 2-6: Dimensions of Employer Brand Equity (Collins & Kanar 2013).....	47
Figure 2-7: Mediation Effect of Organisational Attractiveness in Job Choice (Chapman et al. 2005, p. 933)	48
Figure 2-8: Employer Branding Framework, Adapted from (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, p. 505)	48
Figure 2-9: Recruitment Stages (Barber 1998).....	52
Figure 2-10: Broad Factors that Affect Employees' Perceptions	56
Figure 2-11: Initial Research Framework: Role of EBE in the Labour Market	61
Figure 3-1: Elements of EBE from the Employment Customer's Perspective.....	64
Figure 3-2: EBE Antecedents and Outcomes of EBE: Employment Customers' Perceptions.....	68
Figure 4-1: Instrument Development and Validation Process.....	96
Figure 4-2: Survey Flow in Pilot Study	98
Figure 5-1: Data Analysis Steps	107
Figure 5-2: Congeneric Model of Familiarity with Employer.....	117
Figure 5-3: Congeneric Model of Employer Brand Associations	118
Figure 5-4: Congeneric Model of Experience with the Employer.....	119
Figure 5-5: Congeneric Model of Loyalty to the Employer Brand	119
Figure 5-6: CFA Model of EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Concept	121
Figure 5-7: Congeneric Model of Corporate Reputation.....	122
Figure 5-8: Congeneric Model of CSR.....	122
Figure 5-9: Congeneric Model of Job Content	123
Figure 5-10: Congeneric Model of Work Context.....	124
Figure 5-11 Congeneric Model of Intention to Stay.....	125
Figure 5-12: CFA Model of EBE Multi-Dimensional Concept (Job Seeker Sample) .	133
Figure 6-1: Theoretical Integrated Model of EBE (Employee Perspective)	140
Figure 6-2: Integrated Model of EBE (Employee Perspective).....	147
Figure 6-3: Theoretical Integrated Model of EBE (Job Seeker Perspective)	150
Figure 6-4: Integrated Model of EBE (Job Seeker Perspective)	155
Figure 7-1: Four-cell Typology of EBE: Internal and External Comparison.....	184

List of Acronyms

AVE	Average Extracted Variance
EBE	Employer Brand Equity
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EoC	Employer of Choice
CBBE	Customer-Based Brand Equity
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CMV	Common Method Variance
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
EBBE	Employee-Based Brand Equity
EBE	Employer Brand Equity
GPA	Grade Point Average
HR	Human Resources
OB	Organisational Behaviour
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SET	Social Exchange Theory
SIT	Social Identity Theory
WoM	Word of Mouth

Abstract

In recent years, companies in developed markets have faced challenges in securing and retaining high-quality employees as a result of aging workforces and skills and labour shortages. To address this challenge, some organisations have developed employer branding programs aimed at building employer brand equity (EBE) in the labour market so the organisation will become an employer of choice (EoC). Traditionally, the branding concept has been used for building brand equity in order to acquire and retain customers. The adaptation of this marketing concept to the field of HR management has been widely accepted among scholars and practitioners; however, the effects of EBE in the labour market remain unclear because of a lack of empirical evidence. Employer branding has two audiences—externally it targets potential employees and internally it is directed towards employees. The majority of studies have focused on the external effects of employer branding, which raises the question of whether EBE has the same effect for job seekers and employees. The aim of this study is to provide an understanding of what drives EBE and to what extent it affects job seekers and employees.

The main assumption in employer branding is that employer brands play a similar role to brands in a traditional consumer context. Therefore, this study explored the theory of branding and brand equity in marketing and discussed previous adaptation attempts. As a result, a conceptual model of EBE was developed that incorporated four elements: familiarity with the employer brand, employer brand associations, experience with the employer and employer brand loyalty. Following that, an extensive literature review of employee attraction and retention revealed important factors that influence individuals' perceptions of an employer. Integrating these factors with EBE elements, this study followed a quantitative research approach. Prospective employees took part in a survey that asked them to evaluate a potential employer and report the level of that employer's attractiveness. Further, they were asked to evaluate their current employer and indicate their intention to stay. The data were analysed using structural equation modelling to examine and compare the factors that build EBE for each audience.

The findings provided support for the applicability of the brand equity concept to the employment context and confirmed the measurement of EBE elements on the two samples.

Most importantly, the role of the examined antecedents differed in building EBE between employees and job seekers. While job seekers are influenced by external factors such as corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility (CSR), EBE in an established employment relationship is primarily driven by job content and work context. The study also introduced a typology for managing internal and external EBE that helps HR managers to diagnose and direct employer branding efforts for effective branding in the labour market. In addition, the findings showed some evidence that segmentation of employer branding targets may only work for job seekers.

Statement of Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint award of this degree.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University's digital research repository, the Library Search and Also through Web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

Sultan Alshathry

May 2015

Acknowledgements

Undertaking this PhD has been truly a life-changing experience for me.

First and Foremost I praise Allah and only Him. I am indebted to Allah for all the bounties He bestowed on me to enable me to successfully finish this thesis.

My appreciation goes to many people who have contributed immensely throughout the process of completion of this research. I would like to thank my parents who raised me with love of knowledge and supported me in all my pursuits, my wife, Wafa, my kids, Abdulrahman and Dania, for their love and encouragement.

I would also like to thank my principle supervisor Dr. Marilyn Clarke for supporting me during these past years. I am indebted of her support and guidance. Marilyn thank you very much for teaching me the value of self-discipline, persistence and strive for excellence. Also, for the guidance during the tough times throughout PhD journey.

To my co-supervisor Dr. Steve Goodman, thank you for all your support and feedback. Your support during the initial stages of thesis is truly appreciated.

My deep appreciation goes to Dr. Cullen Habel, Dr. I Gusti Darmawan, Dr. Carolin Plewa and Dr. Chris Smith for their insightful comments and feedback. I am also very grateful to PhD students at Adelaide Business School, specially students and researchers I met during the course PhD seminars and academic conferences. Thank you very much for all the inspiration and feedback you provided through the process of this thesis. Finally, thanks to elite editing for providing editing service to this thesis.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the Thesis

This study explores the use of a marketing concept in the labour market called employer brand equity (EBE). In recent years, companies in developed countries have faced challenges in securing and retaining high-quality employees because of aging workforces and skills and labour shortages (Richardson 2007). This challenge is expected to intensify as Baby Boomers exit the workforce and organisations are forced to compete for talent (Stahl, G et al. 2012). To address this challenge, some organisations have developed employer branding programs aimed at building EBE in the labour market in order for the organisation to become an EoC.

Employer branding is ‘an activity where principles of marketing, in particular the “science of branding”, are applied to HR [human resources] activities in relation to current and potential employees’ (Edwards 2010, p. 106). The key assumption behind this application is that individuals in the labour market are customers of an employment relationship who are influenced by the company brand. Efforts at employer branding aim to build EBE for a company in the labour market by targeting two audiences: externally it targets potential employees and internally it is directed towards employees (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004).

EBE is defined as the effect of the employer brand of the company on potential and existing employees (Collins & Kanar 2013). It represents the value of working for an organisation (employer) as perceived by both groups. The ultimate goal for EBE differs between these two targets; for individuals outside the organisation, the aim is to generate interest in joining, whereas for those internally, it is to continue experiencing the value. EBE is a central concept in the branding literature, and it is designed to measure the success of employer branding programs from the employment customers’ perspectives. The adaptation of this marketing concept to the field of HR management has been widely accepted among practitioners; however, the effect of EBE on the labour market remains unclear because of a lack of empirical evidence. The majority of studies have only focused on the external effect of employer branding, which raises the question of whether EBE has the same effect on both

potential and existing employees. An understanding of what drives EBE and to what extent it affects the different target groups is needed in order to progress research in this area.

This study focuses on the role of EBE in helping organisations to achieve a competitive position in the labour market. In the study, job seekers took part in a survey that asked them to evaluate a potential employer and report how attractive they thought that employer would be, while employees were asked to evaluate their current employer and indicate their intention to stay. The aim of this research is to advance our understanding of employer branding by investigating how EBE is driven from the perspectives of job seekers and employees. This led to the three fundamental research questions:

- i. What are the elements of EBE?
- ii. What are the key antecedents driving elements of EBE?
- iii. Do the same antecedents influence EBE for job seekers and employees?

This introductory chapter presents the background to the research, defines the research problem and its significance, and discusses the contribution of this study to knowledge and practice.

1.2. Background to the Research

Over the past two decades, employer branding has become a widely used strategy to increase an organisation's chance of attracting talents who make a difference and contribute to the organisation's success. Many scholars have described employer branding as a strategic tool that helps organisations gain a competitive advantage through its people (Streb, Voelpel & Leibold 2008). While employer branding is still in its infancy in both research and practice, its expected contribution is becoming more substantial because of the increasing belief in the usefulness of adopting a marketing approach as a way to face current challenges in the labour market.

Increasing interest in employer branding has been noticed as a way that organisations can maximise their Human Capital through attracting and retaining employees. Human Capital Theory argues that an organisation's investment in employees of choice, employees with the

right knowledge, skills and experience, results in a valuable resource that contributes to organisational efforts towards competitive advantage (Lepak & Snell 1999). Thus, the organisation can secure employees with unique qualifications and training to achieve high levels of productivity. At the same time, the employer has the ability to keep those employees and prevent the loss of a valuable resource to competitors. While Human Capital refers to the quality of all employees of the organisation, employer branding can help the organisation to be seen as a 'preferred place' to work and thus to attract more talented job seekers and retain them on the long term (Boxall & Purcell 2011). There have been several studies that examined and reported the relationship between organisation human capital and performance supporting the importance of having better quality employees (Chowdhury et al. 2014).

Recently, there has been a discussion regarding the consequences of an aging workforce in many developed countries. In Australia, for example, the total fertility rate is decreasing, resulting in a skewed age distribution towards an older age (Kwok, Lloyd & Yip 2013). As more people are closer to leaving the workforce, an insufficient supply of younger workers replacing them becomes evident. According to the Workforce Aging Report (The Department of Employment 2012), the median age of the Australian population is projected to increase from 36.9 to about 39.7 years in 2026. This climb will push the number of Australians aged 65 and above from 3 to 8.1 million (Australian Government Treasury 2010). In another example, more than 33 per cent of the United Kingdom (UK) labour market will be aged over 50 years by 2020 (UK Houses of Parliament 2011). This situation will affect how companies manage their HR in terms of attraction and retention.

As the result of an aging workforce, experienced workers are leaving organisations through retirement, which results in a loss of knowledge and skills and a decrease in productivity (Burke & Ng 2006). This requires organisations to take a proactive approach to delay attrition through avoidable turnover and retirement and by transferring knowledge and skills to new, younger employees. Some large companies, such as MasterFoods and OTTO, are already preparing to replace the current aging workforce by introducing programs for the 'next generation of high potentials'. They justify these strategies by comparing the shrinking population of younger employees with increasing demand (Streb, Voelpel & Leibold 2008). In countries like the United States (US), new legislation is aimed at increasing the retirement age, which may lessen the effects of the aging workforce (Social Security Administration

2014). In other countries, a short term fix through immigration has been adopted (Beaverstock & Hall 2012).

However, as economies are recovering from the recent recession caused by the global financial crisis in 2008, companies have the opportunity to grow and expand globally, which requires access and competition for workers in markets where skills shortages are evident. In Australia, a report found that each job vacancy receives an average of 13.9 applications; however, only 2.2 applicants are suitable for the vacancy (The Department of Employment 2014). According to the same report, there have been staff shortages in several occupations for the past five years. The McKinsey Global Institute (2012) anticipates a shortage of more than 40 million skilled workers globally by 2020, whereas the supply of unskilled labour will pass 95 million. Moreover, more jobs are being created, which may lead employees to look for opportunities outside of their current employers (Collins & Kanar 2013). Tikkanen (2011, p. 1315) described these changes in the labour market as a move:

from a 'demand-driven market', in which employers are in a dominant position, to a 'supply-driven market', in which employees assume a dominant position. It is unclear how employers will respond to this change.

These changes intensify what practitioners call 'the war for talent' (Michaels, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod 2001). This means that employers will need to respond strategically in order to have a stronger position than their competitors; as a result, they will have effective access to their employees of choice, who have the potential to significantly contribute to achieving the organisation's goals (Streb, Voelpel & Leibold 2008). However, what matters in this issue is the way companies respond to such challenges. McNulty (2006) advised that: 'companies that expect to compete in even the very near future must open themselves to revisiting assumptions ... and to rethinking the ways in which they hire, motivate, and retain employees'.

Therefore, companies adopt strategies that aim at differentiating them in the labour market in order to become attractive. One effective strategy that companies such as Google, KPMG and Deloitte use is to develop a superior employer brand to promote the company's attractiveness externally to prospective employees. Thus, individuals in the labour market become aware of,

and interested in, what the company is offering to employees. In addition, it considers its employees in promoting attractiveness, so it ensures that they ‘live’ the actual employer brand that meets their needs and wants. In doing so, the company moves from dealing with a ‘vacancy management’ approach to a more strategic focus, where the best talent continuously looks for a chance to work for the company, and where employees of choice enjoy helping the company to achieve a competitive advantage.

Although little is known about employer branding and EBE building, this strategy is becoming more popular. More organisations are developing employer branding programs and aligning them with strategic HR and organisational goals. Practitioners see potential in employer branding as an organisational strategy. For example, Pern (cited in Stevens 2010, p. 11) pointed out that ‘developing and harnessing the power of the employer brand helps bring focus to people management, and this is enabling companies to get more with less, adding to both growth and profitability’. The potential benefits of having an attractive employer brand include lower costs, customer satisfaction and a higher-than-average return on investment (Barrow & Mosley 2011).

However, developing an employer brand strategy that builds a strong EBE in the labour market is not an easy task. It requires investment, commitment and support from top management to achieve the required objectives. The Philips electronics company is an example of an early adopter of employer branding. Philips began a program in 2002 to conduct internal and external focus groups and surveys that covered employees in China, France, Germany, India, Netherlands, the UK and the US. The program helped Philips to build an employer brand that acknowledges employees’ contributions and promoted the message that ‘Philips employees touch the lives of people all over the world every day’ (Pietersis, van Leeuwen & Crawford 2005, p. 18). The program improved the company’s rank as an ‘ideal’ employer from 14 in 2003 to 4 in 2005 in the targeted market (Rosethorn 2012).

The benefits of employer branding initiatives in practice have drawn attention to learning how to maximise outcomes. As a result, employer branding has predominantly received attention from practitioners, who hold annual conferences (e.g., CIPD), publish books (e.g., Barrow & Mosley 2011) and organise awards (e.g., Randstad). In addition, companies have established

roles such as employer brand manager and employer brand specialist. However, the employer branding concept as an organisational strategy has only recently received attention in academic research (Edwards 2010); this is possibly because employer branding needs to be investigated with a multidisciplinary approach that combines branding theories from marketing with HR understanding. The effect of EBE on individuals in the labour market remains unclear; thus, its contribution to the HR field is currently unknown in terms of empirically verifiable outcomes.

1.3. Research Problem

The emerging literature of employer branding represents an intersection between the marketing and HR disciplines. The concepts of branding and brand equity have been areas of interest for marketers for decades; thus, HR scholars believe that branding and brand equity literature present a shortcut for employer branding research (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Collins & Stevens 2002; Edwards 2010). This provides an opportunity to explore the role of EBE in the labour market upon foundations of brand equity in the way that job seekers and employees are the market consumers who perceive differences between employers because of EBE.

There have been attempts to adapt brand equity from marketing into the employment context in the sense that individuals in the labour market are employment customers and EBE represents the benefits of working for an organisation (Collins & Stevens 2002). Job seekers seek the benefits of being employees of that organisation, so they experience the value as an exchange for their effort and time. Although this type of adaptation is deemed appropriate and the potential development of the concept is based on underlying knowledge of brand equity (Martin et al. 2005), efforts to apply the brand equity concept to the employer brand suffer from limitations that are discussed below.

Adapting the brand concept to an employment context requires the integration of both marketing and HR. Past studies that have aimed to adapt EBE elements from the marketing literature have resulted in re-labelling with a limited applicability to the HR context, which might provide limited contributions to this notion (e.g., Cable & Turban 2001). Models of brand equity (such as Aaker 1991; Keller 1993) that are commonly adapted were

predominantly developed for product brands that relate to a usage of a product rather than a relationship. While experiential benefits are an essential part of brand equity in relationship marketing, most employer branding research has been developed from a goods-dominant view in which functional, economic and psychological benefits are core benefits for value exchange. This view is more appropriate in the context of product usage; however, customer experience in service marketing forms an essential element of brand equity. Experience is a core element in building value for a brand, and it is the main driver for customer purchase, satisfaction and retention (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello 2009; Iglesias, Singh & Batista-Foguet 2011).

Similarly, benefits for individuals in the employment relationship are exchanged as an outcome of the interaction between the main parties, the company and the employee (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). Experience with the employer is fundamental in judging the value of an employer brand. Employer branding research therefore needs to integrate marketing literature that recognises the relational nature of employment. A product view of the employment relationship makes it a one-off transaction rather than a long-term mutual investment and commitment. However, fields such as HR, organisational behaviour and personnel psychology have developed a solid base for understanding this type of relationship. Developing an EBE model that lacks the interaction side of employment may not provide an appropriate understanding for long-term relationships.

Moreover, previous attempts to integrate the two bodies of literature have been limited to a theoretical adaptation of the concept, and they lack empirical examination. The validation of a theoretical model verifying EBE elements from the perspective of employment customers is missing. To understand the role of EBE in the labour market and ensure applicability of marketing brand equity, research is needed to develop EBE and examine its dimensionality. The lack of empirical evidence means that the contribution of brand equity to employer branding literature is unclear.

Marketing's understanding of brand equity is that it has two audiences: potential and existing customers (Stahl, F et al. 2012). While the purpose of customer acquisition is to attract potential customers and convert them to existing customers, the aim of customer retention is

to make existing customers loyal to the brand so they maintain a relationship with it. Similarly, the concept of EBE refers to the organisation's brand equity in an employment setting, which appears to be a distinctive identity of the organisation in the labour market. It is perceived by two different audiences: potential workers and employees. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) pointed out that employer branding activities may be directed internally to employees, or externally to potential employees. Hence, organisations seek two different outcomes of building a strong EBE based on the target audience: attracting prospective employees to join the organisation and encouraging employees of choice to stay.

The important lesson from marketing branding is that brand equity forms the link between the benefits that a company aims to deliver and customer acquisition and retention (Vivek, Beatty & Morgan 2012). Factors that build brand equity for potential customers may differ in strength from those that drive brand equity for existing customers (Berry 2000). For example, word of mouth (WoM) has a greater influence on potential customers than existing customers. The critical difference is that existing customers experience benefits with the product/service (Berry 2000). Therefore, they use their experience to evaluate the brand rather than relying on perceptions.

Therefore, in HR, the key point to attract and retain employees of choice is to understand what drives the value of working for a company. Research on employee attraction and retention has reported common factors (e.g., corporate reputation) influencing individuals' perceptions and decisions regarding employment. Drawing upon knowledge from marketing, EBE may not be driven by the same factors because the actual benefits that are 'lived' only by those who have joined may be perceived differently by individuals outside the organisation.

Therefore, the research problem highlighted in this study is to explore the internal and external role of EBE in the employment context. To address this research problem, the study develops a model for EBE and links the antecedents of EBE to its outcomes in order to provide answers to the following three questions:

- i. What are the elements of EBE?
- ii. What are the key antecedents driving elements of EBE?
- iii. Do the same antecedents influence EBE for job seekers and employees?

1.4. Justification for the Research

Although the notion of employer branding is still in the developmental stage, there is some agreement among academics and practitioners regarding its organisational benefits (Aggerholm, Andersen & Thomsen 2011; Martin, Gollan & Grigg 2011). Some supporting evidence exists for external and internal positive effects for employer branding activities, including applicant quality and quantity, and employee satisfaction (Collins & Han 2004; Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). However, to maximise organisational outcomes, it is important to understand how a strong EBE can enhance employee attraction and retention. Thus, this research will examine the effect of EBE on employee attraction and retention.

A recent employer brand benchmark survey (Kunerth & Mosley 2011) investigated the main reason behind developing an employer brand strategy for 104 organisations. The results showed that while 12 per cent of the participating companies developed an employer branding strategy for external attractiveness and recruitment purposes, 40 per cent indicated that the target of the developed strategy was internal and external employees. Surprisingly, about 48 per cent stated that the main reason for adopting employer branding was for internal purposes such as employee retention. Obviously, this result contradicts the common focus in academic research and practitioner materials, where the focus is on the external use of employer branding and the aim is employee attraction. However, a closer examination of the nature of HR activities shows that it is more organised and directed to internal audiences to ensure that the employee's job in the organisation provides attractive benefits and, in turn, contributes effectively to the organisation's goals. This highlights the critical role for internal employer branding practices, which should also be aligned to how EBE is perceived externally. Failing to do so may lead to financial costs and an inability to have attractive EBE externally. Given the importance of having an attractive employer brand to both audiences, the critical question is: Are employees and potential employees influenced by the same factors? This study will address this question, which will help organisations to ensure that the benefits are conveyed to each target appropriately.

In an academic vein, despite the agreement among researchers of the two audiences of employer branding—internal and external—the majority of research studies have focused on the effect of employer branding on recruitment and employee attraction (e.g., Berthon, Ewing

& Hah 2005; Cable & Turban 2003; Elving et al. 2013; Lievens 2007; Lievens & Highhouse 2003; Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). This (in most instances) results in models that lack applicability to the internal audience of employer branding, which can be misleading for employer branding practice. Models that explore EBE from an external view focus on employer attractiveness as an outcome; however, using the same factors for employee retention requires an empirical investigation to confirm whether the same factors also apply for internal employer branding. This is coupled with little effort made to explore the internal effect of employer branding activities. Certainly, the two perspectives relate to employer branding efforts, and in order to advance a deeper understanding of the notion and maximise its benefits, research must acknowledge this fact and provide a consistent framework that applies to both perspectives. Research to date has failed to provide a complete picture of the two perspectives and achieve a thorough understanding of what EBE comprises and how it affects attraction and retention. This research will develop and examine a unified model of EBE from the two perspectives in order to provide a consistent picture of internal and external employer branding.

Further, as shown previously, organisations have a vested interest in having a strong EBE as an effective way to compete and cope with labour market challenges. An organisation may be able to generate more applicants by conveying strong EBE to future employees, but does that indicate success for employer branding programs? If talented staff work for a short period and then leave the organisation because of weak internal EBE, it may mean that employer branding programs are no more than an additional expense that fails to bring expected benefits to the company. In marketing, effective retention strategies reduce acquisition costs, which leads to increased profitability (Leone et al. 2006). Similarly, employee attraction and retention strategies are also connected and affect each other. For example, better HR practices reduce turnover and enhance employer attractiveness (Hiltrop 1999). Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that build strong EBE to attract potential employees, as well as the factors that drive internal EBE and thus retain employees. Despite the fact that many organisations seek a competitive position in the labour market through employer branding initiatives, research has been silent on whether the same antecedents similarly drive internal and external EBE. Although job seekers are influenced by sets of factors, using the same factors for both employer branding audiences will ultimately lead to the failure of

employer branding programs and increased turnover, thus making it more difficult to face challenges.

There is limited knowledge about the key antecedents of EBE. Employee attraction and retention functions require organisational resources to be efficiently allocated. Thus, it is important to know whether similar resources can be used for both, or whether each function needs to have different investments and promotions. It is also vital to know the consequences of any such differences, as experts advocate that employer branding should not be managed by individual departments, which means that additional cross-functional resources from marketing and HR departments should be used to build EBE (Ambler & Barrow 1996; Moroko & Uncles 2008). Organisational resources that are allocated for employer branding must be efficiently and effectively managed to ensure better performance of EBE in attracting and retaining employees of choice. As this research will examine the antecedents of EBE from each perspective, it will reveal the more influential factors for attracting better job seekers and retaining employees. Thus, HR managers will be able to maximise the outcomes of employer branding more effectively and resourcefully.

Another potential application for applying the branding concept to the HR setting is labour market segmentation (Moroko & Uncles 2009). Although early recruitment research discussed different preferences for various groups of job seekers, such as fresh graduates (Rynes & Barber 1990), the use of theory from marketing may help to explore segments of employment customers through a wider range of factors, such as corporate social responsibility (CSR). Using the segmentation approach in employer branding can help in promoting appropriate recruitment messages and designing employee experiences for the individuals that the organisation wants to attract. That is, building EBE may not be identical for all groups in the labour market. Thus, this study will explore segmentation opportunities in building EBE for common factors, including age, gender and length of work experience. This will help in investigating the difference in applicability of the concept of building EBE for job seekers and employees.

To understand the overall role of EBE in the labour market, this study takes a deductive approach that builds upon the brand equity theory of marketing (e.g., Berry 2000; Keller

1993) to understand the employment context (Cable & Turban 2001). This approach integrates HR and marketing literature in order to understand how EBE can be better understood and help organisations in their ‘war for talent’.

1.5. Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to the knowledge and practice of employer branding because it explores the role of EBE in attracting and retaining employees. In particular, it contributes to the development of employer branding theory and meets practice needs. This study examines employer branding as an employment relationship rather than a usage of product; thus, it is expected to advance knowledge in this area by approaching EBE from a different angle. Further, it helps to achieve a deeper understating of the EBE concept and how it is driven from the perspective of job seekers and employees. It also discusses managerial implications that help companies confronting challenges in the labour market.

Although employer branding is perceived in HR research as an emerging concept that has the potential to advance practice, the concept remains under-researched with limited applicability of the conceptual adaptation because of a lack of empirical evidence and appropriate literature integration in which the employment relationship is recognised. This study extends the theory of employer branding by integrating branding literature that acknowledges the interactive nature of the employer–employee relationship and enhances the applicability of marketing theory to the employment context. Previous research has explained some factors that increase employer attractiveness externally (e. g. Knox & Freeman 2006; Lievens 2007). Such factors may contribute to building an EBE for potential employees. However, as a result of limited research on internal employer branding, it is unclear whether the same factors have a similar influence on employees.

To understand whether EBE antecedents work the same way for employee attraction and retention, this research helps to manage attraction and retention practices and maximises outcomes. If the same antecedents influence both employer branding targets similarly, then employee attraction and retention should be approached the same way in order to achieve higher outcomes for HR and the organisation overall. The other possibility is that EBE is built

differently for each audience. This means that employers may need to address each audience differently and promote target-specific employment messages and practices. Hence, companies can avoid losing an audience by providing an identical composition of employment benefits. Thus, they make the most out of their HR with lower costs and maximum outcomes to become the EoC.

Another contribution of this study is the unified model, which simultaneously examines antecedents and outcomes of EBE for both internal and external employment customers. Incorporating organisational, job and work context attributes into one empirical model shows the relevance of each to employee attraction and retention, as examining them individually may not reflect the simultaneous effect of the factors that build value in the employer branding context (Collins & Han 2004).

This study makes some additional contributions. Most employer branding research has been conducted using student samples, which may not generalise to the real labour market (Rynes, Heneman & Schwab 1980). Samples collected for this study comprise actual job seekers, who are rarely represented in attraction research. Moreover, to examine the research framework, this study begins an operationalisation of brand equity in the employment context. It provides a reliable and valid EBE measurement model developed through an adaptation of established scales of brand equity. The model can capture the value of working for an organisation from the perspectives of both internal and external employment customers.

Building and managing EBE that appeals to both job seekers and employees are complex tasks, but they are critical to achieving the organisational objectives of attracting and retaining employees. When promoting external attractiveness, equal attention must be given to the internal audience to ensure the retention of employees of choice. In this context, the EBE model developed in this study can also be used as a diagnostic tool for comparing external and internal attractiveness. Antecedents of EBE are used to leverage EBE (or its elements) in the eye of the target audience to achieve the goal level of attractiveness. Employer brand managers can then set priorities and allocate required resources that can drive elements of EBE. The desired situation is one in which EBE is well regarded by both job seekers and

employees. Viewing EBE in this way provides useful insights into the successful management of EBE and the evaluation of employer branding programs.

1.6. Research Sample

The focus of this study was full-time employees as internal employment customers and job seekers as external. Given that full-time employees experience the actual benefits that the employer provides, this target was deemed appropriate for the study. However, a job seekers group was chosen because they are actively considering the benefits of employment, while actual applicants may be influenced by recruitment process practices, which may co-effect the influence of EBE (Barber 1998).

1.6.1 Research design

Given that employer branding originated from a marketing viewpoint, it has been considered beneficial to explore branding and brand equity concepts in order to understand how the employment setting can be viewed through a marketing lens (Cable & Turban 2001). In addition, to develop a theoretical framework, this study conducts an extensive review of employee attraction and retention literature to identify the factors that affect employees' perceptions of employing companies. To empirically analyse the research framework from the perspectives of job seekers and employees, two versions of the research model were established in order to test each perspective separately.

This study developed a model for EBE and adapted marketing measures into the employment context (Lievens, Hoye & Schreurs 2005). A pre-test for the research instrument followed this step, which included a review by an expert panel. The survey collected data in a similar manner to the main study to ensure appropriateness and so the instrument would be capable of producing the data needed to address the research questions. To test the internal EBE model, participants were asked to evaluate their lived benefits with their current employer, as well as the elements of EBE, and then indicate their intention to stay. To examine the external EBE, a sample of job seekers was asked to evaluate the benefits of one of four companies as a potential employer (Highhouse, Lievens & Sinar 2003). The participants indicated the extent

to which the company was preferred. Both samples were recruited through a paid panel and varied in terms of age, gender, qualifications and work experience. The collected data were analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM).

1.7. Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters, as summarised in Table 1-1. Chapter 1 introduced the study motivation and research questions. It then presented the background for the research and highlighted its significance. Following this, the research problem was discussed, and potential contributions to theory and practice were summarised. The chapter concluded with a brief outline of the important parts of the research design, the samples employed and the data analysis.

Table 1-1: Outline of the Thesis

Chapter	Topic	Focus
1	<i>Introduction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research objectives and questions • Background to the research problem • Relevance and significance of the research • Research contributions to knowledge and practice • Thesis organisation and outline
2	<i>Review of the Literature</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of extant knowledge of employer branding • Research gaps in the literature • Overview of marketing branding as a theoretical foundation • Review of employee attraction and retention literature
3	<i>Research Framework</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of research framework • Justification and presentation for the study hypotheses
4	<i>Research Design</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation and justification for the research approach • Development of research instrument • Data collection procedure and analysis strategy • Description of sampling process
5	<i>Study Results (Part 1)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of data analysis procedure • Preliminary analysis and SEM assumption test • Respondents' profiles • Development of measurement scale and confirmation process • Reliability and validity examination
6	<i>Study Results (Part 2)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model specification and estimation process • Examination of two separate models • Full path model test for each sample • Multi-group analysis findings
7	<i>Discussions and Conclusions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of study findings • Research contributions to theory and practice • Highlight of study limitations • Directions for future research

Chapter 2 begins with a review of the employer branding literature and highlights the two main streams followed in exploring the notion of employer branding. The chapter then presents and discusses the relevant theory from the marketing literature, focusing on the brand equity concept, which helps to understand how brands develop equity in the customer–brand relationship. Following this, past EBE conceptual attempts are discussed. A review of the literature on employee attraction and retention is conducted in order to identify the important factors that affect the attraction and retention of employees. Chapter 2 concludes with an initial research model that shows how the identified factors affect EBE for job seekers and employees.

Chapter 3 builds upon the discussion in Chapter 2 and aims to develop a unified research framework that initially explains the role of EBE in the labour market. It adapts the theory from brand equity into an employment setting, assuming that both job seekers and employees are the customers of the employment relationship. Specifically, it integrates the antecedents of corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context to EBE and its outcomes for attraction and retention. It also presents hypotheses for the predicted relationships between the framework concepts.

Chapter 4 sets out the steps followed in the research design. It explains the research method and justifies the decisions made. It also shows the process of instrument development and validation. Following this, it describes the data collection procedure and sampling process.

Chapter 5 reports the preliminary analysis for both study samples, including data cleaning and normality tests. It then develops a measurement scale for each sample and evaluates the reliability and validity of each construct.

Chapter 6 continues the data analysis process. It examines the full-path model for each sample, including the assessment and specification of each model. It also tests the study hypotheses and includes multi-group analysis.

Chapter 7 discusses a confirmed model of EBE and its elements for both job seekers and employees. Findings from employment customers are interpreted separately. This is followed by a section that compares and contrasts the differences between job seekers and employees in building EBE in the labour market. Next, both theoretical contributions and managerial implications are provided. The chapter concludes by acknowledging some limitations of the present study and suggesting future directions for employer branding research.

1.8. Chapter Summary

Despite the increasing interest in employer branding, the concept is still under-researched, and the potential benefits of applying the branding theory from marketing are yet to be explored.

Recent changes in the workforce present challenges for organisations that require a response. Developing an employer brand is seen as a strategic tool to overcome such challenges. Although scholars and practitioners agree on the potential contributions of applying the brand equity concept, empirical research of the role that EBE plays in the labour market is unclear. Building strong EBE can be rewarding for an organisation, but it is not known whether the two audiences of employer branding practices are similarly influenced. This study aims to bridge these gaps and provide theoretical and practical contributions to theory and management.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews the concept of employer brand, which has increasingly received a great deal of attention from HR and marketing researchers. The chapter begins with a review of employer branding studies to highlight the two streams of research. The first stream follows the symbolic-instrumental framework (Katz 1960; Lievens & Highhouse 2003; Locander & Spivey 1978). The second is based on organisational and job characteristics that examine how such attributes contribute to employer brand attractiveness. Research within this stream is commonly based on Signalling Theory (Spence 1973) and Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner 1979). The chapter also presents and discusses the relevant theory of branding and brand equity, with a focus on branded service context. This helps to understand how branding works in the brand–customer relationship. Previous conceptual work on EBE is then discussed. Following this, the chapter reviews the literature of employee attraction and retention with the aim of identifying the factors that affect individuals’ perceptions in the employment setting.

2.2. Employer Brand: An Emerging Human Resource Marketing Concept

Employer branding is a relatively new area of research. It is a complex concept that applies marketing branding knowledge to the employment context in order to achieve HR outcomes such as employee attraction and retention. It relates to existing concepts from various bodies of literature, including organisational attractiveness (Lievens, Hoye & Schreurs 2005), organisational identity (Highhouse, Thornbury & Little 2007), recruitment practices (Collins & Stevens 2002), corporate branding (Foster, Punjaisri & Cheng 2010) and internal branding (Bodderas et al. 2011).

2.2.1 Employer brand: evolution and definition

The term ‘employer brand’ was first used in the literature in 1996. Ambler and Barrow (1996) tested this term among HR professionals and concluded that marketing theories could be

applied to an employment context in which the company is the brand and the employee (existing or potential) is the consumer. Several scholars (like Agrawal & Swaroop 2009; Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Edwards 2010; Ewing et al. 2002) supported the application of regular brand foundations from the product/service context to employment, wherein a company considers its employees as internal consumers and future employees as potential customers. Consequently, it is presumed that job seekers confront the same situation as customers in the purchasing process (Cable & Turban 2001), and that employees experience a similar situation that service consumers face when they decide to continue with a provider.

To get a better understanding of the concept, it is useful to explore how the notion of an employer brand is defined in the literature. The first introduced definition came from the concept's pioneers, Ambler and Barrow (1996, p. 187), who described an employer brand as 'the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company'. This definition lists three types of benefits that an employee receives for being a member of an organisation. Functional benefits include developmental and useful activities, such as learning opportunities. Economic benefits refer to material or monetary rewards, such as salary. Psychological benefits reflect individuals' feelings, such as the sense of belonging. It also specifies the type of relationship as employment, which includes both potential employees who consider the potential employer and employees who are currently working for the organisation.

The process of providing the employer with the power of a brand is called 'employer branding'. Ambler and Barrow's (1996) definition inspired later definitions. For example, Wilden, Gudergan and Lings (2010, p. 56) defined 'employer branding' as 'the package of psychological, economic, and functional benefits that potential employees associate with employment with a particular company'. Focusing on the effect of employer branding activities rather than the benefits, Sullivan (2004, cited in Backhaus & Tikoo 2004) defined employer branding as 'a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm'. There is agreement among scholars that both employees and prospective workers are target customers of employer branding efforts (e.g., Aggerholm, Andersen & Thomsen 2011; Edwards 2010; Ewing et al. 2002; Moroko & Uncles 2008), and the main aim of employer branding is to differentiate the employer from its competitors in the labour market, which is

similar to the role that regular product/service branding does in the traditional marketing context (e.g., Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Ong 2011). In addition, it is used as an approach to manage awareness and beliefs about benefits in the employment relationship.

Moroko and Uncles (2008) explored the characteristics of employer brands and what makes them successful. They found five characteristics—three are similar to corporate and product/service brands and two are different. The three similar characteristics are: (a) being known and noticeable, (b) being seen as relevant and resonant, and (c) being differentiated from competitors. These three features are about creating awareness of an employer brand and providing an attractive set of benefits that are not offered in alternative employment. The two different characteristics are specific to employer brands. The first one fulfils a psychological contract, which is ‘an individual’s beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party’ (Rousseau 1989, p. 123). Employees evaluate the employment offering made by an employer according to beliefs they have formed, including both explicit and implicit contractual terms. Those beliefs can be a result of promissory signals that an employer brand sends to the labour market, or actual experience with the employer and socialising within the organisation (Tomprou & Nikolaou 2011). Promissory signals can be related to experiences that employees have with the employer including rewards employees expect to receive (comparable visible rewards for job seekers) or organisational practices such as training programs (Rousseau 2001). When a mismatch or ‘inconsistency’ between the conveyed and the ‘lived’ employer brand occurs, it may increase ambiguity for potential employees and lead to employee dissatisfaction and ultimately failure for the employer brand (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). The second characteristic is unintended appropriation of brand benefits, which relates to difficulty for prospective employees in evaluating experience with the employer before joining, which may result in an incomplete promise according to psychological contract theory (Rousseau 2001). Researchers have empirically extended some theories into an employer branding context in order to enhance employer attractiveness. The next section discusses extant empirical research relating to employer branding.

2.2.2 Employer branding: extant knowledge

Employer branding has recently received much attention as a new approach to explore and enhance organisational attractiveness in the labour market. Researchers have tended to examine what makes an employer brand attractive and thus have a bigger influence on employment customers. Two main theoretical streams have emerged within employer branding research: employer brand image, which builds upon the symbolic-instrumental framework (Lievens & Highhouse 2003), and employer brand attributes, which adopts Signalling Theory (Spence 1973) and SIT (Tajfel & Turner 1979). The majority of research in both streams has focused on the effect of employer brand image and job and organisational attributes on attracting potential employees and retaining current employees. Empirical research of each stream is reviewed in the following two sections.

2.2.2.1 Symbolic-instrumental framework

This stream builds on the work of Katz (1960) and Locander and Spivey (1978), in which a brand image is decomposed into functional attributes and symbolic meanings. In marketing, brand image is defined as ‘perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory’ (Keller 1993, p. 3). The symbolic-instrumental framework in the employer branding context suggests that the meaning of employer brands (in terms of inferred traits) plays an important role in differentiating employer brands and influencing employment customers (Lievens & Highhouse 2003). While the instrumental functions of a brand are related to the product’s physical and tangible attributes, symbolic attributes describe the subjective and intangible features of a brand.

Lievens and Highhouse (2003) adopted this framework into the employer brand context in which job and organisational attributes work as instrumental attributes. The authors adapted five dimensions of brand personality from Aaker (1997) into an employment setting and examined applicability and validity for each employer brand personality. The five dimensions are sincerity, innovativeness, competence, prestige and robustness. The authors examined the influence of both instrumental and symbolic attributes on potential employees and found that symbolic attributes predicted employer attractiveness over and above instrumental attributes.

They concluded that symbolic meanings are more effective in differentiating an employer in the labour market.

The application of the symbolic-instrumental framework has been expanded in more recent studies. For example, Van Hove et al. (2013) tested the symbolic-instrumental framework model in a non-Western country (Turkey) on a student sample as potential employees and concluded that the framework is applicable across different countries, cultures and organisations. However, the study may not provide sufficient evidence for generalisability to other countries. Other studies have examined the effect of the employer brand personality model on outcomes other than employer attractiveness. For example, Rampl and Kenning (2014) tested the influence of employer brand personality on employer brand trust and effect for a student sample as potential employees. The results indicated that 'sincerity' influences both outcomes, but 'competence' does not predict effect or trust. These findings are contrary to findings from Lievens, Van Hove and Anseel (2007) and Lievens (2007). Rampl and Kenning (2014) attributed the conflict in findings to the effect of the industry in which the employers operate. This explanation was supported by Dowling's (2000) framework, in which industry affects the organisation's reputation and how it is perceived by different stakeholders, including employees. Recently, Wallace, Lings and Cameron (2012) found that industries such as the rail industry may weaken employer brand image. Interestingly, Lievens, Hove and Schreurs (2005) took into account familiarity with the employer brand when examining employer brand personality and instrumental features, finding that the effect of the features and personality dimensions on attraction are stronger when familiarity is higher, which highlights the role that familiarity may play in the employer branding context.

Further, Davies (2008) examined employer brand personality on employees and reported mixed findings in terms of the effect of employer brand personality on four different outcomes: perceived differentiation, affinity, satisfaction and loyalty. However, when predicting employee retention, instrumental features explained additional variance over and above symbolic meanings, whereas symbolic features explained job satisfaction over and above instrumental features (Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). While such findings highlight the significant role of symbolic meanings in predicting psychological outcomes, instrumental features remain stronger predictors for both attraction and retention. Recently, research has reported initial evidence that symbolic meanings are developed by the

instrumental features that an employer offers (Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013), which makes employer brand differentiation possible from both approaches.

From a practical point of view, some job and organisational attributes have both instrumental and symbolic meanings. For example, in Lievens and Highhouse (2003) study, task demand and working with customers were considered (and statistically supported) more symbolic than instrumental, although they describe job attributes. Further, managing employer brand image can be out of HR's scope, as some aspects, such as industry image and type of product/service, play a significant role in shaping potential employees' perceptions. Hence, managing employer brand image can be a big challenge compared to managing job and organisational attributes.

2.2.2.2 Organisational and job attributes

Studies within the second stream have examined the influence of various sets of job and organisational characteristics on individuals' perceptions in the labour market. Generally, these studies have used Signalling Theory (Spence 1973) and SIT (Tajfel & Turner 1979). Building on an understanding from marketing on the role of brands in sending signals to consumers, employer brand research posits a similar role for organisational and job attributes in influencing individuals in the labour market. SIT also shows how an employer brand communicates the identity of the organisation both internally and externally so that employment customers tend to join, and stay with, the organisation that they find has a more attractive identity and that fits with their own identity (Ashforth & Mael 1989).

Berthon, Ewing and Hah (2005) developed 'EmpAtt', an employer brand attractiveness scale that aims to measure a set of benefits linked with an employer brand from the perspective of potential employees. The scale comprised 25 items divided into five factors, namely, economic, development, application, social and interest. The EmpAtt scale has been widely used as an employer branding scale. For example, Elving et al. (2013) analysed 100 online job advertisements to investigate whether employer branding is being used by employers in the Netherlands, finding that it is rarely used. They also conducted an experiment using a student sample to examine whether including additional information regarding the factors of

employer brands would be more attractive to potential employees. They found that employer branding could help improve employer attractiveness. However, the authors did not account for familiarity as an important factor in employer attractiveness (Turban 2001).

Using EmpAtt, Bonaiuto et al. (2013) compared 'ideal' and 'real' employer brand attributes in the Italian context. To identify what talents considered most attractive, they divided a student sample into three groups: high, average and low Grade Point Average (GPA). They found that capacity to innovate, value of diversity, value of workers' abilities and knowledge, opportunity for different careers, and freedom of opinion are important features that attract future leaders groups, however, the researchers measured potential for leadership using student GPA, which may not be an accurate indicator of talent. In contrast, graduates considered CSR an important feature of an 'ideal' employer brand, but not when evaluating 'real employers'. The authors called for further investigations to provide an understanding of the role of CSR in attracting employees, as well as the possible effects of retaining employees (Bonaiuto et al. 2013).

In terms of the effect of employer brand attributes on attracting prospective employees, Knox and Freeman (2006) found a moderate correlation between employer brand attributes and job seekers' (students') intention to apply, which indicates that it is more likely that potential employees will apply for a job with an employer when the job and organisational attributes are highly regarded. Interestingly, they also found a perception gap between prospective employees and part-time recruiters of the same organisation. This difference in views may indicate a possible variation between internal and external perceptions of the employer brand (Moroko & Uncles 2008).

As noted, previous studies in this stream have relied heavily on student samples in exploring the direct role of employer brand features on potential employees' perceptions. Such findings should be treated with caution, as student samples may not represent real composition in the labour market, although it is part of it. Participants in student samples are more likely to represent younger age groups who lack work experience (Rynes, Heneman & Schwab 1980).

In contrast, a few studies have examined the internal effect of employer brand attributes on employees. Ito, Brotheridge and McFarland (2013) compared the preferences of employer brand attributes across three age generations in childcare service providers. The 'Y' generation comprised employees aged 19–24 years, the 'X' generation included those aged 25–39 years and 'Boomers' comprised those aged 40–55 years. They found that the priorities of attributes remained in the same order from entry to exit (younger to older), although they differed between groups. For example, pay and security importance increased from entry to exit, whereas work values and development decreased. However, the flexibility factor remained at about the same level. The findings emphasised the different priorities of the age groups. In addition, the study found significant effects of job security, work flexibility and promotion opportunity on intention to search for an alternative job, and also for age and job security on intention to remain with the current employer.

Recently, Biswas and Suar (2014) interviewed top-level executives about their perspectives of their employer brand management and found that job and organisational attributes such as CSR affected employer branding in their companies, which in turn was related to non-financial and financial performance. For the authors, an employer brand consisted of EBE, loyalty to an employer brand and employee engagement, and talent attraction and retention. The results also compared the desired and current state of the employer brand and revealed that a higher gap led to a lower perceived employer brand. Although this study presented new insights into employer branding knowledge, it reflected executives' views of their company, which were not necessarily similar to those of potential employees and employees of the company.

While known attractive attributes of employer brands tend to vary from one organisation to another, Maxwell and Knox (2009) suggested adopting a broader perspective when researching employer brand attractiveness. Current conceptualisations that incorporate only 'attributes related to employment may be overly restrictive' (Maxwell & Knox 2009, p. 903). This recommendation is in line with the theory from marketing in the way that service providers are perceived as a 'whole' brand rather than single attributes (de Chernatony, Cottam & Segal-Horn 2006). Thus, a relationship to a brand is influenced by collective impressions rather than an evaluation of a single feature. In the employment context, this conceptualisation appears to be more applicable for the reasons outlined below.

While the term ‘employer brand’ is loosely borrowed from the marketing literature, it is a distinctive area of research in different ways. Firstly, employer brand is employment-specific and related to the identity of the organisation as an employer, whereas the product brand is related to a customer product (Edwards 2012). Secondly, employer brand has external (i.e., potential) and internal (i.e., existing) audiences, while the target audience in regular product branding is external customers (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Edwards 2012). Thirdly, employment is usually a long-term relationship and has critical implications for both parties, unlike the majority of marketing contexts, as both the employee and the company are unlikely to change employment frequently. However, it is important that the HR view of employer branding takes into consideration that employer-employee relationship is interactive. Accordingly, the conceptual applicability of the branding theory to the employment context may not always be appropriate.

An attractive set of employer brand features is not sufficient for organisational success in the labour market. However, conveying such features and making them ‘liveable’ are an important part of the employer branding process (Chhabra & Sharma 2014). Thus, organisations tend to use marketing strategies to create a presence in the labour market. For example, Collins and Stevens (2002) found that sponsorship, WoM and advertising, as early recruitment practices, play a role in shaping job seekers’ perceptions of the employer and job attributes. Such activities aim to create awareness among individuals in the labour market and show that working for a particular employer brings certain benefits to employees.

While various organisations may use similar promotion practices, such as career fairs, potential employees respond differently to such practices depending on the EBE associated with each organisations (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). Although the belief among researchers that having strong EBE is vital for employee attraction and retention, as a HR outcome, the role of EBE remains unclear. There have been few attempts to develop a model for EBE, and such efforts have mainly focused on re-labelling marketing concepts and have lacked empirical support. Further, they have solely built upon the theory of product branding, which may not be appropriate, as it is a usage of a product and a short-term (one-off) relationship. Before discussing these attempts, it is useful to explore the theory of branding and brand equity in marketing in order to understand these concepts.

2.3. Branding and Brand Equity in a Consumer Context

This section presents the branding theory from the marketing literature. It defines the relevant concepts and shows how branding works in a consumer–brand context. It helps to adapt the theory to the labour market setting, in which employees (future and existing) are customers of employment. It then discusses brand equity models and highlights the main aspects of brand equity. Lastly, it discusses three conceptual models of EBE from extant employer branding research.

2.3.1 What is a brand? What does it do for a company?

According to the American Marketing Association (2014), brand can be defined as ‘Name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers’. The process of endowing products and services with the power of brand is called branding (Keller & Kotler 2006). Basically, this definition presents a ‘brand’ as an entity that is differentiated because of a name, symbol, term, design or any other feature. Branding can also be aimed at stakeholders other than customers, such as employees who are considered part of value creation in the branding process (Brodie 2009). From this broad perspective, employees (internal customers) are co-creators of the brand promise aimed to be delivered to customers (Merz, He & Vargo 2009). Such an understanding defines the relation between a company and its employees as part of the marketing approach. However, employer branding (as per in earlier definitions: Ambler & Barrow 1996; Collins & Kanar 2013; Moroko & Uncles 2008; Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010) focuses on an employment relationship that primarily leads to HR outcomes. Therefore, this review focuses on the customer–brand relationship as an analogue to the employee–employer brand.

As a marketing tool, branding provides companies with various benefits, including being a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Madden, Fehle & Fournier 2006). Companies operating in high-rivalry markets may consider branding an effective differentiation strategy, as it differentiates the company’s products from its competitors’ products, which in turn provides several advantages. Firstly, a brand identifies a product/service and its features in the

market. It sends signals to customers about the product's level of quality (Keller & Kotler 2006), which makes the product trusted in the eyes of consumers when they find the benefits they were looking for. Over time, consumers become loyal to the brand, which enables the company to charge a premium price and enhances predictability and security for demand. Such benefits increase profit margins by attracting more customers and keeping the current ones loyal (Riezebos, Kist & Kootstra 2003). Secondly, brands help customers to build a mental structure to organise knowledge and information about the brand and its features so that customers can easily recognise and identify its uniqueness during the decision-making process (Keller 2008). Thirdly, companies usually know more than customers about product/service quality, features and characteristics. Hence, they use branding as an approach to educate customers about the product/service and teach them what the consumption looks like (Erdem & Swait 1998). In parallel, employer brands help employers to achieve a competitive advantage by having the best workers in the labour market (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). Further, employer brands communicate employment benefits that the employer offers to employees, show what makes it different from other companies and provide reasons for developing loyalty.

2.3.2 How brands work in a consumer context

The advantage of brands and branding practices is not only for companies; customers also gain benefits of branding. In the purchase process, consumers perceive a risk of choice, as the decision to choose a certain product will have consequences. The more important and more expensive the product is, the more risk is perceived (Erdem & Swait 1998). However, by analysing signals that indicate product/service quality and features, brands can reduce uncertainty and perceived risk by portraying the benefits of a product/service. In addition, brands save customers time and effort when they seek information to evaluate alternatives for their needs. Indeed, some brand features are difficult to evaluate prior to purchase. Hence, customers infer brand signals to learn about other potential functional, experiential and psychological benefits that the brand offers (Chang & Liu 2009; Krishnan & Hartline 2001). In successful branding activities, consumers are convinced that the brand has meaningful differences compared to other competing brands, and their worries remain at a minimal level (Keller & Kotler 2006).

However, once a customer makes a purchase, the company continues communicating new features and offerings through various marketing strategies that may include advertising and WoM. Such communication strategies may also aim to remind existing customers about the benefits that contributed to their decision to build the relationship in the first place. In addition, the company strives to maintain the level of quality and experience delivered to the customer in order to build loyalty to the brand (Iglesias, Singh & Batista-Foguet 2011). However, in some situations, the customer receives higher value than what they thought prior to their purchase, and in other cases, the opposite happens. Such a gap in perception is likely to lead to serious implications, such as customer dissatisfaction and termination of the relationship (de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2001). To retain existing customers, the company must ensure that customers are also aware of the differences that make the delivered functional, psychological and experiential benefits distinctive.

In parallel, the signals that employer brands send to the labour market help job seekers when considering potential employers and making decisions regarding the portrayed benefits. Job seekers face difficulties in trying to avoid risk when searching for an employer (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010); hence, such employment signals can minimise risk and organise information to facilitate decision making. For employees, a similar level of portrayed benefits should be delivered to ensure that they made the right decision to join, which in turn leads to loyalty to the employer.

2.3.3 Concept of brand equity

Although the brand equity concept has been used since the eighteenth century (Farquhar 1989), it only started to be widely applied by US advertising practitioners in the 1980s. It then began to appear in academic research (Ambler & Styles 1996). As a result of marketing efforts to develop brand attractiveness for a product/service, brand equity represents the value that a brand has in terms of the benefits it brings to various stakeholders. Three perspectives have emerged in the brand equity literature. The financial-based brand equity perspective represents the monetary value of a brand as shown in the balance sheet, while employee-based brand equity (EBBE) is a similar concept to EBE, as it represents the value of a company's product/service from the employees' perspective (King & Grace 2009; Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2006).

However, EBBE differs from EBE in various ways. Edwards (2012) highlighted some of these differences. While employer branding has two audiences—external and internal employees—employee branding has only an internal audience. Employer branding aims to attract, engage and retain employees. In contrast, employee branding aims to brand all employees who interact with customers in order to ensure customer satisfaction and retention. Ultimately, organisations use employer branding to achieve high performance by having employees of choice at the right time, whereas employee branding is used to increase profitability through higher sales (Edwards 2012). Employer branding relates to managing the employment relationship, while employee branding focuses on the customer relationship. Both employer and employee branding influence each other through influencing employees, and they simultaneously influence the overall perception of the company (Foster, Punjaisri & Cheng 2010).

The third perspective comes from the customer's point of view and is known as customer-based brand equity (CBBE). Aaker (1991, p. 15) defined brand equity as 'a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customer'; that is, it is the added value that a given brand endows a product with (Farquhar 1989). This perspective focuses on the influence of the brand on customers' perceptions and behaviours, regardless of the source and type of knowledge. Therefore, CBBE is the value of a brand in customers' minds that results from their knowledge of the brand (Keller 1993). In addition, it helps to build and position brands to appeal to the target market by learning the factors that are more attractive to a specific segment, such as young consumers. Before exploring the models of brand equity, the next section discusses the difference between branding products and branding service in order to identify aspects that help to develop a better understanding of EBE and, importantly, better applicability to the employment setting.

2.3.3.1 Services v. goods branding

In recent years, the brand-relationship has emerged, transferring branding activities from physical products to service branding (Merz, He & Vargo 2009). While this appears to be common in regular consumer practice, it helps to build a deeper understanding of employer branding in the HR setting. That is, in service (as in employment), the production and

consumption of benefits occur simultaneously and cannot be separated (Bamert & Wehrli 2005). For example, to build an impression of a supportive supervisor requires both the employee and the supervisor to interact at the workplace. This feature is significant to marketing brands for three reasons. Firstly, in some services, a consumer must be highly involved in the production–consumption process for a successful service delivery, which is the case in employment. This makes the service experience an active creation of meanings that is related to the feelings and behaviours of a customer (Padgett & Allen 1997). In this situation, a customer visits a service facility, which can be seen as a delivery site (workplace), to experience the benefits. Secondly, being at a service site may involve the co-delivery of benefits (Lovelock, Patterson & Walker 2007). For example, in the work context, the employee is part of the organisation’s workplace. To experience a cooperative environment, the employee (and others) should work together in a cooperative way. Hence, employees experience, and at the same time co-create, value in the workplace.

Thirdly, there is no physical product to be delivered in the service branding, which is known as intangibility of the product. Unlike goods, services cannot be touched, seen and tasted; services are all about customer experience (Bamert & Wehrli 2005). This critical difference has important implications for the service context. Depending on the tangibility level of a service, the level of perceived risk in purchasing the service may become higher. Less comparable attributes and more experienced benefits lead to a higher perceived risk (Baron, Harris & Hilton 2003). Search factors may include price, brand name and other factors that can be evaluated. Conversely, experience factors are characteristics that can only be evaluated after purchase or consumption, such as an opportunity for learning at the workplace.

Therefore, branding in the service marketing context is more about establishing a relationship for the benefit of experience, which is a similar case to employment. Although some attributes are easy to compare (e.g., salary), many are difficult to learn about or even experience before joining the organisation. For example, a supportive supervisor as an important attribute of employment quality is difficult to learn about before an actual interaction occurs between the employee and the supervisor.

Fourthly, de Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2001) interestingly revealed a key aspect that differentiates services from goods. Most goods have a one-off relationship, which means that they exist for a short term, as the brand is usually a repeat purchase. For example, after a

cereal product is consumed, the relationship has expired and a repurchase decision needs to be made. However, in services such as banking, long-term relationships might exist. Consumers do not have to review their decision every time they go to their bank. In addition, changing from one bank to another may involve effort and cost. Thus, when the bank fails to provide a high-quality experience, this might change the customer's attitude prior to a change decision being made. However, it might not involve changing the bank (behaviour). In the case of goods, the attitude is strongly related to repurchase behaviour, but as research shows, in service, the attitude-behaviour relationship tends to be weaker (de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2001). This might be similar to the employment relationship. Research has shown that it is difficult to accurately predict employee reaction in employment, as the link between attitude and behaviour may not be indicative of relationship continuity. Although some employees might be satisfied and are not searching for alternative jobs, they might still leave the organisation (Mitchell et al. 2001), for example, if their family decides to relocate because their partner received a better job opportunity in a different location.

2.3.3.2 Models of brand equity: a review

There are a number of models that simplify and explain brand equity from the customer perspective. However, some models have been more influential, including Keller's (1993) model of brand knowledge, Aaker's (1991) model of brand equity and Berry's (2000) model of service brand equity. These models have received significant attention and are widely accepted among marketing scholars for their contributions to enhancing the understanding of brand equity. In addition, an advantage of these models is that they convert complexity of brand into a small number of manageable parts (O'Cass & Grace 2003). Accordingly, the first two models in particular have been largely adapted in employer branding research. However, it is important to point out that these two models were developed in times when branding activities focused on goods as products. Thus, the discussion will be furthered to cover brand equity for services.

In his associative network memory model, Keller (1993) proposed two dimensions for brand knowledge: brand awareness and brand image (Figure 2-1). These two dimensions are widely used in brand equity models (e.g., Chang & Liu 2009; Kapferer 1997; Krishnan 1996). Brand awareness is defined as customers' ability to recognise and recall a specific brand from its

product category, which forms the base of other dimensions (Aaker 1991). Awareness in this sense ranges from unawareness of a brand to a ‘front of mind’ brand, in which it is assumed that it is the only brand in the product category, so it has a strong node in customers’ memory that is reflected in their ability to identify the brand under different conditions (Keller 1993).

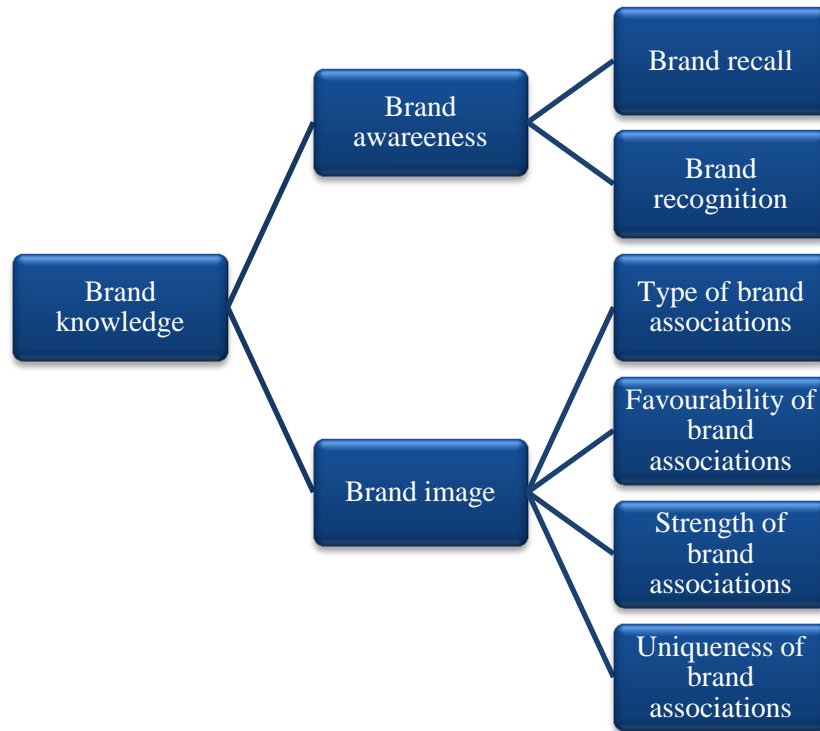


Figure 2-1: Dimensions of Brand Knowledge (Keller 1993, p. 7)

The level of awareness in this context can play a critical role in how brand equity affects consumers’ perceptions. Firstly, brands with awareness are more likely to be considered, especially when the purchase decision is made in the presence of other competing brands (Keller 1993). For example, it is essential for the Emirates airlines brand to be recognised while planning for a holiday; otherwise, it is unlikely that the carrier will be considered an option. Secondly, there is empirical evidence to suggest that customers tend to buy brands that they are more familiar with, even if they are lower in quality. In particular, inexperienced customers facing a new decision use their familiarity with a brand as a technique to infer other qualities of that brand. Further, brand awareness may prevent customers from discovering quality differences between brands (Hoyer & Brown 1990). Thirdly, brand awareness is essential and a pre-requisite to building brand associations and perceived quality. Consequently, brand awareness affords salient cues of associations in an individual’s mind

that can be retrieved when a motive or related situation triggers the memory (Holden 1993). Therefore, several studies have empirically shown that, in consumption decisions, brand awareness can be a superior tool for predicting brand preference and purchase behaviour (e.g., Holden 1993; Nedungadi & Hutchinson 1985).

This element is similar to familiarity with the employer concept in HR literature, which relates to an employee's level of knowledge about an organisation (Brooks et al. 2003). However, while awareness or familiarity in marketing is explained as the amount of knowledge in relation to other brands (i.e., top of mind), this definition may not apply in the same way in the employment setting. The perceived risk and level of involvement in employment have greater consequences for employees compared to marketing brands (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). Individuals in the labour market need information in order to make a decision to join or stay with an employer.

Keller (1993) focused on exploring brand image as part of brand knowledge. Positive value of brand equity occurs when the customer is aware of the brand that has features of a certain level of favourability, strength and uniqueness in memory. As in this model, after establishing awareness, customers' impressions and behaviours rely on brand image, which is determined by type of brand association (such as social acceptance), favourability of associations (priority), strength and uniqueness of associations. Specifically, brand associations are classified into three types: product attributes, attitudes and benefits. Product attributes are descriptive features of a brand, such as a wide airplane seat. Brand attitudes are overall evaluations of a brand that inform customer behaviour (del Rio, Vazquez & Iglesias 2001). Benefits represent the attached value of a brand to the individual and have three types:

- functional, which are the intrinsic advantages of a product/service, and it is usually linked to basic needs such as physiological needs
- symbolic, which are the extrinsic advantages of a product/service, and it is usually linked to non-product-related attributes such as prestige
- experiential, which relates to how it feels to use the product/service, and it is usually linked to product/service-related attributes such as joy (Keller 1993).

For example, traveling with a world-class airline may include the three types of benefits. Having a wider, comfortable seat represents a functional benefit, while a symbolic benefit is using a well-respected airline service and an experiential benefit may include in-flight entertainment such as the latest Hollywood movies.

Brand associations consist of anything that is linked in memory to a brand and that may contain meaning for consumers (Aaker 1991, 1996). According to Keller (1993), associations can be created from various sources, such as advertising. They can also result from inferences of other associations that already exist in customers' minds. For example, the quality of a brand in some situations can be inferred from the price of that product/service. For a new customer, these sources can inform beliefs about a particular brand. However, customers' experiences are the strongest creators of brand associations, which only occur for existing customers who have actually used the brand (Berry 2000).

Brand associations have a fundamental effect on customers' perceptions and behaviours. Research has consistently shown that brand associations influence brand preference and purchase intentions (e.g., Cobb-Walgren, Ruble & Donthu 1995; del Rio, Vazquez & Iglesias 2001; O'Cass & Lim 2002). In addition, O'Cass and Grace (2003) reported the strong influence of brand associations on the overall attitudes of brands because they provide reasons to buy and use the brand. As brand associations represent the basis for purchase decisions, they also contribute in building loyalty to a brand. The stronger the link between a brand node in the consumers' memory, the stronger the effect of that association on perception. Having strong, favourable and unique associations increases the likelihood of getting an attractive position in the target market. However, consistency between brand associations is essential for brand success (Keller 1993).

In the same way, individuals in the labour market form impressions of a company based on the benefits it portrays and offers to its employees. While associations in marketing are related to memories of products/services, in the employment context, employer brand associations may be formed from both related and non-related employment attributes. For example, an employee may form an association of a company as a non-caring employer because of a lack of respect and appreciation of the employee's achievements (employment-

related). A potential employee may form a positive impression of an employer because of the high-quality product/service it provides to its customers (non-related employment).

In a different but complementary way, Aaker (1991) developed a model for brand equity that comprised two further dimensions: perceived quality and brand loyalty. As show in Figure 2-2, the brand equity model comprises four dimensions of assets that form brand equity. These dimensions are: brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty. The first two dimensions are similarly conceptualised as in Keller (1993); however, the latter two dimensions are additions that are widely accepted and used in brand equity literature.



Figure 2-2: Dimensions of Brand Equity (Aaker 1991)

Oliver (2009, p. 434) defined brand loyalty as a ‘deeply held commitment to rebuy or re-patronise a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having potential to cause switching behaviour’. For companies, it is less expensive to have a loyal customer than to target a new one (Gounaris & Stathakopoulos 2004). Loyalty cannot exist before forming a relationship between an individual and a brand, which implies actual use (experience) of the brand. In psychological contract terms, employers fulfil their obligation towards employees by providing rewards and support to retain them. While some of the provided benefits are explicit and can be part of a written contract, psychological benefits (such as prestigious status) and some functional benefits (like organisational support) are subjective and implicit within the employment

relationship (Lee et al. 2011). When an employer meets its obligation and fulfils the perceived psychological contract employees, over time, develop loyalty to the employer and perform well (Lee et al. 2011).

Although repurchase behaviour (or continued usage of service) can be an indicator of loyalty to a brand and may produce similar sale revenues in the short run, some researchers have argued that it can be misleading. As a result of a lack of attitudinal commitment, the customer may decide to change brand very easily (Jacoby & Kyner 1973). Therefore, combining attitudinal facets with behaviour is presumed to differentiate between people who consume a brand because they are committed to it and those who rebuy it because they have not found an alternative. In an employment setting, a dissatisfied employee might stay longer because of a lack of alternatives. Dick and Basu (1994) introduced a classification that differentiates between these types of consumption in marketing by examining attitudinal aspects (Figure 2-3).

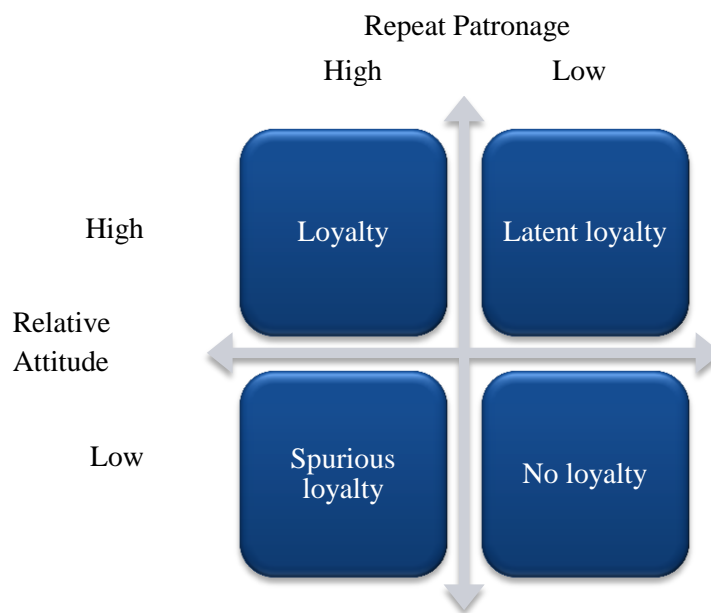


Figure 2-3: Customer Loyalty (Dick & Basu 1994)

In ‘no loyalty’, customers rarely repeat the purchase of a brand and might hold a neutral attitude. In ‘spurious loyalty’, customers might keep purchasing a brand not because they like it, but because they find it close to where they live. For example, an individual might frequently visit a particular fuel station because it is the only one located on his or her way to work. ‘Latent loyalty’ occurs when a customer likes a brand but does not rebuy it. For

example, a person likes to stay at Shangri-La hotels, but the chain does not operate in his or her frequently visited destinations. ‘Loyalty’ to a brand occurs when a consumer repurchases a brand that he or she likes. For example, customers who like a particular airline will always choose it as their carrier when they travel.

Parallel to marketing, employer brand loyalty relates to employees feeling that they are attached to an organisation as a result of a positive relationship (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). While some employees may continue working for an employer (behaviour), it does not necessarily indicate loyalty, as they may not have an alternative job opportunity. ‘Spurious loyalty’ may help the company to achieve its financial outcomes, but it may affect employees’ performance and intention to remain with the employer (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004).

Further, Aaker (1991) model designated a dimension that pertains specifically to attitudes towards product-related associations such as quality of a brand. Perceived quality dimension can be defined as customers’ perceptions of overall quality of a product/service with respect to its intended purpose and relative to alternatives. Thus, it is not about the actual quality of a brand, but customers’ perceptions of the core function or process of a brand. The importance of this dimension lies in setting the expectations of new consumers; high perceived quality results in a more attractive brand and a higher expectation of superiority of the brand. For existing consumers, perceived quality is considered a determinant of customer satisfaction and an essential factor for customer retention (Anderson & Sullivan 1993).

However, perceived quality is linked more to a physical product than a service. Service marketing researchers have adapted the concept of perceived quality into a sense that benefits are experienced and branding is a relationship with the company. In particular, Berry (2000) included customer experience with the service provider in a brand equity model (Figure 2-4) as a way to deliver benefits to customers and as a determinant of brand meaning (or associations). Customer experience in brand relationship can be defined as ‘internal and subjective response customers have to any contact (direct or indirect) with a company’ (Teixeira et al. 2012, p. 363). It combines all relevant contact points that occur during the promised value-creation process. Experience affects consumers’ attitudes and intentions (O’Cass & Grace 2004). For example, Iglesias, Singh and Batista-Foguet (2011) found that customer experience has a significant effect on affective commitment.

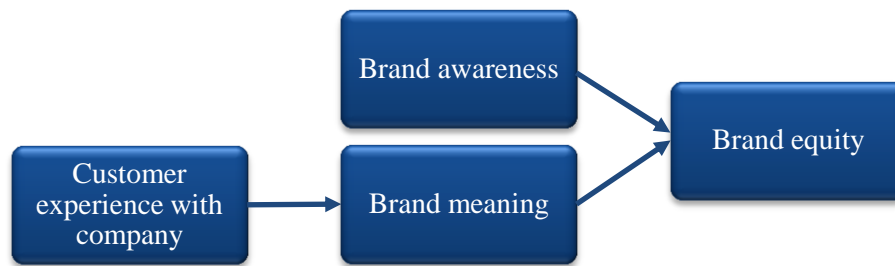


Figure 2-4: Service Branding Model (Berry 2000)

There are two important determinants of customer experience: hedonic impression and/or practical contact, which includes service environment and service people (i.e., employees) (Helkkula 2011). Both determinants make the value-creation process seen as hedonic service and convenient (Wong 2013). In particular, customer experience is largely influenced by the context in which the customer receives the value, as well as the process of creating the value of the service (Teixeira et al. 2012). They influence each other and make the overall evaluation of the experience; hence, the brand is more likely to become noticed as an attractive brand that provides a positive experience (Palmer 2010).

Similarly, employee experience can be part of the employment set of benefits (functional and symbolic). Thus, it can relate to the internal and subjective response an employee has as a result of interacting with the employer. In translating the customer equity concept into employee equity in the employment setting, Cardy, Miller and Ellis (2007) highlighted the importance and relevance of convenience at work for creating value—for example, offering childcare services in the workplace. While the term ‘employment experience’ is often used in employer branding, integration to the appropriate literature from marketing is rare and vague. For example, for Edwards (2010), employment experience represents a wide range of benefits. However, experiential benefits, which are an essential component of brand equity in brand relationship, are absent in the employer branding literature.

2.3.3.3 Effect of brand equity on consumers

Prior to actual consumption, a new customer has an impression of a brand that has been formed from exposure to, and knowledge of, the brand (i.e., various types of associations

from awareness). Empirical research has found a significant effect of brand equity on attracting new customers. The influence can take the form of brand preference, which was defined by Hellier et al. (2003, p. 1765) as ‘the extent to which the customer favours the designated service provided by his or her present company, in comparison to the designated service provided by other companies in his or her consideration set’. Thus, when a customer sees two brands, the reaction will be different based on the equity of each brand, and the one with stronger brand equity will have more preference over the other. Another form of influence that brand equity has on customers is the effect on purchase intention, which Chang and Liu (2009, p. 1690) described as ‘a customer’s plan to buy a specific brand’.

Several studies (such as Chang & Liu 2009; Cobb-Walgren, Ruble & Donthu 1995; O’Cass & Lim 2002) have provided empirical support for both forms of effect of brand equity on brand preference and purchase intention. In particular, Myers (2003) found a strong relationship between brand equity and brand preference, and consumers favour the brand that carries higher brand equity than competing brands. In the employment context, exposure to an organisation with positive associations will have a greater influence on potential employees and will build stronger EBE in the labour market. Consequently, job seekers will prefer that organisation to alternative employers.

For existing customers, service marketing researchers have reported indirect effects of brand equity on customers’ intention to repurchase. Through continued effects on brand preference, brand equity is associated with existing customers’ willingness to maintain the relationship with the brand of choice (e.g., Chang & Liu 2009). In addition, brand loyalty has a direct influence on repurchase intention, as reported by Liao (2012). Although brand experience may be expected to affect loyalty, recent empirical evidence by Iglesias, Singh and Batista-Foguet (2011) revealed that no direct effect exists but through an emotional component that mediates the relationship. Similarly, employees who receive attractive benefits such as a great experience will have positive feelings towards the company and will accordingly commit to their employer and do their best to maintain the employment relationship.

One critical difference between potential and existing customers in a marketing setting is that existing customers have an additional source that informs their perception of a brand—namely, experience with the company. Experience is considered the core product of a service, and evaluation of the service mainly relies on the actual experience (de Chernatony, Cottam &

Segal-Horn 2006). Regardless of other marketing activities, such as advertising, existing customers evaluate and build their beliefs about a brand through their real experience with the company. In the case of a conflict or inconsistency between the marketing message and the actual experience, existing customers will believe their experience, as marketing communication cannot establish non-existing value. This only applies for customers who have experienced or are experiencing the service, while new customers rely on marketing communications to shape their impression of a brand. Unlike existing customers, new consumers will mostly be influenced by the marketing message, as they have little or no actual experience (Berry 2000). Consequently, both the marketing message and real experience in services must be consistent to attract and retain profitable customers successfully.

In summary, brand equity recognises three essential aspects that create value for a brand in an individual's mind: (i) how much an individual knows about a particular brand, (ii) how they evaluate that brand based on that knowledge, and (iii) what experience they have (or perceive) with that brand. These aspects establish a connection to the brand when greater value is delivered to customers. Over time, loyalty to that brand evolves as a result of actual experience. Elements of brand equity then play an important role in influencing brand preference for potential consumers, and in influencing willingness to maintain a relationship with the brand of choice for existing ones (Chang & Liu 2009). In HR terms, EBE consists of three elements: (i) how much an individual knows about a particular employer, (ii) how they assess the employer based on that knowledge, which includes employment-related and non-related associations, and (iii) what experience they have (or perceive) with that employer brand. For employees, loyalty to an employer brand evolves over time as a result of attitudes towards experience with the employer, which represents a fourth aspect of EBE in the employment setting.

2.4. Employer Brand Equity in Current Research

Given that concepts and established theoretical foundations from marketing appear to be applicable to a HR context (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Edwards 2010; Ewing et al. 2002), there have been attempts to develop models for EBE that build upon the theory from marketing and fit the employment context. While theoretical conceptualisations discuss EBE and its

elements, empirical evidence is clearly missing. In addition, employer branding research lacks empirical support about the role of EBE in the labour market. There are three conceptual models that draw from the marketing literature and develop a theoretical framework for EBE in the employment setting: job seekers' employer knowledge (Cable & Turban 2001), EBE in recruitment (Collins & Kanar 2013) and employer branding framework (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). Each framework is explained and discussed in this section.

2.4.1 Job seekers' employer knowledge

For Cable and Turban (2001), an individual's knowledge of an employer consists of three elements: employer familiarity, employer reputation and employer image (see Figure 2-5). Such knowledge is assumed to influence job seekers' attitudes and behaviours. Cable and Turban (2001, p. 124) defined familiarity as 'the level of awareness that a job seeker has of an organisation'. Familiarity with an employer is a popular concept in recruitment research. Recently, attention has been given to the role that familiarity with an organisation plays in attracting employees. Several studies have shown that the level of awareness that a potential employee has about an employer is positively associated with CSR (e.g., Luce, Barber & Hillman 2001), corporate reputation (e.g., Cable & Graham 2000; Turban et al. 2001) and employer image (e.g., Gatewood, Gowan & Lautenschlager 1993).

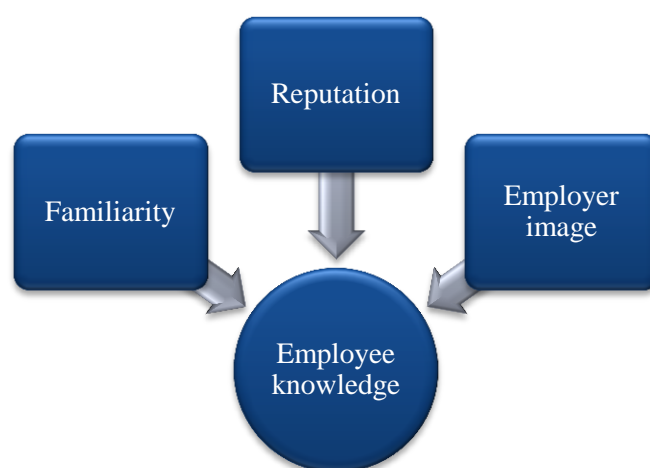


Figure 2-5: Elements of Job Seekers' Knowledge (Cable & Turban 2001, p. 122)

The overall effect of level of familiarity on job seekers' perceptions has been recognised in empirical research, but the relationship between employer familiarity and attraction has not been clearly established and needs further investigation (Gomes & Neves 2011). Some researchers (such as Luce, Barber & Hillman 2001; Turban et al. 2001) have reported a direct effect of familiarity on attraction, which means that job seekers are more attracted to an employer when they are more aware of it than its alternatives. Conversely, other researchers have found no significant relationship between familiarity and attraction, indicating that employees' attitudes and evaluations of an employer are the only drivers of attraction (e.g., Allen, Mahto & Otondo 2007). Interestingly, Lievens, Hoye and Schreurs (2005) noted that the effect of organisational attributes and trait inferences (employer brand image) of an employer on attraction are higher when familiarity with a company is high. In this matter, Brooks et al. (2003) conducted four experiments in order to understand the role of familiarity in the recruitment stage. They argued that the unpredictable relationship of familiarity is based on the context in which the job seeker makes a decision. This is because of the large pool of information (positive and negative) about an organisation when the level of familiarity is high. When more negative information about an organisation exists, the employer is less likely to be attractive. Such findings seem consistent with psychological contract literature in the way that the context in which a job seeker gains information during the pre-employment stage impacts on understanding and interpretation of future promises. Thus a minimum level of familiarity is essential to establish beliefs towards an employer and contexts shape those beliefs. However, when contradictory information is present at the pre-employment stage, it may erode trust in the employer brand and make it less attractive (Rousseau 2001).

In this conceptual model, Cable and Turban (2001) proposed a positive relationship between familiarity and reputation and employer image. Employer reputation is defined as 'a job seeker's beliefs about the public's affective evaluation of the organisation' (Cable & Turban 2001, p. 125). Reputation can increase the potential applicant pool and the employer's ability to attract more qualified employees (Collins & Han 2004; Turban & Cable 2003). While reputation intersects with various disciplines and is examined from different perspectives, less agreement exists among researchers in regards to its definition, measurement and role (Chun 2005; Walker 2010). A generic definition was given by Highhouse et al. (2009, p. 783), who defined reputation as 'a global, temporally stable, evaluative judgment about a firm that is shared by multiple constituencies'. This means that reputation represents a shared perception of different constituents, including employees, customers, investors and the whole

community, which generally means that reputation is a stable impression of the public regarding a company as a whole rather than as an employer only.

Turban, Forret and Hendrickson (1998) reported an interesting finding that supports the distinction between familiarity and reputation. A content analysis of reputation constructs revealed two different factors: reputation itself and knowledge of the company, which represents a potential employee's level of awareness about a company. This important finding drew researchers' attention to investigate the effect of the level of knowledge of an organisation as a separate concept to employees' perceptions. Thus, researchers have examined and supported the direct effect of reputation and familiarity on employer attractiveness (see Lievens, Hoye & Schreurs 2005; Turban 2001; Turban et al. 2001).

Further, Cable and Turban (2003) examined the relationship between familiarity and reputation in the attraction context. They found that familiarity with an employer improves job seekers' evaluations of reputation. In contrast, Turban and Greening (1996) found that unfamiliarity with an employer is negatively correlated with both reputation and attraction (Highhouse, Brooks & Gregarus 2009). Such findings support Brooks et al. (2003) argument regarding the influence of the type of information that a potential worker has about an employer. In this case, having a good reputation is not essential for attractiveness, but avoiding a bad reputation is crucial in order to attract employees (Bourhis & Mekkaoui 2010). Such findings highlight the need for further research to be conducted to provide a deeper understanding of the nature of the relationship between reputation and familiarity, and whether reputation has an indirect effect on the attractiveness of a company through employer familiarity.

Organisational reputation as an important determinant of attraction perception has been used to refer to different constructs (Barnett, Jermier & Lafferty 2006). In some studies, organisation reputation has been defined in a similar way to employer image in that it represents job seekers' beliefs about an employer (e.g., Cable & Turban 2001; Collins 2007). However, Highhouse, Brooks and Gregarus (2009) differentiated between these two concepts (reputation and image) and mentioned three important differences. First, 'reputation' represents the overall evaluation of an organisation, which includes financial image, CSR

image, market image and employer image, whereas 'image' explains a particular perspective of the organisation. For example, employer image refers to how an individual in the workforce perceives that organisation as an employer, whereas reputation is formed as collective judgments of several constituents and includes other images. Finally, 'image' exists in the individual's mind and is not possessed by the organisation. Previous discussions have brought to light similarities between organisation reputation and brand reputation, especially in the way that both are accumulated judgments towards the organisation (Jurisic & Azevedo 2010).

This framework suggests that familiarity is positively related to both reputation and employer image and mutual effects between them. Eventually, job seekers' knowledge affects their response to future information about the employer, how attracted they are to the organisation and whether they pursue a job with the organisation (Cable & Turban 2001). However, according to marketing theory, brand equity represents the value of a brand in the individual's mind and may be influenced by others' views rather than others' beliefs about an employer. For example, a job seeker may have positive EBE for an organisation, which may not be similarly regarded by the public. Thus, reputation can be an influential driver for EBE from an individual's perspective, but not part of his or her belief.

2.4.2 Employer brand equity in recruitment

The second EBE conceptual model was developed by Collins and Kanar (2013), who defined EBE as 'the effects on decision making of potential and existing employees uniquely due to the employer brand of the company' (Collins & Kanar 2013, p. 285). In addition to the brand awareness (familiarity) dimension, the model includes employer brand associations (Figure 2-6). While the term employer brand associations is used to capture impressions of an organisation, the authors re-labelled the two aspects of employer brand image in Collins and Stevens (2002) work (general attitudes and perceived attributes) to surface and complex employer brand associations. Surface employer brand associations are the attitudes and overall evaluation of an employer. The authors argued that surface associations collectively work together as employer attractiveness. Consequently, employer attractiveness is a dimension of EBE.

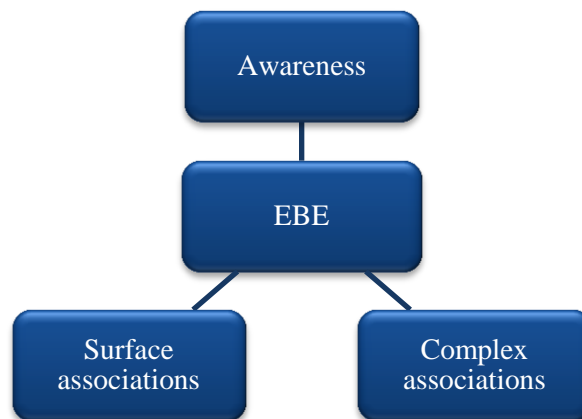


Figure 2-6: Dimensions of Employer Brand Equity (Collins & Kanar 2013)

Conversely, complex employer brand associations are perceived as work-related characteristics such as opportunity for advancement. While surface associations require little cognitive processing and are easy to retrieve, complex associations are codified beliefs about employment benefits with a certain company (Collins & Kanar 2013). However, this conceptualisation proposes that EBE is merely developed from employment-related features, which is inconsistent with evidence from employee attraction that shows a vital role for non-work-related features in employment decisions. For example, Turban and Greening (1996) found that CSR provides companies with a competitive advantage in attracting potential employees.

Similar to the previous model, this model proposes that employer brand awareness directly affects an individual's application intention. In addition, both surface and complex associations are related to employment decisions. Previous research has consistently found that the characteristics of an employer are an important determinant for attractiveness. For example, it is evident from Chapman et al. (2005) meta-analysis that job and organisational characteristics drive organisational attractiveness in the job choice context (Figure 2-7). However, Collins and Kanar's (2013) model includes attitudes towards an employer and characteristics of an employer as dimensions of EBE, but it does not explain whether and how they are related to each other. Finally, the first two discussed models explain EBE in recruitment research and thus merely apply to potential employees, while EBE is believed to work for both internal and external targets.



Figure 2-7: Mediation Effect of Organisational Attractiveness in Job Choice (Chapman et al. 2005, p. 933)

2.4.3 Employer branding framework

Backhaus and Tikoo's (2004) conceptual model is the most cited in employer branding literature. As shown in Figure 2-8, employer branding activities form two essential assets: employer brand associations and employer brand loyalty. Employer brand associations are the thoughts and ideas that an employer brand evokes in the mind of employees. They shape employer image, which represents functional and symbolic features. Thus, prospective employees are attracted to perceived employer associations when they perceive employer brand image positively.

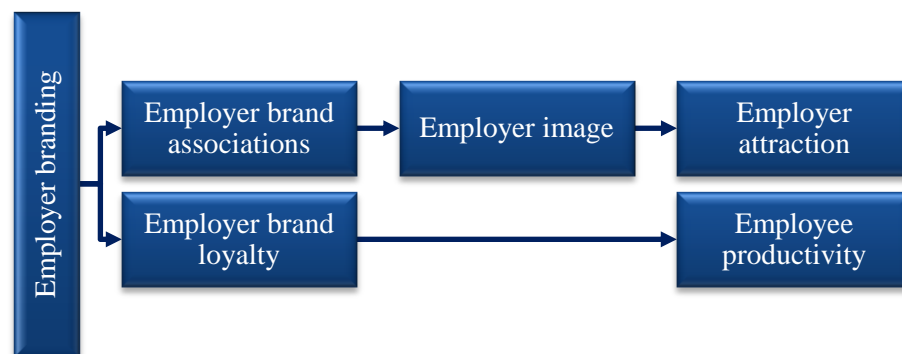


Figure 2-8: Employer Branding Framework, Adapted from (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, p. 505)

In contrast, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) conceptualised employer brand loyalty as analogous to organisational commitment, which implies identification and involvement with the company, its values and goals (Crewson 1997). However, a close look to the two concepts (brand loyalty and organisational commitment) shows that they are more likely to be different. While brand loyalty is a positive outcome and feeling that a value exchange creates overtime (Iglesias, Singh & Batista-Foguet 2011), organisational commitment, may not always a result of positive exchange between the employment parties. An employee can

choose to be committed to the organisation due to: 1) difficulties in leaving the organisation (continuance), 2) feeling of obligation (normative), and 3) involvement and identification with the employer (affective), which Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) likened to employer brand loyalty. Since loyalty to an employer brand is an outcome of positive impression and experience with the employer, in light of SET, loyalty is an outcome of reciprocity obligations between the two parties and employer brand loyalty in this context can be similar to normative organisational commitment.

While employer brand associations help to influence external audience decisions, employer branding activities develop loyalty by influencing organisational culture and identity. Similar to traditional marketing, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) classified loyalty to an employer brand as attitudinal and behavioural. The attitudinal component relates to organisational culture; for example, when a company has a supportive work culture, it is more likely that the employee will develop a positive impression of the employer and feel attached to that environment (Gifford, Zammuto & Goodman 2001).

EBE is the desired outcome for employer branding activities, and this model provides a comprehensive picture of how EBE works in the labour market, as it shows how the two audiences of employer branding are influenced in the employment context. However, the model lacks the familiarity component, which, as discussed earlier, is an essential component in the employer branding context. In addition, research has shown that employer brand image (as determined by employer brand associations) also has an internal effect on employees (e.g., Christine, Robert & Jodi 1997; Rampl & Kenning 2014).

As discussed in this section, extant understanding of EBE is largely built on the adaptation of branding theory from a product-dominant perspective in which functional and symbolic attributes are heavily used. However, in an employer–employee relationship (as in a brand–customer relationship), individual experience is a core part of the benefits and means of value exchange. Failing to provide a positive experience in an employment relationship may negatively affect employer attractiveness for both targets of employer branding.

After observing employer branding in practice, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) developed a three-step process for building EBE. The company began by identifying the ‘value proposition’ that it offers to its employees, including employment and non-employment features and benefits. Following this step, the company markets this set of features to potential employees with the aim of attracting better-quality talent and promoting attractiveness in the long term. Along with external marketing, internal employer branding practices are conducted in order to develop a workforce that can meet the organisational needs and ensure that employees of choice remain with the company. This leads to a fundamental question that is important for theory and practice and is the focus of this study: Do the same antecedents influence EBE for job seekers and employees?

Given that employer branding has two audiences—job seekers and employees—it is important to identify and understand the antecedents that drive EBE and its elements for each perspective. Therefore, the following section explores the employee attraction and retention literature to help develop a comprehensive model of EBE, its antecedents and outcomes.

2.5. Employee Attraction and Retention

Although employee attraction and retention have been explored independently in the literature, an extensive review of the two areas of research revealed a common set of factors that influence employees’ perceptions of the company before and after they join. These factors can be at the job and organisational levels, including job and work context attributes, corporate reputation, and CSR. Before discussing these four factors and reviewing how they relate to individuals’ perceptions (job seekers and employees), this section describes the concepts of employee attraction and retention from the HR perspective. It provides a brief discussion of the importance of both employee attraction and retention to organisations and then reviews the literature and highlights the important factors that affect the perceptions of individuals in the labour market regarding employment.

2.5.1 Employee attraction

Creating a positive early impression in a potential employee's mind of an organisation is a critical step in creating an employment relationship (Gomes & Neves 2011). These impressions represent the beginning of the relationship, and according to Barber (1998, p. 5), it includes 'the practices and activities carried on by the organisation with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees'. Strong positive early impressions should improve the supply of better-quality employees to the company through HR practices such as selection and socialisation stages (Boudreau & Rynes 1985; Collins & Han 2004). In the HR literature, an organisation's attractiveness as an employer and its influence on future employees have attracted attention from different areas of research, including marketing (e.g., Maurer, Howe & Lee 1992) and international business (e.g., Newbury, Gardberg & Belkin 2006).

To examine the overall attraction process from the organisation perspective, Barber (1998) developed a model that has three main stages (Figure 2-9). The first stage is called 'extensive research', in which a company identifies and generates applicants by promoting its attractiveness in order to fill job vacancies. In this stage, job seekers develop an impression of the organisation as a potential employer. No direct contact occurs between potential employees and the future employer. Research in this stage concentrates on early impressions that affect future employees' perceptions of an employer and how it then influences the employment relationship (for example, Bourhis & Mekkaoui 2010; Lievens & Highhouse 2003). The second stage is 'intensive search', in which interpersonal contact between an actual applicant and a company representative is established. Research in this stage follows the attraction stage and investigates the effects of recruiting practices and selection, such as interviews and the characteristics of recruiters, on actual applicants' attraction perceptions (such as Knox & Freeman 2006; Powell & Goulet 1996). At the end of this stage, the employer decides whom to offer the available vacancy to. In the third stage, the job seeker decides whether to accept the job offer from the employer (e.g., Carless 2005).

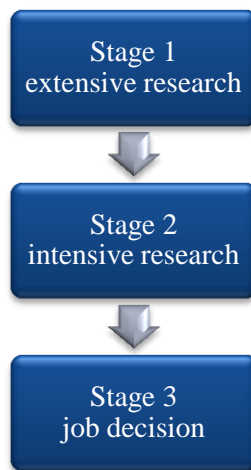


Figure 2-9: Recruitment Stages (Barber 1998)

The first stage is the most critical in the employer branding process, as the effect of the employer brand is greater before a direct contact stage. Given that employer branding is related to the management of awareness and impressions of the employer, its role begins at an early stage of the attraction process, before any contact has been made with the organisation. When contact occurs between a job seeker and an organisation, additional factors (e.g., interviews) will affect the job seeker's overall impression (e.g., Powell & Goulet 1996). This stage also has a major influence on the latter stages of recruitment (Slaughter & Greguras 2009) and can take the form of effects on potential employees' perceptions. For example, Turban, Forret and Hendrickson (1998) found in a longitudinal approach that the early attraction perceptions of a student sample predicted post-interview attraction. Alternatively, it can take the form of an indirect effect, where organisational attractiveness plays a mediating role in predicting initial application decisions (Gomes & Neves 2011; Rynes 1989), and in a later stage, such as the acceptance of a job offer (Turban, Eyring & Campion 1993).

2.5.1.1 Initial attraction stage

In this stage, organisations develop and conduct a mix of practices that target future employee populations. These practices make the employer attractive and help to attract the best job seekers and EoC status (Barber 1998). Therefore, employer attractiveness can be defined as a future employee's assessment of an employer's desirability as a workplace (Hannon 1996). This assessment implies various types of benefits that a potential employee perceives in being a member of a particular organisation (Ambler & Barrow 1996). It is reflected in individuals'

impressions and attitudes, which are not necessarily followed by behavioural actions—for example, applying for a job vacancy with the organisation (Highhouse, Lievens & Sinar 2003).

Having established the important role of organisation attractiveness in employment stages and decisions, HR scholars have also examined the antecedents of organisational attractiveness that influence job seekers' perceptions. Prior research has incorporated similar concepts/constructs as components of employer attractiveness, including job pursuit intention, application decision, likelihood of job acceptance, choice intention and choice decision. However, recent research has found that these concepts are different. For example, Aiman-Smith, Bauer and Cable (2001) empirically found that job pursuit intention and organisational attractiveness are two separate constructs and can be predicted by different factors. In addition, Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar (2003) found that organisation attractiveness and intention towards an organisation, albeit highly correlated, are two distinct constructs. Nonetheless, predictors used to measure initial attraction to an organisation, as well as other dependent variables (such as actual decision), have been found to be in similar patterns of relationships and highly correlated to each other. According to Turban (2001), this makes their antecedents generalisable across these outcomes.

2.5.2 Employee retention

After attracting and employing employees of choice, retaining them is another challenge that confronts organisations. Although different levels of attrition are acceptable, the loss of key staff through avoidable turnover and retirement means the loss of knowledge, skills and experience, which are essential for organisational success (Beardwell & Claydon 2010). Employee attrition may also include financial costs resulting from investment in training and hiring new employees, which can reach an annual salary for a key employee (Curtis & Wright 2001). In addition, the consequences of employee turnover go beyond tangible costs. Other costs may become more significant to an organisation, including effect on organisational culture, employee morale and social capital (Tanova & Holtom 2008). Therefore, retaining employees of choice is essential for human capital stability within the company and to ensure that investment in talents is successful. Organisations can overcome such challenges by providing employees of choice with attractive employment benefits. According to Frank,

Finnegan and Taylor (2004, p. 13), employee retention is ‘the effort by an employer to keep desirable workers in order to meet business objectives’. These workers remain when they perceive their employer as a great place to work and when their experience meets their needs.

The increasing importance of employee retention in practice has led researchers to give the topic much consideration, which has resulted in significant growth in this area of research (Tanova & Holtom 2008). For a while, scholars tended to investigate the reasons for employees leaving companies, but they have recently turned to what makes employees choose to stay (Holtom et al. 2008). This shift provides better consideration for factors that can maximise retention rates and make workers want to stay instead of focusing on avoiding negative drivers, which is in line with the aim of employer branding.

Several models have attempted to explain why people choose to stay or leave a company. For example, Muchinsky and Morrow (1980) developed a theoretical framework for employee turnover that suggests that turnover has three determinants: individual, work-related and economic opportunity factors. In addition, Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski and Erez (2001) developed ‘job embeddedness’ as a more comprehensive model that predicts voluntary turnover and intention to leave, and it has been found to offer more accurate predictions of turnover than other models. Yao, Lee, Terence, Mitchell and Sablinski (2004, p. 156) defined job embeddedness as ‘the combined forces that keep a person from leaving his or her job’. Although the job embeddedness model assesses both on-job and off-job factors, it does not explain why workers choose to remain with an employer, what they like/want from it and what makes them choose to continue (Crossley et al. 2007). In addition, it is difficult for companies to control off-job factors despite their relevance to quitting intentions and job embeddedness. Nonetheless, HR researchers have also developed models that focus on internal controllable factors that influence employees’ perceptions of their current employer.

Two concepts were extensively researched in relation to employee retention: job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Both mediate the relationship between retention factors and intention to quit or stay. Locke (1976, p. 1300) defined job satisfaction as the ‘positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences’. The evaluation may include job content and work context, organisational characteristics, and benefits of

employment. A large number of studies (such as Brown & Yoshioka 2003; Carsten & Spector 1987; Cotton & Tuttle 1986; Tett & Meyer 1993; Trevor 2001) have found that job satisfaction is negatively related to employee turnover.

The other most researched predictor is organisational commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990, p. 14) defined organisational commitment as the 'psychological state that binds the individual to the organization'. As suggested by Allen and Meyer (1990), and widely accepted by others, organisational commitment is a multi-dimensional construct that has three components:

- i. affective, which refers to attachment to, involvement in and identification with the organisation
- ii. continuance, which is based on the cost associated with leaving the organisation
- iii. normative, which refers to the feeling of obligation to remain with the organisation.

In empirical research, each component has a negative effect on turnover. However, according to several studies, affective commitment is the strongest predictor of turnover, followed by normative commitment (e.g., Meyer & Allen 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch 2001). As the continuance component results from the perceived cost of leaving and external conditions rather than the perception of the current company, more focus is given to the drivers of affective and normative components in the next section, which explores the factors that affect the perceptions of employment customers.

2.5.3 Influential factors on employment customers' perceptions

While employee attraction research has tended to examine the direct influence of the antecedents, employee retention literature explores the influence of similar factors on employee retention indirectly through job satisfaction and organisational commitment. However, following Maxwell and Knox (2009) recommendation, this study takes a broad view of the influential factors on employees' perceptions rather than a narrow view of single attributes, which can be restrictive and does not provide a complete picture of the organisation. As indicated earlier in this section, four broad factors commonly affect the perceptions of job seekers and employees: corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context, (see Figure 2-10). The next section presents a review of the empirical research that

relates to each factor, with an emphasis on its role in attracting job seekers and retaining employees.

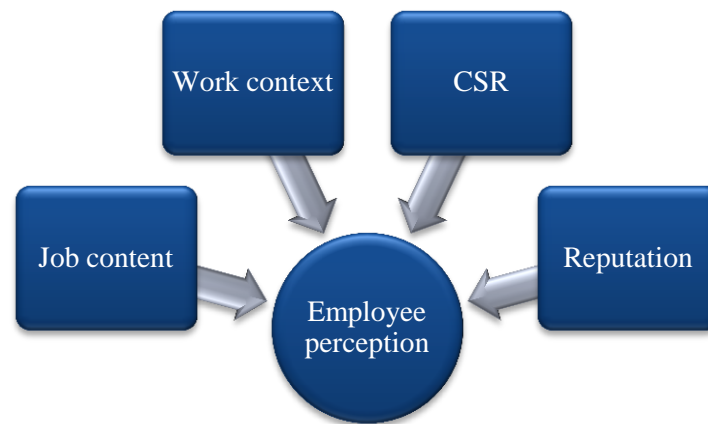


Figure 2-10: Broad Factors that Affect Employees' Perceptions

2.5.3.1 Job content

Job content attributes and their influence on the attraction perceptions of job seekers have been heavily examined in the HR, organisational behaviour (OB) and applied psychology literature, as they play a vital role in forming individuals' impressions in the labour market. Job attributes signal specific information about a particular aspect of the job before joining work. For example, opportunity to use abilities, challenging and interesting work and allowing freedom in doing the task are important job characteristics that predict employee attraction (e.g., Cable & Turban 2003; Gomes & Neves 2011; Judge & Bretz 1992; Powell 1984; Taylor & Bergmann 1987).

Conversely, job attributes also influence employees' intention to remain through organisational commitment and job satisfaction. For example, jobs that require learning and using new skills are predictors of organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Holtom et al. 2008; Mathieu & Zajac 1990; Meyer, Bobocel & Allen 1991; Meyer & Smith 2000; Meyer et al. 2002). Job characteristics in Hackman and Oldham's (1976) model (skill variety required in a job, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback), which were developed essentially for employees, are also relevant and effective in attracting job seekers

because offering a mix of attractive job attributes to employees leads them to feel comfortable in their roles, makes them feel more competent in what they do and increases their attachment to their employer (Allen & Meyer 1990).

2.5.3.2 Work context

The second factor that influences employees is work context. While job content attributes are directly related to an employee's job and responsibility, work context attributes refer to the context in which the job is performed. These attributes in the attraction stage signal information about the working conditions that surround the job and are controlled by the organisation. Examples of work context attributes that predict attraction perception include compensation package, job location, job security, competent and sociable co-workers, supportive supervisor, and opportunity to advance (e.g., Cable & Judge 1996; Judge & Bretz 1992; Powell 1984; Schwoerer & Rosen 1989; Turban, Campion & Eyring 1995; Turban & Keon 1993; Williams & Bauer 1994).

Similarly, several work context attributes have been examined as predictors for organisational commitment and job satisfaction. For example, compensation package, supervision, relations with co-workers and communication, as well as work values such as fair pay and fair treatment, were found to be relevant to employee retention (e.g., Bourhis & Mekkaoui 2010; Brammer, Millington & Rayton 2007; Breugh & Frye 2007; Gladstein 1984; Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner 2000; Lambert, Hogan & Barton 2001).

Until recently, less attention was given to characteristics at the organisational level, and particularly how these characteristics influence employees' intention to stay. Most research has focused on job attributes and work-environment-related characteristics, rather than exploring how perceptions of the organisation (as whole) can affect employees' employment intentions and decisions (Cardy, Miller & Ellis 2007). Recent research investigated two characteristics at the organisational level—CSR and corporate reputation—which were both found to be influential factors at the organisational level that affect the perceptions of job seekers and employees.

2.5.3.3 Corporate social responsibility

CSR has been found to be a strong predictor of organisational attraction in many studies (e.g., Albinger & Freeman 2000; Bauer & Aiman-Smith 1996; Belt & Paolillo 1982; Greening & Turban 2000; Luce, Barber & Hillman 2001). CSR has been defined as a ‘construct that emphasizes a company’s responsibilities to multiple stakeholders, such as employees and the community at large’ (Turban & Greening 1996, p. 658). As research has shown, CSR is a multi-dimensional construct that covers various aspects. Commonly, CSR has four dimensions:

- i. community, which reflects charities and activities that the organisation is involved in within the community
- ii. diversity, which includes the representation of genders and minorities in the workplace
- iii. employees relations, which deals with employees’ rights
- iv. natural environment, which reflects the considerations that an organisation gives to the environment (e.g., Graves & Waddock 1994; Sharfman 1996; Turban & Greening 1996).

According to Greening and Turban (2000), job seekers interpret the role of CSR in the community, the environment and with stakeholders (including internal employees) as signals that reflect the organisation’s values and norms. For example, producing an environmentally friendly and ‘green’ product signals an organisation’s positive stance towards the environment and society. This influences future workers’ perceptions of the organisation and its workplace as a potential employer in a way that makes it more attractive than companies that are less responsible (Bauer & Aiman-Smith 1996).

In addition, CSR activities influence the organisation’s employees, as CSR includes practices for the welfare of employees, their families and society (Devi 2009). For example, companies might contribute to the community in different ways, ranging from allowing employees to participate in small charities to introducing organisational practices and policies for social welfare and sustainability. Moreover, some companies encourage their staff to become involved in such activities, which are arranged by the employer to take place during work time. Employees assess the extent to which their employer is committed to its responsibility to the community and how it meets employees’ needs for belongingness in the community.

They feel proud when they work for an employer that makes a significant contribution to society, and it enhances their self-concept (Turker 2009).

Over the past few years, more attention has been given to CSR's advantages for companies, including employee retention. Brammer, Millington and Rayton (2007) examined the influence of employees' perceptions of external CSR on their employer, procedural justice in the company and the provision of staff training on organisational commitment. Interestingly, they reported that CSR practices have an equal influence (if not larger influence) than job satisfaction on employee commitment. Further, Turker (2009) investigated the influence of how employees perceive their employer in terms of social responsibility to employees, customers, the government and other stakeholders. She found that CSR practices for employees, customers and other stakeholders are the strongest predictors of organisational commitment. More recently, Ali et al. (2010) found a significant effect of CSR on both employees' commitment and organisational performance.

2.5.3.4 Corporate reputation

Building on previous discussions in Section 2.4.1, corporate reputation in the employment setting has a positive effect on employees' impressions. As a dimension of the organisational attractiveness construct, albeit distinct (Highhouse, Lievens & Sinar 2003), Carless and Imber (2007) found reputation to be a relevant factor in attracting employees across different industries. Research supports this relevance as a prediction relationship (such as Gatewood, Gowan & Lautenschlager 1993; Newbury, Gardberg & Belkin 2006), or as correlated (as in Brooks et al. 2003; Cable & Graham 2000; Collins 2007; Turban & Greening 1996). According to Cable and Turban (2003), corporate reputation provides potential employees with a reason to join the company, and it sends signals that they would be proud to work for a company that is well respected in the labour market.

Similarly, working for a company that has a distinctive reputation makes an employee feel proud to be a member of the company (Bear, Rahman & Post 2010). Despite the fact that researchers in different disciplines have argued about the role that corporate reputation plays in retaining employees, little empirical research has examined its effect on employees.

Recently, Alniacik et al. (2011) found that an employee's perception of his or her employer's reputation predicts intention to leave over and above both organisational commitment and job satisfaction. Such evidence supports the effect of corporate reputation on employee retention; however, this has been examined in the absence of other antecedents, such as CSR.

2.6. Chapter Summary

There has been increasing interest in understanding employer branding as a new approach for attracting and retaining employees. Despite such interest, the role of EBE in the labour market is still unclear and requires further investigation (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Collins & Kanar 2013). Knowledge from marketing theory is considered an appropriate foundation to provide a deeper understanding of the concept of employer branding (e.g., Ambler & Barrow 1996; Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Edwards 2010; Ewing et al. 2002). The core assumption behind this theoretical application is that job seekers confront the same situation as customers during the purchasing process (Cable & Turban 2001), and employees experience a similar situation to service consumers when they decide to continue with a provider.

While there have been attempts to develop models of EBE in the employment setting, extant research suffers from limitations. A lack of empirical evidence that supports the structure of proposed EBE limits further understanding of its role in the labour market. In addition, most adaptations in recent research have focused on functional and symbolic benefits, while experiential benefits have received a very limited focus, although they are important in the customer-brand relationship. As a result, previous research has failed to acknowledge the experiential benefits of the employer brand, which is important in order for EBE research to move forward. Further, employer branding research has focused on the external attractiveness of EBE, while employer brands and branding activities have targeted both job seekers and employees. Most importantly, despite the importance of having strong EBE in the labour market, it is still unclear whether the same antecedents influence both job seekers and employees similarly.

Drawing on discussions from the branding theory and employee attraction and retention literature, and following Maxwell and Knox (2009) recommendation of examining broad

factors, it appears that similar antecedents influence individuals' perceptions of employers. Such factors can be seen as common antecedents that drive perceptions of EBE. These factors are corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context. The initial framework that emerges from this chapter is presented in Figure 2-11. According to the figure, for both job seekers and employees, each factor is expected to affect EBE (through its elements). However, the outcome of EBE and its elements is more likely to differ between job seekers and employees. Job seekers will prefer organisations with stronger EBE, whereas employees will stay with the organisation that has strong EBE.

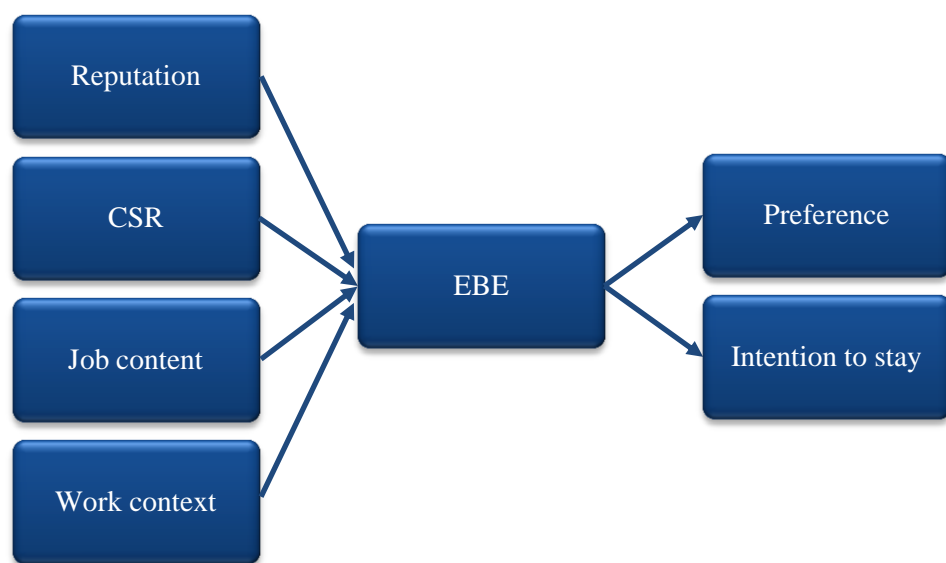


Figure 2-11: Initial Research Framework: Role of EBE in the Labour Market

In conclusion, this chapter merged the branding theory from marketing with HR knowledge in order to advance the understanding of employer branding. It highlighted gaps in the research and showed the potential for research to bridge such gaps and drive the notion of employer branding. Chapter 3 will integrate this understanding of branding from marketing to employer branding to develop an enhanced model of EBE from the individual's perspective. It will also present a conceptual framework for EBE that merges both perspectives of job seekers and employees and links the antecedents that are proposed to drive EBE elements.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Model and Hypotheses Development

3.1. Introduction

This chapter builds on discussions from Chapter 2 and aims to develop a unified research framework that advances the understanding of the role of EBE in the labour market. This chapter adapts the brand equity theory from marketing to develop a model for EBE in the employment setting. It then integrates the antecedents of corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context to EBE and its outcomes for attraction and retention. It also presents and justifies a set of hypotheses that examines the effect of the antecedents on EBE for both job seekers and employees.

3.2. From Product/Service Branding to Employer Branding

This thesis integrates knowledge of branding equity from the marketing field into the employer–employee context, as it provides the basis for a framework to understand what builds EBE for organisations in the labour market and, more importantly, how employees perceive it. Examining employment through a marketing lens, the attraction and retention of employees is similar to customer acquisition and retention, where a company offers value in a product/service to attract customers and make them become repeat purchasers. To be attractive, an employment customer must experience (or perceive) quality value in a service that the company is trying to sell—a job. This value can be a set of functional, symbolic and experiential benefits. While it is difficult to communicate and educate external customers about all features of a product, it is useful to use branding as an approach to communicate the features that a customer would experience with a company. Once a customer buys a product (or joins a service), the company continues the same level of care to ensure that the promised value is being delivered and to market the actual benefits to potential customers (Alshathry, Clarke & Goodman 2013). Indeed, internal customers (employees) differ from potential customers (job seekers) in having their actual experience with the company as an additional source of employer knowledge rather than relying only on impression. However, both job seekers and employees are influenced through similar packages of benefits from the employing company (Knox & Freeman 2006; Lievens & Highhouse 2003).

3.2.1 Employer brand equity and its elements

The application of brand equity theory to the employment setting moves the focus on attraction and retention from the influence of a single (or a small set) of organisational and/or job attributes to the evaluation of the whole organisation as an entity. The focus on the organisation offers a new approach to link the collective effects of, and interactions among, important factors in the employment relationship with HR outcomes (Edwards 2010). Importantly, it shows how individuals develop equity for an employer brand, as EBE takes a broad view of HR activity for employer branding and recognises its various effects on brand knowledge.

This thesis builds on the understanding of brand equity to generate a model for EBE in the context of employment, and thus develop a framework for employer–employee attraction and retention. In an employment context, EBE represents a cumulative evaluation of a package of benefits that reflects the value of being an employee of a company. The employer branding effort focuses on promoting this value internally (to employees) and externally (to job seekers) to make the organisation seem a desirable place to work (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004); hence, this study translates elements of brand equity into EBE in the sense that the employer is the branded product/service and the outcomes of branding efforts attract and retain employees of choice. As discussed in Chapter 2, four elements are required to build equity for an employer brand in the labour market: familiarity with the employer brand, employer brand associations, experience with the employer and employees' loyalty to the employer (Figure 3-1). Each element is adapted and explained in the next section.

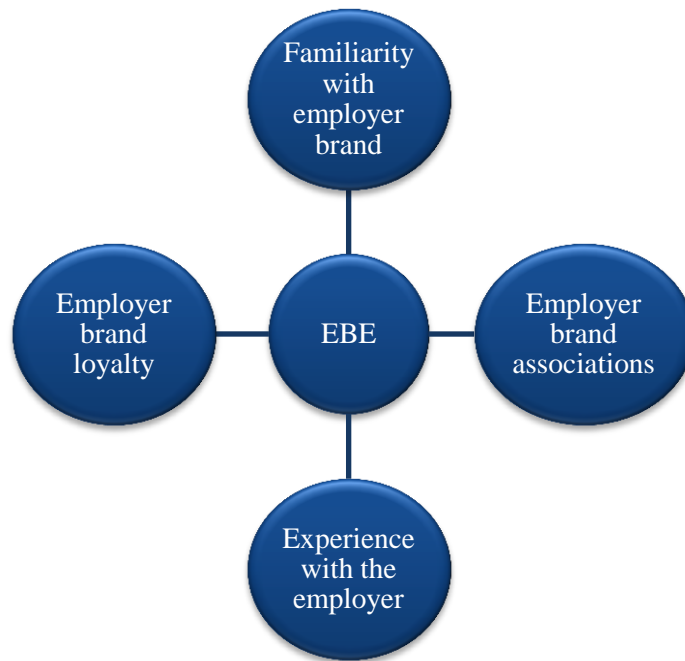


Figure 3-1: Elements of EBE from the Employment Customer’s Perspective

3.2.1.1 Familiarity with the employer brand

In a HR context, Cable and Turban (2001, p. 124) defined familiarity with the employer brand as ‘the level of awareness that a job seeker has of an organization’. It reflects the knowledge level of, and familiarity with, an employer and forms the basis for other elements of EBE. The organisation that the individual is not familiar with does not have value in mind. Familiarity with the company goes beyond the simple recognition of, or ability to recall, a company’s ‘name’; it represents deeper knowledge more than awareness. It is less likely that a job seeker will include an employer in the selection set because he or she could recognise the name or logo of that company. It involves vital investment in time and effort to make an employment decision, which requires greater need for information and less uncertainty (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). Employees need to learn about the employing company before joining. This lowers the perceived risk and helps form knowledge upon which they will make a thoughtful employment decision (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010).

In the employer branding literature, researchers tend to consider the role of familiarity with an employer in job seeker attraction; however, familiarity with the employer has received less emphasis in the context of internal employer branding. Moroko and Uncles (2008)

highlighted the importance of promoting employment benefits internally as a feature of a successful employer brand. However, such an internal role for familiarity in employer branding context has not yet been explored. Familiarity with the employer is an essential part of the employer–employee relationship, and previous research has acknowledged its role in relation to employees. Research has explored familiarity with the job, which implies knowledge of the required tasks in a job, and found that it has a significant effect on employees’ performance (e.g., Hackman & Oldham 1976). Further, familiarity with the company’s position among the competition can be an important aspect for employees, as it helps to build a general positive impression of the organisation (Maxwell & Knox 2009).

3.2.1.2 Employer brand associations

The employer brand associations element of an employer brand consists of anything that is linked in memory to a company and may contain the meaning of an employer brand for employees. It can be original, in terms of the source(s) upon which it has been built, or an inference from existing associations. For example, when a company goes through a downsizing process, employment customers (job seekers and employees) may develop the negative association that jobs with that company are not stable, which affects confidence in job security (Feldman 1995). Such activity is stored with other information in an individual’s mind, and together they form a generalised impression of the company. The concept of employer brand associations in this sense works as a repository for all evaluations of different aspects of an employer brand; thus, it may contain contradictory associations about a company (Brooks et al. 2003). For example, an individual may have a positive impression of a company’s financial performance (positive), but he or she may think it produces less environmentally friendly products (negative). Associations stored in an individual’s mind may not be related to employment, but they may heavily rely on employment-related associations, such as the extent to which the company cares about its members. In an employment relationship where employer brand associations are consistent and strong, they are expected to have a significant influence over other associations.

3.2.1.3 Experience with the employer

The third element of EBE is experience with the employer, which is the central element in an employment relationship. The presumption of experience with the employer as an element of EBE offers a new perspective by increasing the applicability of the branding theory to the HR field (Moroko & Uncles 2008). During an employee's experience within the organisation, value is exchanged between the employment parties. Therefore, employee experience in EBE refers to how an employee perceives the process of value exchange. It differs from employer brand associations in that it is employment-related and normally occurs inside the organisation through an interaction with the employer (delivery site in marketing terms), as benefits are exchanged with the employer.

Employee experience in this context can be defined as the internal and subjective response that an employee has to the value exchange process with the employer. For an employee, this implies functional, psychological and economic benefits, which together comprise the employee experience (Ambler & Barrow 1996; Edwards 2010). In this sense, the employee experience encompasses exchanged benefits within the relationship with the company, and in fact, employees who work with the company and in the environment where the exchange takes place are also an important determinant of the quality of experience. For example, a delay in an employee's promotion may lead to a negative employee experience. Therefore, the employee's experience with the employer relates to the actual experience rather than the intended, which requires effective management of the package of benefits and the context where the exchange takes place (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore 2007).

Consistent with the marketing view of the disparity between existing and potential consumers in terms of perception versus experience with a company, employees evaluate this element by experiencing the actual benefits and living the 'real employer brand', while job seekers only have an impression that is drawn from information they obtain prior to employment.

Information scarcity about the experience at the initial attraction stage may lead job seekers to infer experience characteristics from other available information in the labour market, such as the average salary that the company provides to its employees.

3.2.1.4 Employer brand loyalty

The element of loyalty to an employer brand is only applicable to individuals who have experienced the employer brand (i.e., employees), which they develop through their overall attitudes towards the employer. Similar to marketing brands, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) argued that brand loyalty in employment can also have behavioural and attitudinal components, and for them it is analogous to organisational commitment, which (Crewson 1997, p. 507) defined as ‘the strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization’. Thus, loyalty in employer branding can be reflected in various forms, including attaching self to, and caring for, a relationship with an employer. These four elements collectively form EBE and, similar to marketing brand equity, the elements of EBE interrelate.

3.3. A Conceptual Model for EBE

This section introduces and explains a conceptual model for EBE in the employment context (Figure 3-2). The EBE model goes beyond existing models by providing a conceptualisation that aims to reflect the employer brand relationship from the perspectives of job seekers and employees. Further, this conceptualisation incorporates and links elements of EBE to employer branding consequences, attraction and retention in order to provide a more comprehensive framework for the employment relationship. The research framework adopts Signalling Theory and Social Exchange Theory (SET) to explain the relationship between concepts in the framework. The first part shows how elements of EBE interrelate, and the second part incorporates the antecedents and consequences for job seekers and employees into the EBE model.

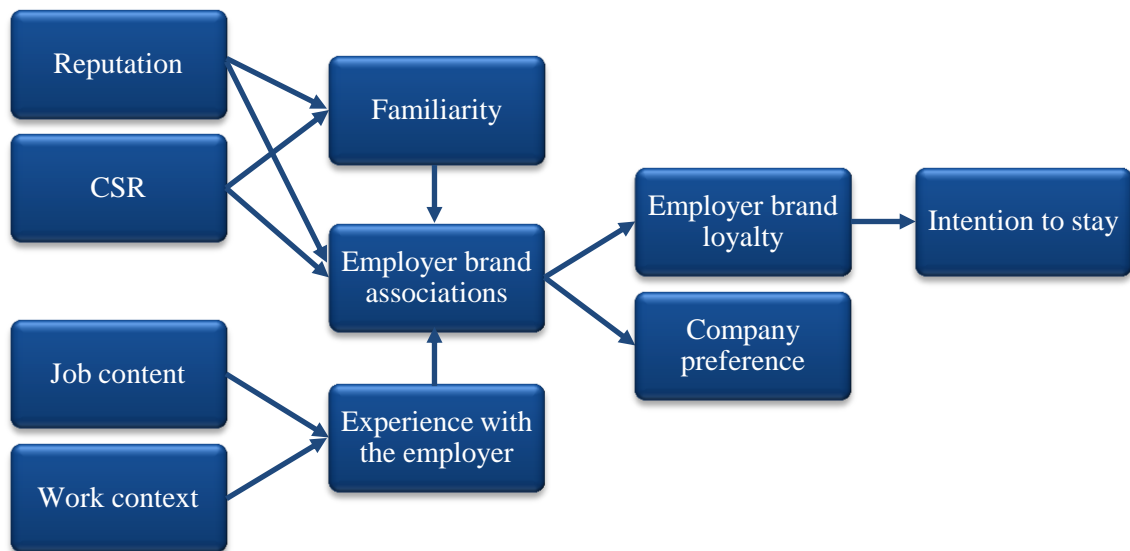


Figure 3-2: EBE Antecedents and Outcomes of EBE: Employment Customers' Perceptions

3.3.1 Relationships among the EBE elements

As a result of the limited information available in the labour market, job seekers use signals such as salary to formulate judgments about a potential employer. Consistent with the marketing literature, a certain level of familiarity is essential before establishing an employment relationship. Job seekers develop beliefs about a potential employer by seeking information about what the organisation will offer. Job seekers rarely have accurate information and perfect knowledge before joining an organisation, even though establishing an employment relationship has long-term consequences (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). Thus, job seekers use signals portrayed by employers to the labour market to build an impression regarding the organisation itself and what their experience will look like when they join. According to Signalling Theory, information gathered at this stage works as signals and is processed in order to form employer brand associations based on how that information is perceived.

While information that is available in the labour market can be positive or negative, more familiarity with an employer brand generally leads to stronger and clearer associations. The expected influence of familiarity with the employer on employer brand associations may explain the mixed findings in the literature (discussed in Chapter 2) in terms of the effect of familiarity with an employer on attractiveness. Some studies have found that familiarity has a

direct positive influence on employer attractiveness (e.g., Newburry, Gardberg & Belkin 2006), as information availability reduces the need for additional search efforts and lessens uncertainty in decision making (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). However, other studies have reported that these concepts are not clearly related (e.g., Brooks et al. 2003). One explanation for the contrary findings is that familiarity provides information (that is positive and negative in nature) upon which a person builds a belief. In this case, familiarity by itself does not lead to attractiveness; however, it builds an impression of the employer. Obviously, the EBE framework shows that the influence of familiarity with an employer brand is likely to be mediated by employer brand associations, which imply an employee's generalised attitude. If the familiarity is high but the overall evaluation of employer brand associations is negative, the employer is more likely to become unattractive.

Information that job seekers receive from the labour market can help in psychological contract creation. Thus, individuals develop early judgements towards future employment. Those judgements can be related to the explicit terms of the contract and/or the unwritten or implicit terms which form the psychological contracts (Rousseau 2001). However, it is important to note that at the time of hire, employees will not have complete representation regarding rewards and benefits expected from the employer (Lee et al. 2011). Employer branding activities, therefore, can play a vital role in creating a psychological contract prior to joining the organisation and shaping employee's expectation upon hire.

Signalling Theory also explains the influence of information on employees (internal employment customers) in terms of building knowledge. Employees learn through formal and informal communications within the organisation, as well as from external sources (such as financial analysis reports), which increases familiarity with the employer, including leadership qualities and commitment to society. This information builds upon employees' existing knowledge and influences the associations related to the employer brand they have. Accordingly, some existing associations are confirmed, whereas others are modified and new associations are created. Haines et al. (2012) pointed out three aspects of familiarity that are important for employees in relation to current employment; that is, familiarity with the external environment, the organisation strategy and the business process. Knowledge of these aspects provides employees with associations that contribute to the overall impression. Thus,

the generalised impressions of an employer can be established by increasing the information available to the labour market (Rynes & Cable 2003). Drawing on this:

H₁: Employees' (job seekers') familiarity with an employer brand is positively related to employer brand associations.

The nature of the employment relationship implies actual interaction between the parties to exchange benefits, which can be usefully explained by SET. The relationship between the employee and the employer is based on social exchange, as shown by (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro 2003). Graen and Scandura (1987, p. 182) described social exchange in employment as 'each party must offer something the other party sees as valuable and each party must see the exchange as reasonably equitable or fair'. SET describes two relevant dimensions in social exchange: process of exchange and content of exchanged benefits (Coyle-Shapiro, Shore & Taylor 2005). Researchers such as March and Simon (1958) have defined content of exchange as an 'inducements–contributions exchange', wherein an employee receives inducements according to the contributions to the employer. Specifically, scholars have included the social benefits (e.g., prestige) and economic benefits (e.g., salary) to be delivered to employees (Homans 1958). Considering the employment exchange from the perspective of employment customers, Edwards (2010, p. 7) adopted Ambler and Barrow (1996) classification of benefits and argued that the exchange comprises the 'totality of tangible and intangible reward features' offered to employees.

Employment benefits exchange occurs during an employee's experience with the employer. As one might think, employee experience is a complicated concept that job-related and organisational-related factors contribute to (Celani & Singh 2011). Effective management and the delivery of the packaged benefits lead to a high preference for the organisation and leverage employment-related beliefs about the organisation as a good place to work. The complexity of the employee experience results from continuous interactions between the two parties and within the benefits being delivered to employees. When an employee experiences a positive exchange process, it is more likely that his or her experience will contribute to building employer brand associations.

However, potential employees have no experience; thus, they only have impressions of what the experience will be like if they join. These impressions lead to expectations and employment-related associations and are added to employer brand associations. Positive perceptions of the employee experience create positive associations, and vice versa. Therefore, the powerful differentiation strategy in employer branding is through building positive employment associations, and the most influential approach is through the quality of the experience that employees have with the employer brand. Therefore:

H₂: Employees' (job seekers') perceptions of their experience with an employer are positively related to employer brand associations.

Employer brand associations differ in strength and importance, which affects the beliefs formed out of a relationship with an employer. Stronger associations will have a greater influence over weak ones, as they will be recalled more easily (Keller 1993). The strength of the associations depends on constant and stable associations with the employer brand. Over time, the exchange relationship between an employee and an employer evolves into loyalty if the employee consistently has a positive attitude towards the relationship (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). Therefore, strength of loyalty is highly dependent on the cumulative beliefs of employment brand associations that loyalty has been built upon. Only individuals who experience the employment benefits with the employer develop loyalty (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). Therefore:

H₃: Employees' perceptions of employer brand associations are positively related to loyalty to an employer brand.

3.3.2 Antecedents of EBE

Given these elements of EBE and how they relate to each other, it is important for theoretical integration and practical implications to understand how they are driven. While employee attraction and retention have been explored independently in the literature, the review of the two areas of research has revealed a common set of factors that influence employees' perceptions of the company before and after they join. These factors can be at the job and

organisational levels, and they include job- and work-related attributes, corporate reputation and CSR.

Research has suggested that corporate reputation is an important factor in forming employees' perceptions (Highhouse et al. 2009). The more reputable the company is, the more likely it is to be accessible to individuals in the labour market. This leads to more exposure, which increases familiarity with that company. For job seekers, corporate reputation sends signals regarding aspects of the employer, such as work environment and position in the market. Generally, to increase familiarity with an employer brand among job seekers, the company has to invest in its reputation in order to generate higher awareness. This has been captured to some extent in the recruitment literature. For example, Cable and Graham (2000), (Cable & Turban 2003) and Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager (1993) found that corporate reputation increases the level of knowledge of an employer, which helps job seekers to increase their knowledge of the organisation before they join.

In addition, companies with a strong corporate reputation are expected to receive more publicity compared to other companies (Cable & Turban 2003). Corporate reputation in this instance can be a critical source of knowledge for employees to learn how their employer is perceived externally by others, and therefore how they should perform in their job (Helm 2011). Overall, employees receive signals through increased exposure with the employer brand; thus, they can form employment brand associations with less investment in time and effort. Therefore, the first effect of corporate reputation on EBE elements is familiarity through increased exposure to the employer brand. Therefore:

H₄: Employees' (job seekers') perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.

In addition to the knowledge that corporate reputation provides to individuals in the labour market, job seekers use corporate reputation to evaluate the psychological benefits they receive from being a member of an organisation. As Cable and Turban (2003) argued, organisations with a well-recognised reputation have the advantage of being able to offer a workplace that evokes feelings of pride in both employees and future workers for being a

member of the company. Corporate reputation gives job seekers a reason to join and sends signals that they could be proud to become a member of a company that has a well-recognised reputation in the labour market. There is also research evidence to support the internal effect of corporate reputation on employees. Alniacik et al. (2011) found that the public's beliefs regarding an organisation affect employees' perceptions of the organisation as an employer. This was also established in the employer branding literature, where Maxwell and Knox (2009) found that employees consider their employer brand more attractive when it is well regarded by external stakeholders, as they link their image to the one of the organisation. Corporate reputation is almost always available for individuals in the labour market. Thus, individuals evaluate how the employer brand is regarded by other stakeholders and store such meanings and feelings associated with that company and its employer brand. A more prestigious status associated with the company increases feelings of pride and prestige gained by working for a company (psychological benefit). Thus, job seekers recognise promoted benefits and seek employment with that organisation as the result of processing signals of expected benefits. After joining the employer, employees consider that advantage part of the exchanged benefits with the organisation. Therefore, in this type of positive influence, corporate reputation can be considered an influential antecedent of employer brand associations. Therefore:

H₅: Employees' (job seekers') perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on employer brand associations.

Another antecedent of EBE is CSR activities. Similar to corporate reputation, CSR affects two elements of EBE. The first effect is on familiarity with the employer brand. CSR signals important information about the organisation's contribution to a community. Influential and multiple contributions from the organisation provide stakeholders, including individuals in the labour market, with information about how it acts in various directions. As a result, job seekers will learn more about a company's stance regarding its employees, customers, regulations, the natural environment and other stakeholders; thus, they will be able to process information in more beneficial ways to help make an employment decision. Luce, Barber and Hillman (2001) and Turban and Greening (1996) found that CSR is related to job seekers' familiarity with that company. CSR signals do not only affect external targets. Similar to job seekers, employees also learn from their employer's activities within a community, which

scholars consider part of the ‘internal outcomes’ of CSR (Aguinis & Glavas 2012). For instance, Hansen et al. (2011) found that workers with a longer tenure are more likely to be familiar with their CSR than workers with less service time, which highlights incremental knowledge gained through different organisational activities and outcomes.

The second way in which CSR influences perceptions of EBE is through employer brand associations. Research findings have been consistent regarding the effect of CSR contributions on employment customers. A key message that CSR signals to the labour market is related to organisational values, which positively influence attraction and retention outcomes (Brammer, Millington & Rayton 2007). In particular, job seekers interpret the CSR role with the community, stakeholders and the environment as indicators of the organisation’s values and norms (Turban & Greening 1996). It can be linked to memories of a ‘doing-good-deeds’ company and a ‘society helper’. These contributions also give an organisation’s employees the feeling that their contribution to their employer will be reflected in the community and, in turn, will enhance their self-satisfaction (Edwards 2010). A company’s efforts in various directions, such as the community, workplace diversity, natural environment and employee relations, will make individuals feel proud to work for that company and to belong to an employer that makes a significant contribution to society; this in turn enhances their self-concept (Turker 2009). For example, Aguilera et al. (2007) stated that ‘an organization’s social actions (positive or negative) provide employees with critical information to use in judging the fairness of the organization’. Therefore, it is expected that the role of CSR in the employer branding context is to build familiarity with the employer and employer brand associations. Therefore:

H₆: Employees’ (job seekers’) perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.

H₇: Employees’ (job seekers’) perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on employer brand associations.

Past research has extensively examined the influence of a wide range of job-related attributes on both job seekers and employees. It has consistently been reported that job-related attributes

play a vital role in developing potential employees' initial attraction perceptions of an employer and in driving psychological states that lead employees to continue working for the company. For Edwards (2010), employee experience comprises a complex set of attributes mainly related to psychological, economic and functional benefits. Given that an employment relationship is an exchange of benefits, recalling traditional customer experience suggests that experience is driven by interactions with the employment provider or by 'touch points' such as other employees (Mosley 2007). However, the complexity of the employee experience with the employer results not only from the simultaneous effect of work context elements, but also from the type of job that the employee performs. Thus, the job content is not only the employee's contribution to the organisation, but also part of the benefits that the employer offers.

From the SET perspective, two important dimensions relate to the exchange: job content, which in this case is a mutual contribution between the employment parties, and the context where the exchange takes place. Job content encompasses the characteristics of the job itself. Initially, job tasks form the core employee contribution in the employer–employee relationship that SET theorists consider part of employees' exchanged benefits with the organisation. However, the experience of meaningful work, responsibility and feedback gives the worker critical psychological benefits in relation to their experience with the employer (Hackman & Oldham 1976).

Further, the means of exchange occurs within a job context, which in this instance is more about what the organisation offers to employees to facilitate the value exchange (Cardy, Miller & Ellis 2007). For example, having supportive co-workers helps employees to maximise their contributions to the organisation and simultaneously makes their experience more attractive. Similarly, an enjoyable work environment makes the value exchange experience more attractive. This classification of job- and work-related attributes provides practical integration to the EBE model because it indicates a clear link to quality of experience with the employer and makes its drivers more manageable. The existence of an attractive job and an attractive work context is essential. An interesting and challenging job in an unpleasant environment does not support an attractive experience.

In contrast, both job content and job context attributes send signals to job seekers regarding the type of job they will do and the context in which they will work. These job- and work-related signals determine the perception of their experience with the employer. Conversely, employees directly experience an exchange of benefits with the employer by performing tasks assigned and contributions required within a workplace context that supports the exchange process and makes them perceive the experience with the employer positively. For example, challenging tasks give employees a feeling of responsibility and a sense that the work they do is recognised and worthwhile, which has a positive effect on their experience. Therefore:

H₈: Employees' (job seekers') perceptions of job content are positively related to experience with the employer.

H₉: Employees' (job seekers') perceptions of work context are positively related to experience with the employer.

The previously mentioned factors affect how an employment customer perceives a company in an employment setting, which appears to be analogous to brand features in a marketing context. Thus, these factors would work as antecedents for EBE. For certain contexts, some factors are more influential than others and can be evaluated differently by different groups (Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). Therefore, it is important to incorporate some factors that may moderate the relationship and at the same time work as a base for segmenting the labour market. Common variables used in marketing include demographic variables such as age, gender and qualification (Moroko & Uncles 2009). In the employment context, the variables include length of work experience and tenure (Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). In addition, as the type of industry in which the company operates may affect the perceptions of employer brands (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010), the type of industry (product or service) can be considered a moderating variable in the EBE context. Although the previous discussion may result in identical relationships for both employment customers, the desired outcome of EBE for job seekers is to generate a preference for the company as an employer, and for employees, the desired outcome is to stay.

3.3.3 Consequences of EBE

Given that the internal customers of employer branding efforts are employees, it is essential to link EBE to employee retention. Familiarity with an employer brand for employees reflects their level of knowledge of their company and its position in the market. During the actual experience with the employer, employees develop and make use of the knowledge they possess regarding different aspects of business, the external environment and employment, as well as other associations that are of value to employees when evaluating the employer brand that they have chosen. The overall impression of working for a company that delivers attractive employment benefits as part of the social exchange evolves over time into loyalty to that employer (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). More attractive benefits that are delivered over what an employee has given leads to stronger equity for the employer brand; thus, employees are more likely to remain with their current employer when they feel loyal (Moroko & Uncles 2008). When loyalty to an employer is established, it is less likely that the employee will move on to another company. According to SET theory, this is an essential part of the social exchange relationship (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). Therefore:

H₁₀: Employees' loyalty to an employer brand has a positive effect on intention to stay.

The second consequence of EBE is employee attraction, which is the outcome of a company's external branding efforts and is driven by EBE. At the initial attraction stage, information about a company is usually limited, and in most situations, it is difficult for job seekers to assess an employer (Srivastava & Bhatnagar 2010). Thus, job seekers will rely on available knowledge in the labour market about choices they are familiar with, such as CSR. The level of familiarity will increase the chance of a company being included in the consideration set. Insufficient and inconsistent information will have a negative effect on employer brand associations, as it may increase the perceived risk of choosing an unknown company (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). Thus, at this stage, employer brands provide signals to prospective staff and minimise the perceived risk by exhibiting associations and quality of experience. The more favourable and strong the unique associations linked to an employer brand, the more likely that they will build stronger EBE among job seekers. This assumption provides an understanding of contradictory findings in the literature, in which the influence of familiarity on attraction has been mixed (Brooks et al. 2003). In this framework, familiarity does not

affect attractiveness directly, but through employer brand associations provided to potential employees. Positive associations are more likely to generate higher attraction to an employer brand. Essentially, the quality of the perceived experience that a company offers is more difficult to evaluate at this stage, although some factors, such as salary, are easy to compare. Thus, unrelated to employment, signals may be inferred to interpret job- and work-related attributes (Moroko & Uncles 2008). Overall, more attractive associations through familiarity and attractive experience build stronger equity for an employer brand, which ultimately leads to higher preference in the labour market. Therefore:

H₁₁: Job seekers' perceptions of employer brand associations have a positive effect on company preference.

Table 3-1 summarises the hypotheses presented in this chapter. As these hypotheses will be tested from two perspectives (except H₃, H₁₀ and H₁₁), each is divided into 'a' for the employee's perspective and 'b' for the job seeker's perspective.

Table 3-1: Summary of Study Hypotheses

Number		Hypothesis
H ₁	a	Employees' familiarity with an employer brand is positively related to employer brand associations.
	b	Job seekers' familiarity with an employer brand is positively related to employer brand associations.
H ₂	a	Employees' perceptions of their experience with an employer are positively related to employer brand associations.
	b	Job seekers' perceptions of their experience with an employer are positively related to employer brand associations.
H ₃		Employees' perceptions of employer brand associations are positively related to loyalty to an employer brand.
H ₄	a	Employees' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.
	b	Job seekers' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.
H ₅	a	Employees' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on employer brand associations.
	b	Job seekers' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on employer brand associations.
H ₆	a	Employees' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.
	b	Job seekers' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.
H ₇	a	Employees' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on employer brand associations.
	b	Job seekers' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on employer brand associations.
H ₈	a	Employees' perceptions of job content are positively related to experience with the employer.
	b	Job seekers' perceptions of job content are positively related to experience with the employer.
H ₉	a	Employees' perceptions of work context are positively related to experience with the employer.
	b	Job seekers' perceptions of work context are positively related to experience with the employer.
H ₁₀		Employees' loyalty to an employer brand has a positive effect on intention to stay.
H ₁₁		Job seekers' perceptions of employer brand associations have a positive effect on company preference.

3.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter adapted the branding theory from the marketing field into an employment context in order to develop an EBE model. The model incorporates three elements for external employer branding: familiarity with the employer brand, employer brand associations and experience with the employer. In addition, employer brand loyalty is a fourth element for

individuals who are currently employed. The chapter then explored the relationship among the interrelated elements of EBE. Following this, four antecedents were predicted to drive EBE for employment customers, job seekers and employees. This study focuses on different outcomes for each—company preference for job seekers and intention to stay for employees. The chapter also developed 11 hypotheses that explain the role of EBE in the labour market and examined whether antecedents for EBE have the same influence. Chapter 4 will focus on the research method used to conduct the research, including study design, process of developing the research instrument, sampling decisions and data analysis strategy.

Chapter 4: Research Design

4.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the steps followed by the research design. It begins by presenting the study's research objectives and questions, as described in earlier chapters, and links these objectives and questions to the research approach of the study. It then provides an explanation of the research method and a justification of the decisions made. It also sets out the process of instrument development and the steps undertaken to validate the instruments, including seeking experts' opinions, pre-testing and initial analyses. Following this, it details the data collection procedure and describes sampling related decisions. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the data collection and analysis strategy.

4.2. Research Objectives and Questions

As discussed in the literature review chapter, brands are essential to marketing products and customer service. Marketing aims at building and maintaining the value of a brand to ensure that it is attractive to both potential and existing customers (Keller & Kotler 2006). It communicates the benefits and features of a product to potential consumers and offers existing customers reasons to repurchase (Chang & Liu 2009; Hellier et al. 2003). Studies have shown that existing customers rely heavily on their direct experience of a brand and evaluations of their actual experience with a brand as opposed to potential customers who rely on brand communication (Berry 2000). Thus, knowing the antecedents of brand equity can theoretically and practically assist marketing efforts to understand what drives the value of a brand in the minds of potential and existing customers (Martensen & Grønholdt 2010). In the context of employer branding, this theoretical link between EBE antecedents and outcomes remains unclear and the practice is limited to trial and error. To enhance our understanding of the concept of EBE in the labour market, it is important that employer branding research is not developed in isolation of theoretical foundations of extant HR knowledge.

By integrating the literature on HR and marketing, this thesis aims to develop an EBE incorporative model that brings influential factors from the HR context and links these factors

to the outcomes of company preference and intention to stay. Similar to marketing branding, it is assumed that employer brands play a similar role in the labour market as brands do in the consumer market. Thus, individuals' perceptions of the labour market will be influenced by the EBE of a company. EBE, both as an adapted concept from marketing and in the service context, is a multi-dimensional construct that consists of the following three elements: i) familiarity with employer brand; ii) employer brand associations; and iii) experience with the employer. There is also an additional fourth element for employees: iv) employer brand loyalty. Drawing on HR literature, four factors are proposed to work as antecedents of EBE, namely, corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context.

As set out in the previous chapters, the three research questions are:

- Q. 1 What are the elements of EBE?
- Q. 2 What are the key antecedents driving elements of EBE?
- Q. 3 Do the same antecedents influence EBE for job seekers and employees?

Given that no empirical model exists for EBE, the first research question (Q.1) represents an important preliminary stage of the research. It examines the extent to which branding theory from marketing can also contribute to the emerging concept of employer branding. It primarily tests whether marketing brand equity elements are applicable and can measure EBE in a HR setting. The second research question (Q.2) aims to identify potential antecedents of EBE elements. In answering this question, an extensive review of the literature on employee attraction and retention was conducted to identify any potential factors that have found to affect the views and attitudes of individuals in the labour markets towards employers. This step followed the recommendation of Maxwell and Knox (2009) to examine broad factors when researching employer brands and resulted in the following four potential antecedents for EBE elements being identified: corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context. A further step was required to examine the proposed impact of those antecedents on EBE elements for both job seekers and employees. Thus, the research third question (Q.3) compares the impact of EBE antecedents in building EBE to attract job seekers and retain employees. Resultantly, a separate examination of the full models was required for both targets of employer branding (i.e., job seekers and employees).

4.3. Research Approach

The purpose and nature of any research determines which approach is the most appropriate for the conduct of the research study. Given that this study explores the role of EBE in the labour market, it adopts a deductive approach by building on an existing theory of branding (Gray 2009). The role of brand equity in conventional marketing literature guided the process of proposing how the research concepts interrelate. From there, a testable conceptual framework was established, and sets of hypotheses were developed, to quantify and examine the impact of EBE antecedents on EBE elements for both job seekers and employees.

It is essential that research constructs are operationalised to be quantifiable and useable in field data collection (Edmondson & McManus 2007). Operationalisation can be achieved in a variety of ways, including using existing scales in the literature in their current forms, adapting existing scales for a relevant context and/or establishing new measurement scales (Scherbaum & Maede 2009). Whatever operationalisation steps are undertaken, prior any research being conducted, methodologists must develop rigorous guidelines to ensure that scale measurements are robust and valid (Schutt 2009). To quantify an effect in empirical research, a large sample should be employed. Researchers and statisticians recommend ‘rules of thumb’ to ensure accurate and generalisable research outcomes. It is essential that social researchers identify the unit of analysis in their studies; that is, ‘the level of social life on which a research question is focused’ (Schutt 2009, p. 191). The present study focuses on employer brands and, thus, the unit of analysis is ‘organisation’.

4.4. Research Hypotheses

As previously stated, this study builds on the assumption that in marketing employer brands have similar roles to product and service brands. In this respect, two sets of testable hypotheses were developed to answer the research questions. The first set of hypotheses aims to identify how elements of EBE interrelate. Table 4-1 lists the hypotheses that examine relationships between elements of EBE. Hypothesis 1 (H₁) and Hypothesis 2 (H₂) are relevant to both job seekers and employees; however, as loyalty to an employer brand is relevant only

to those with an employment relationship with an employer, Hypothesis 3 (H₃) applies only to current employees.

Table 4-1: Proposed Relationships Between EBE Elements

Hypotheses		Target
H ₁	Familiarity with an employer brand is positively related to employer brand associations	Job seeker and employee
H ₂	Experience with an employer is positively related to employer brand associations	
H ₃	Employer brand associations is positively related to loyalty to an employer brand	Employee

The second set of hypotheses (see Table 4-2) aims to provide an answer for the second research question; that is, what are the key antecedents driving elements of EBE? It examines the impact of the antecedents of EBE (i.e., corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context). The hypotheses apply to both targets of employer branding. Thus, by further analysis and comparison of the data between job seekers and employees, these hypotheses also provide a basis to answer the third research question.

Table 4-2: Proposed Antecedents of EBE

Hypotheses		Target
H ₄	Corporate reputation has a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand	Job seeker and employee
H ₅	Corporate reputation has a positive effect on employer brand associations	
H ₆	Corporate social responsibility has a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand	
H ₇	Corporate social responsibility has a positive effect on employer brand associations	
H ₈	Job content is positively related to experience with the employer	
H ₉	Work context is positively related to experience with the employer	

The third set of hypotheses creates a complete picture of the role of EBE by linking the antecedents and elements of EBE to the outcomes. Hypothesis 1 aims to link elements of EBE with employees' intention to stay at an organisation. Hypothesis 2 examines the external role of EBE elements in attracting future employees. Table 4-3 sets out these hypotheses.

Table 4-3: Impact of EBE on Targets of Employer Branding

Hypotheses		Target
H ₁₀	Loyalty to an employer brand has a positive effect on intention to stay	Employee
H ₁₁	Employer brand associations have a positive effect on company preference	Job seeker

4.5. Research Method

A cross-sectional design comprising of a survey technique was used in this study. The collection of data from participants on one occasion provided sufficient information to examine the hypotheses and answer each of the research questions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson 2008). Given that surveys fulfil most research needs, including in relation to attitudinal research problems, the use of surveys is a very common in both organisational and marketing studies (Podsakoff & Organ 1986; Rindfleisch et al. 2008). Surveys are logical, deterministic, general, parsimonious and specific and conform to the requirements of scientific research. In light of these benefits, the survey technique was selected for use in this study. Additionally, surveys are versatile, enable the collection of demographic data and provide a measurement of a participant's perception towards an employer (Walter 2010). Compared to other techniques like experiment, surveys are also efficient for use in large-scale data collection, save time and reduces costs (de Leeuw, Hox & Dillman 2008). Further, in accordance with the requirements for the empirical testing of research hypotheses, surveys allow advanced statistical analysis techniques to be conducted (Rea & Parker 2005).

Despite its many advantages, the survey technique is not without limitations. First, it provides only a snapshot of data at a specific point in time, which can limit causality inference and increase common method variance (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Second, there is a chance that participants may misinterpret survey questions, resulting in the collection of misleading data (Walter 2010). However, in the context of this study, the survey technique was deemed sufficient to provide the information needed to meet the objectives of the study (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson 2008). Additionally a pilot test was conducted to minimise any disadvantages of self-administered surveys.

The HR literature shows that a common research technique in employee attraction studies is to provide participants with a fictitious company or scenario and ask them to make evaluations (for example Bourhis & Mekkaoui 2010). For the purposes of the present study, however, this technique would limit the results as it would not allow the familiarity of participants with companies to be identified, which, previous research has shown, is vital in the formation of employee's attitudes towards an employer (e.g., Brooks et al. 2003). Further, one study suggests Cable and Turban (2003) that research on fictitious organisations cannot be not generalised to real practice. Additionally, in terms of employee evaluations, experience with an employer is a cumulative practice that cannot be measured by asking questions about a company that does not exist.

Interestingly, researchers tend to use real companies when asking job seekers for their evaluations of a company. This enables participants to feel more confident in assessing the potential employer and also assists the researcher to obtain findings that can be more readily generalised (Cable & Turban 2003). Conversely, researchers tend to ask employed participants to evaluate their present employer. This appears to provide more reliable evidence in testing research models (e.g., Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013; Maxwell & Knox 2009).

4.5.1 Online survey

This study opted to use an online survey for a variety of reasons. First, online surveys enable researchers to collect data from different geographic locations, at flexible times and for lower costs (Rea & Parker 2005). Second, they offer a wide range of features in relation to controlling the look and feel of the survey. Third, online surveys enable researchers to design more attractive questions, which increases response rates and survey completion, and also allow researchers to minimise the pitfalls of long surveys (Gray 2009). Fourth, online surveys can be designed with features that ensure responses are recorded in the correct form; for example, surveys can offer options that minimise no-responses and missing values and limit answers to certain choices (de Leeuw, Hox & Dillman 2008). Further, for studies that are required to reach a specific group of targeted participants, such as job seekers, web-based surveys provide researchers with access to specialised populations (Rea & Parker 2005).

Online surveys, however, do not allow researchers to easily follow-up with participants and, in some cases, questions can be misunderstood and there is no opportunity to correct such misunderstandings (Zikmund et al. 2010). Thus, the importance of clear and understandable questions is paramount and was subject to in-depth consideration at the pre-test stage of research in this study. Another concern for online surveys is that the sample may not be representative of the population of interest as this population may not have access to the Internet, this in turn may affect the generalisability of the findings of the study (Walter 2010). To minimise the negative impact of online surveys and ensure that the sample of participants was representative, this study engaged a panel company to undertake the main data collection. In a study that adopts a deductive approach, it is important to ensure that concepts of interest are operationalised to confirm their occurrence before research takes place (Nachmias & Nachmias 1996). Next section elaborates on this step for the present study.

4.6. Development of Research Instrument

To allow quantitative analysis to be undertaken, a valid and reliable scale must appropriately measure each construct in the conceptual model (Worthington & Whittaker 2006). Following the recommendations of Churchill (1979) and Hinkin (1995), all constructs examined in this study used multi-item measures. The study adopted two approaches in developing the research instrument (Scherbaum & Maede 2009). First, existing scales that were found to be valid and reliable in previous research were used. This approach was followed for the four antecedents of EBE (i.e., corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context), familiarity with the employer and also for the two dependent variables in the model (i.e., the constructs of company preference and intention to stay). Second, where a scale did not exist, as was the case for the three elements of EBE (employer brand associations, experience with the employer and loyalty to employer brand), valid and reliable marketing scales were adapted to reflect the constructs of EBE.

4.6.1 Measurement scales of EBE antecedents

As stated above, this study used a number of scales established by previous research. However, scales for corporate reputation, CSR, job content, work context, intention to stay

and company preference were drawn from existing research. Each scale is discussed in further detail below.

Corporate Reputation: Studies in the HR field use two methods to operationalise corporate reputation. The first method measures corporate reputation using industry reputation reports, such as *Fortune Annual* reports. This method was common in earlier research (Collins & Han 2004; Turban & Cable 2003); however, such reports were predominantly based on financial performance and only assess reputation from the point of view of executives (Cable & Graham 2000). The second method measures corporate reputation from a stakeholder’s perspective (i.e., employees’ perspective). This method was adopted by Cable and Turban (2003) in the attraction context and by Helm (2011) in the context of employee retention. The present study adopted the second method to measure the impact of corporate reputation on EBE from the point of view of employment customers (Cable & Turban 2001). Table 4-4 sets out the four items that comprise the corporate reputation scale used in this study, these items were adopted from the studies of Highhouse, Brooks and Gregarus (2009) and Cable and Graham (2000).

Table 4-4: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Corporate Reputation

	Item	Source
1	In general, this company is among the best in the industry	Highhouse, Brooks and Gregarus (2009)
2	In general, this company is widely admired and respected	
3	In general, this company has an excellent reputation	Cable and Graham (2000)
4	In general, people believe that this company is reputable	

CSR: Similar to corporate reputation, the CSR construct has been measured in the literature in two ways; that is, through the use of reports such as those used by Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini & Co (KLD) (e.g., Luce, Barber & Hillman 2001) and through responses to self-report questions (e.g., Ali et al. 2010). The present study followed the latter approach to measure CSR, on the basis that the effect of CSR on employees is informed by their perceptions of the CSR activities of an organisation. The CSR scale adopted by this study comprised of three items, drawn from Turker (2009), and covers the contributions of an organisation to social and non-social stakeholders (Table 4-5).

Table 4-5: Items Used to Measure the Construct of CSR

	Item	Source
1	This company participates in activities that aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment	Turker (2009)
2	This company implements special programs to minimise its impact on the natural environment	
3	This company contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well being of society	

Job Content describes the particular job that an employee performs (or, in the case of job seekers, would perform). Various measures have been used in the literature of employer branding. In this study, the focus was on job characteristics, including challenging work, a variety of activities that require the learning of new skills and allow for the use of different skills and job freedom. The questions adopted have been widely used in employer research (such as Berthon, Ewing & Hah 2005; Highhouse et al. 1999; Knox & Freeman 2006). In this study, the job content scale comprised of five items drawn from Gomes and Neves (2011) and Carless and Imber (2007) (see Table 4-6).

Table 4-6: Items used to Measure the Construct of Job Content

	Item	Source
1	My job allows me to use different skills	Gomes and Neves (2011)
2	My job includes a variety of activities	
3	My job allows me the freedom to do the job in my own way	
4	My job requires learning new technical skills	
5	My job is challenging work	Carless and Imber (2007)

Work Context: This construct covers a wide range of contextual characteristics that surround the jobs of any employee. Some characteristics have been found to be common in employer branding research (e.g., Berthon, Ewing & Hah 2005; Bonaiuto et al. 2013; Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). The focus for this construct was on support at work (from co-workers and supervisors), work location and conditions, job security, opportunity to learn and clarity of company policies. These factors have also been widely examined in HR research and reflect the context in which employees work. In this study, the work context scale included seven items from Turban, Eyring and Campion (1993), Powell (1984) and Schwoerer and Rosen (1989) (see Table 4-7).

Table 4-7: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Work Context

Item		Source
1	Supportive supervisor	Turban, Eyring and Campion (1993)
2	Supportive co-workers	
3	Appropriate working conditions	
4	Desirable location	
5	Having job security	
6	Opportunity to learn	Powell (1984)
7	This company has clear policies	Schwoerer and Rosen (1989)

4.6.2 Measurement scales of EBE outcomes

Company Preference: The dependent variables in the conceptual model; that is, company preference and intention to stay, have been widely used in HR and employer branding research. As detailed in Table 4-8, items that measured company preference were drawn from existing scales. This scale aimed to measure company preference from job seekers’ perspective and comprised of three items from Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar (2003).

Table 4-8: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Company Preference

Item		Source
1	For me, this company would be a good place to work	Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar (2003)
2	This company is attractive to me as a place of employment	
3	A job at this company is very appealing to me	

Intention to Stay: In terms of EBE internal outcome, the intention to stay construct included three items that had also been developed and used in previous research. Items were taken from King and Grace (2009) and Cunningham, Fink and Sagas (2005) to measure the intention of employees to stay with their current employer (see Table 4-9). An early version of the scale included the item ‘I would turn down an offer from another company if it comes tomorrow’; however, this item was removed from the final scale based on the reliability analysis of pilot study.

Table 4-9: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Intention to Stay

	Item	Source
1	I plan to work at my present employer for as long as possible	King and Grace (2010)
2	I plan to be with the company I work for, five years from now	
3	I do not intend to pursue alternative employment in the foreseeable future	Cunningham, Fink and Sagas (2005)

4.6.3 Operationalisation and measurement of EBE elements

Since the elements of EBE were initially marketing concepts, existing scales had to be adapted to ensure that they were appropriate measures of the constructs in an employment settings (Scherbaum & Maede 2009). As stated above, EBE is a multi-dimensional construct that has four elements: familiarity with the employer, employer brand associations, experience with the employer and employer brand loyalty.

Measures for familiarity with employer were adopted from previous research as these measures were deemed a sufficient measurement of the familiarity construct. However, to develop appropriate measures for the three other constructs, the study adapted brand equity scales from marketing. In doing so, guidelines were established from an understanding of the marketing nature of each construct and its application to the HR context. Accordingly, references to the word ‘brand’, which in the marketing context represents the branded service/product, were changed to ‘company’, which represents the employment provider and the branded entity in employer branding (Ambler & Barrow 1996; Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). The guidelines also changed references to ‘customers’ to ‘employees’, as employees were deemed to be targets of employer branding (Cable & Turban 2001; Ewing et al. 2002). Finally, in relation to the core products/services of a company, the guidelines changed references in marketing questions about ‘core values’ to address ‘employment experience’ in the context of employment relationships (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Edwards 2010).

The adaptation process is not novel. Indeed, Lievens and Highhouse (2003), and Lievens, Hoye and Schreurs (2005) similarly adapted measurement scales from marketing literature to the employment context to measure employer brand image. Van Hoye and Lievens (2009) also adapted source expertise of WoM in a recruitment context. However, as the EBE

elements in this study had only been newly operationalised to the employment context, further steps were taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the new measurement scales (see section 4.8. below, which discusses instrument validation).

Familiarity with the employer: The scale for this construct comprised of five items from a study of Newburry, Gardberg and Belkin (2006) in the HR context that measure the level of knowledge that an employee has in terms of five different employment and non-employment aspects. The items are set out in Table 4-10.

Adopting existing scales, which have proven to be reliable, is useful; however, careful revisions to such scales need to be made to ensure that the items are clear and appropriate in the context of the new study (Scherbaum & Maede 2009). Each item or question of a survey should assess only one aspect or characteristic. Accordingly, this study elected to split a question from Newburry, Gardberg and Belkin’s (2006) study that went to both leadership and vision into two separate questions (Hinkin 1998).

Table 4-10: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Familiarity with Employer

Item		Source
1	Vision	Newburry, Gardberg and Belkin (2006)
2	Leadership	
3	Workplace environment	
4	Responsibility and commitment to society	
5	Position in the market	

Employer Brand Associations: This construct defines feelings and meanings that are linked to the employing company. For this construct, five items measured the overall impression of individuals towards employers. The items were adapted from Martensen and Grønholdt (2010), Matzler, Bidmon and Grabner-Kräuter (2006), Punniyamoorthy and Raj (2007) and Aaker (1996). Table 4-11 presents the items before and after adaptation.

Table 4-11: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Employer Brand Associations

		Item	Source
1	Before	For this (brand), I have positive personal feelings	Martensen and Grønholdt (2010)
	After	I have positive personal feelings about this company	
2	Before	I am proud to use (brand)	
	After	I feel proud of being an employee of this company	
3	Before	This (brand) gives me pleasure	Matzler, Bidmon and Grabner-Kräuter (2006)
	After	I enjoy working for this company	
4	Before	Using this (brand) will improve the way I am perceived	Punniyamorthy and Raj (2007)
	After	Working for this company improves the way I am perceived	
5	Before	I admire the (brand) organisation	Aaker (1996)
	After	I admire this company	

Experience with the employer: For this construct, the adaptation considered the interactive nature of the employer-employee relationship. Thus, items for this construct were adapted from marketing service-dominant logic, in which the core value of the company is experienced. The study adapted four items from Martensen and Grønholdt (2010), Bamert and Wehrli (2005) and Netemeyer et al. (2004). Table 4-12 shows the items before and after adaptation.

Table 4-12: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Experience with the Employer

		Item	Source
1	Before	This (brand) lives up to its promises	Martensen and Grønholdt (2010)
	After	This company lives up to its promises	
2	Before	Compared to alternative banks (brand)'s products and services are of a high quality	
	After	Compared to others, this company offers a very distinctive employment experience	
3	Before	(Brand) stands for impressive customer service	Bamert and Wehrli (2005)
	After	This company has an impressive work environment	
4	Before	The company that markets (brand) really cares about its customers	Netemeyer et al. (2004)
	After	This company really cares about its employees	

Employer Brand Loyalty: This construct aimed to measure the attitudinal side of loyalty. Specifically, the items measure employees' attachment to employing organisations. Two

items were adapted from Yoo and Donthu (1997) and Martensen and Grønholdt (2010) and one item was used from Cho and Johanson (2008). Table 4-13 sets out the three items before and after adaptation.

Table 4-13: Items Used to Measure the Construct of Employer Brand Loyalty

Item			Source
1	Before	I would consider myself as loyal to (brand)	Yoo and Donthu (1997)
	After	I would consider myself as loyal to this company	
2	Before	It is important for me to maintain the relationship with (brand) in the future	Martensen and Grønholdt (2010)
	After	It is important for me to maintain the relationship with this company in the future	
3	From	I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this company	Cho and Johanson (2008)

Measuring the perceptions and attitudes of individuals usually requires that a position be given in relation to a statement (or question); however, ‘yes or no’ scales or three-point answers are not sensitive enough to capture various levels of perception (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson 2008). Thus, using a scale with more intervals of difference assists participants to indicate what level best reflects their attitude. Likert scales offer this feature and are commonly employed in organisational studies. Likert scales are useful in producing scaled data of equal intervals. Further, such scales allow for various statistical techniques, such as factor analysis, to be applied (Hinkin 1998).

Thus, all the items in the survey were rated on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from ‘Strongly disagree’ (1) to ‘Strongly agree’ (7) or ‘A little’ (1) to ‘A lot’ (7). Seven-point scales were chosen as they offer participants more intervals to reflect their opinion and increase variance in each item, which is useful in conducting statistical analyses (Bass, Cascio & O'Connor 1974). However, an argument against this view is that coefficient alpha reliability score decrease when scales of more than five points are used (Lissitz & Green 1975). To address this issue, a pilot study was conducted at the instrument development stage that showed that the seven-point scales selected were highly reliable. A copy of the final surveys used in this research can be found in the Appendices (see Appendix A for the employee survey and Appendix B for the job seeker survey).

4.7. Survey Content and Order of Questions

The structure of any survey is important because it may have hidden influences on participants' responses and may also lead to inaccurate measurements (Rea & Parker 2005). In this study, the online survey began with an introduction that welcomed and thanked participants for taking part in the study. It also explained the objectives of the study and ensured participants that all the data collected would be confidential.

In relation to the order of the questions, familiarity with employer items formed part of the first section because of the possibility that responses to these questions may affect how participants responded to other questions (Yoo & Donthu 2001).

An issue also arose in relation to the placement of questions seeking personal information. Ultimately, questions seeking personal information were placed at the end of the survey to address concerns that if participants were asked to provide personal information at the beginning of the survey, they may feel uncomfortable answering the remaining questions and the number of completed responses may have also been reduced (O'Neil & Penrod 2001; Rea & Parker 2005).

4.8. Instrument Validation

Prior to main data collection stage a research instrument has to be validated. It is important to ensure that the chosen research approach and designed instrument are able to answer the proposed research questions (Gray 2009; Walter 2010). Testing a survey in a context similar to the main data-gathering context enables researchers to identify potential difficulties and increases familiarity with the data collection process. Additionally, data gathered from pilot testing can validate an instrument and reveal issues that need to be addressed before the actual study is conducted (Hardy & Ford 2014).

The practices followed for the development and validation the research instrument drew heavily on recommendations from earlier methodologists (Churchill 1979; de Leeuw, Hox & Dillman 2008; Hinkin 1995; Hinkin 1998; Worthington & Whittaker 2006). The research

included three main phases of development and validation. Figure 4-1 details the steps undertaken in the development and pilot testing of the instrument for the main data collection.

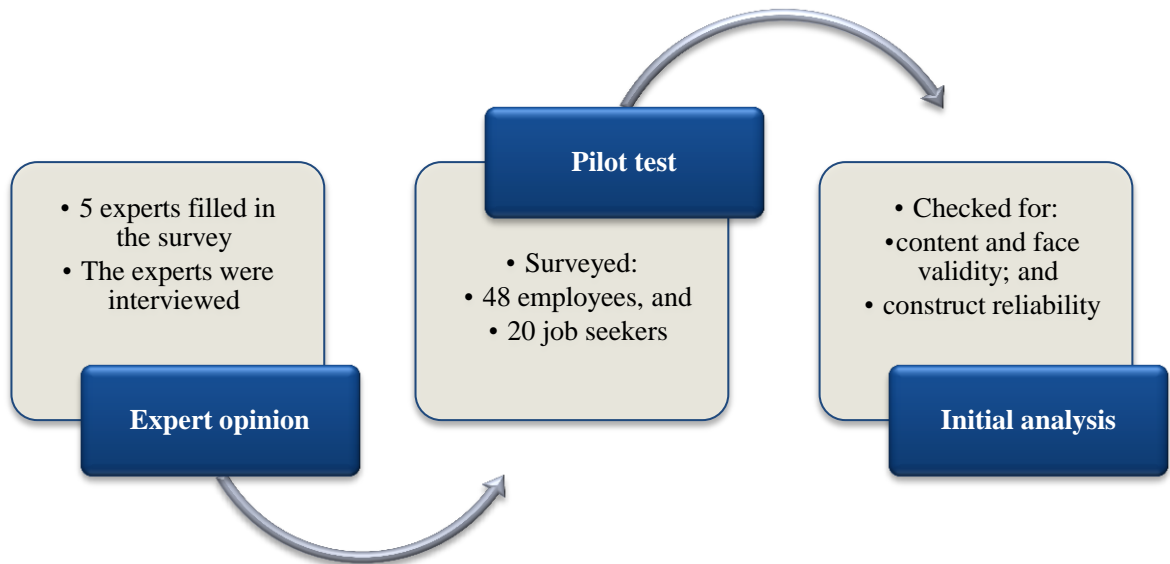


Figure 4-1: Instrument Development and Validation Process

de Leeuw, Hox and Dillman (2008) suggested a variety of approaches to test a survey for research purposes to ensure the survey questions are understandable and communicated effectively to the target sample. Suggestions included traditional approaches, such as field tests (usually called pilot tests), and new methods, such as interviewing experts after they have taken the survey. Both approaches were used in the present study, as described further below.

4.8.1 Expert opinion

An important part of survey development is to make sure that the instrument is clear and understandable to its targeted population (Rea & Parker 2005). Thus, five experienced individuals, familiar with the concept of employer branding, were asked to evaluate the content of the survey and complete an interview (de Leeuw, Hox & Dillman 2008; Worthington & Whittaker 2006). Experts included recruitment specialists and business researchers. The experts first completed the survey and were then asked to comment on the questions. Following this, in an interview with the researcher, the experts communicated and

offered suggestions to improve the survey and its content. The survey was modified accordingly. This step required modification, deletion and rewording of confusing and ambiguous questions/items. Technical improvements to the layout of the online survey were also made. Once this step was completed, pilot testing could begin.

4.8.2 Pilot testing

In the previous stage, the expert opinions were sought to address any issues with the content of the survey (questions and items); however, the pilot testing stage was designed to detect possible flaws and ensure that a reliable and valid instrument was produced. Indeed, the aim of the pilot test was to examine and validate the structure of the measurements of the research constructs. An online survey was used to collect the data from a sample of participants who were deemed to have characteristics similar to the main study sample (Walter 2010). Currently employed participants were asked to evaluate their current employer and participants seeking employment were asked to evaluate a suggested company.

The steps of pilot testing included:

1. After the survey was uploaded to Qualtrics (an online survey website), a link to the online survey was electronically distributed and data gathered from a sample of participants via different electronic means, including email and social media websites. The surveys for job seekers and employees were similarly designed; however, some differences existed in relation to the wording of question/items and the constructs of ‘company preference’ and ‘intention to stay’.
2. The survey used a flow logic that included two paths, one for employees and another for job seekers. The direction of path flow depended on responses to the question: ‘Are you currently employed?’ Answering ‘yes’ to this question lead participants to questions designed for exiting employees; whereas answering ‘no’ lead participants to questions designed for job seekers.
3. Then, a skip pattern technique was employed to ensure that participants only answered questions relevant to them; for example, currently employed participants saw items for the ‘intention to stay’ construct, but ‘company preference’ items were not be presented.

Figure 4-2 below shows the survey flow and highlights the differences between the two versions.

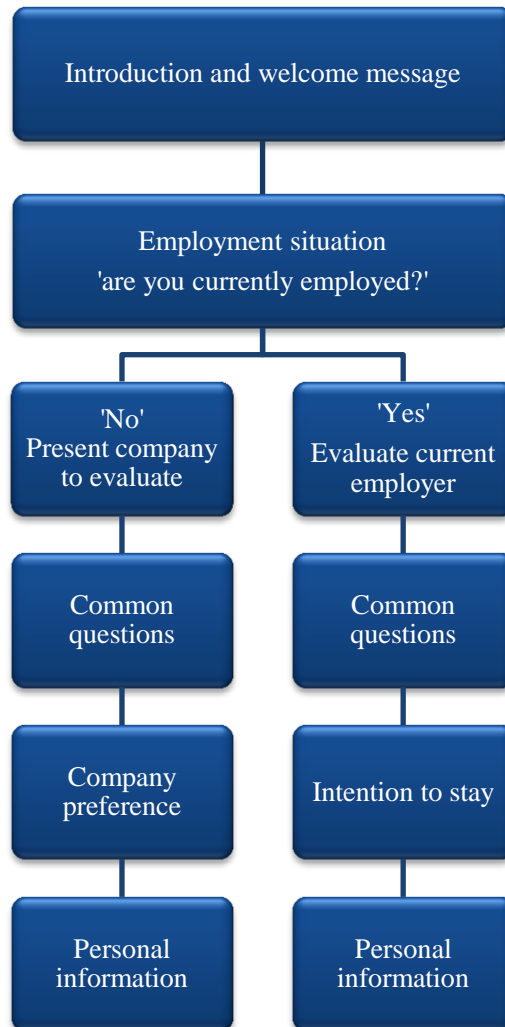


Figure 4-2: Survey Flow in Pilot Study

The sample for the pilot test consisted of 68 participants (48 full-time employees and 20 job seekers). To improve the survey, participants were asked to provide feedback and comments about confusing and unclear questions/items via email. The survey was subjected to instrument pre-testing through a two-step validation process that examined the face validity and construct reliability of the instrument. Ultimately, pre-testing resulted in the removal of five items that lacked clarity, which enhanced reliability and resulted in a shorter survey. Following the pre-test phase, main data collection commenced.

4.9. Main Data Collection

This section discusses the main data collection phase of the study. It provides a description and justification of the steps undertaken in relation to the choice of study samples and data collection. Given that the scope of this research includes two perspectives of EBE, the study surveyed two different samples and conducted two separate analyses. A first round of data collection was undertaken with a sample of full-time employed participants to examine the influence of EBE on employees. Following this, a second round of data collection was conducted with job seeking participants to examine the external role of EBE. As two different samples were used in data collection and two separate analyses undertaken, the internal impact for EBE on full-time employed participants is referred to as ‘Phase 1’ and the external impact for EBE on job seeking participants as ‘Phase 2’.

4.9.1 Procedure

An online survey website (www.qualtrics.com), which offered the proper programmable features needed to develop the electronic survey, was used to create the survey for this study. The data collected for the main study used an online panel that accessed the survey through a paid company (Hardy & Ford 2014). The use of a paid company assisted to reduce the impact of non-response bias, a fundamental challenge to all surveys (Lynn 2008). Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) defined ‘non-responses’ as observations missed from a sample for reasons such as refusal and non-contact. To minimise non-responses, researchers (such as Gray 2009; Lynn 2008) have suggested that incentives be offered to increase participation rates. Resultantly, participants were offered incentives in this study. The study also sought an adequate distribution across gender, age and work experience to ensure each group was comprised of a representative sample.

For participants, the advantages of using an online panel included that the survey could be completed at any time and location convenient to the participants. It also ensured the anonymity of participants. Online panels have been found to produce better quality data as they allow participants to choose an appropriate time and context to complete the survey (Hair et al. 2010). In this study, only individuals who met the selection criteria set for the study were invited to participate by the panel provider.

Previous research has shown that in gathering data on HR outcomes, it is common for employees to be asked about their present companies; for example, employees may be asked about their intention to remain with the company that they presently are employed at (e.g., Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). Asking employees about their current experience with a company provides reliable evaluations for an examination of the relationships among constructs. This approach was deemed appropriate for participants in Phase 1 of this study. Conversely, the target individuals in Phase 2 of the study, who accepted the invitation to participate, were randomly assigned to evaluate one of four companies (due to the length of the survey, each participant was only asked to evaluate one of four companies (Walter 2010, p. 170)). Multiple companies from different industries were used to ensure that relationships between variables would not be idiosyncratically related to one particular company or industry, this also increased the generalisability of the findings (see Highhouse, Lievens & Sinar 2003; Wells & Windschitl 1999). To determine which employer brands would be appropriate for the participants in the Phase 2 job seekers sample, a preliminary step was undertaken to select the target employer brands.

4.9.2 Employer brands selection

The main objective of this step was to find appropriate potential employer brands for job seekers. Given that participants would not be able to evaluate companies that they were not familiar with, employer brands generally known to the target population had to be identified. Thus, a minimal level of familiarity was required (Cable & Turban 2003). Drawing on research from marketing, unknown companies are not included in the consideration set and cannot be evaluated as potential employers (Keller 1993).

In selecting employer brands for the job seekers sample, a list of companies from the *2012 Corporate Reputation Index* (AMR-Australia 2012) (Appendix C), an index that covers a range of Australian companies across a variety of industries, was used (Cable & Turban 2003). This index is a ranking list, primarily compiled based on the financial performance of companies. Thus, it differs from the measurement of corporate reputation construct used to examine the proposed model in this study.

Six participants, from the target population of Phase 2 (i.e., job seekers) were asked to choose three companies that were familiar with from a list. The participants in this stage consisted of males and females, undergraduates and postgraduates, students and currently employed individuals; all participants were seeking new or different jobs. This stage was designed to ensure that participants involved in the main data collection stage had minimal exposure to the companies. The four most commonly selected companies were chosen to be included in the job seekers survey as potential employers. The result of this preliminary stage included companies from four different industries (i.e., computing and technology, banking, beverages and food and telecommunications) and represented both services and products see Table 4-14.

Table 4-14: Results of Employer Brand Selection Stage for Data Collection (for Phase 2 participants)

Selected company	Apple Australia	Nestle Australia	Commonwealth bank	Vodafone Australia
Industry	Computing and technology	Beverages and food	Banking	Telecommunications
Type of Product	Goods company		Services company	

4.10. Sampling

Sampling is a critical issue in social research. It is the process of choosing a subset from the larger population to draw precise inferences on a research problem (Rea & Parker 2005). It is essential that researchers identify and define elements that relate to the study and carefully select the sample of who actually participates in the study. This section covers four main parts, target population, sampling frame, sampling method and sample size.

4.10.1 Target population

A target population refers to the entire set of entities related to the research decision (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson 2008). For this study, the target population included individuals who were employable, 18 years or older (but not retired) and resided in Australia. Additionally, these individuals had either be employed part-time or full-time, or unemployed and seeking full-time employment. The study avoided using a student sample as this has been

criticised in past research (e.g., Shen et al. 2011) and was considered a limitation of previous empirical employer branding research (e.g., Berthon, Ewing & Hah 2005; Bonaiuto et al. 2013). Table 4-15 sets out the target population groups.

Table 4-15: Target Population of the Study

Employed Individuals				Unemployed Individuals	
Full-time employees		Part-time employees		Seeking another job	Not seeking another job
Seeking another job	Not seeking another job	Seeking another job	Not seeking another job		

Note: Only the groups in cells highlighted in yellow were included in the target population

4.10.2 Sampling frame

Ideally, a sampling frame includes all entities in a target population; however, it is rare to have access to all entities of a population (Nachmias & Nachmias 1996). Given that the objective of this study was to quantify the relationships between the constructs in the research model for employment customers, individuals who were employed full-time were deemed to be the appropriate sampling target. The influence of full-time or part-time employment on attitudinal concepts, such as organisational commitment and job satisfaction, has not been clearly determined (Thorsteinson 2003). Research has found (see Thorsteinson 2003) that full-time employees are more involved with their workplaces and know more about their organisations than part-time employees, such a difference has the potential to change employees' evaluations of their experiences with their employers. Experience with an employer is a core element of EBE and requires a certain level of actual interaction between an employee and a company. Thus, it was ultimately decided that Phase 1 participants would only include individuals who were employed full-time.

To examine the external role of EBE, the sampling frame for Phase 2 participants consisted of job seekers. Phase 2 participants had not previously interacted with the companies referred to in the survey or been exposed to factors, such as recruitment activities, that could have affected their perceptions towards an employer (e.g., Powell & Goulet 1996). Thus, the sampling frame consisted of individuals who were seeking a new full-time job within the next 12 months, including full-time, part-time and unemployed individuals. Table 4-16 shows the subgroups of the target population included in the sampling frame.

Table 4-16: Sampling Frame for the Study Samples

Employee Sample (Phase 1)	Job Seeker Sample (Phase 2)
Full-time employees	Unemployed individuals and individuals in full-time or part-time employment who were considering seeking new employment in the next 12 months

Due to an overlap between the two sampling frames (i.e., full-time employees not seeking to change jobs and full-time employees who were considering looking for another job within the next 12 months), consideration was given to whether individuals could participate in both surveys; however, ultimately it was decided that this would affect the quality of gathered data. Accordingly, as each respondent had been given a fixed identification number (ID) (i.e., a unique number assigned by the panel provider), the IDs of participants in both samples were checked to avoid duplicate participation.

4.10.3 Sampling method

In the data collection process, the present study undertook non-probability quota sampling (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson 2008). The panel company was instructed to use demographic characteristics to invite an approximate representative number of individuals for each category to participate in the survey. This step was undertaken to ensure that each category was adequately represented in the study. Additionally, in relation to the job seekers sample, quotas for the required numbers of responses for each company (i.e., Apple Australia, Commonwealth Bank, Nestle Australia and Vodafone Australia) were set through the available options offered by the online survey website.

4.10.4 Sample size

With the proposed data analysis technique in mind, a target sample size was estimated. Scholars have debated the sample size required for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM); however, to date, no fixed rule for calculating a required sample size has been determined. This study adopted Kline's Kline (2005) approach that there be a minimum of a 5:1 ratio for the number of responses to number of parameters in the path model. Thus, the study obtained

370 responses for Phase 1 (the number of parameters was 76) and 370 responses for Phase 2 (the number of parameters was 71). In the final analysis, the number of useable cases amounted to 668, consisting of 331 participants who were full-time employed and 337 participants (i.e., 50.4 per cent) who were classified as job seekers. Despite the fact that this number was less than the target number set, it was deemed to be acceptable for analysis as the suggested minimum sample size in simulation statistical studies is normally 200 responses per sample (see Lei & Lomax 2005; Shen et al. 2011). As shown in Table 4-17, each employer brand had a similar number of responses by Phase 2 participants.

Table 4-17: Number of Responses for Each Company in the Job Seekers Sample

	Products		Services	
Sample size	164		173	
Name of company	Apple Australia	Nestle Australia	Commonwealth Bank	Vodafone Australia
Sample	86	78	85	88

4.11. Data Analysis Strategy

After conducting a preliminary statistical analysis on the collected data, more advanced techniques were needed to examine the conceptual model and test the research hypotheses. Accordingly, SEM was used. Hair et al. (2010) defined SEM as a family of statistical models used to investigate relationships among variables. These variables can be observed or unobserved (latent variable). SEM incorporates a combination of two techniques: factor analysis and multiple regression analysis.

SEM was considered useful for the present study for three reasons. First, it deals with latent constructs; that is, unobserved variables that consist of different observed variables or indicators. Thus, unmeasured theoretical concepts can be represented in the model under examination. More importantly, in accordance with the objectives of this research, it allows for the testing of a theoretical model against empirical data (Brown 2012). Additionally, SEM provides statistical estimates of the relationships among constructs that are free from measurement error. Thus, SEM was deemed more beneficial for use in this research than conventional techniques such as multiple regression analysis.

4.12. Chapter Summary

This chapter summarised the research objectives and questions of this study and highlighted the main assumptions that underpin the role of EBE in the employment context. It also provided an explanation of, and justification for, the research design and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the research methods used in the study. The instrument validation procedures, including the seeking expert opinions and pilot testing, showed the reliability and validity of the instrument ultimately used in main data collection phase. This chapter discussed the main data collection procedure and specifications of the target sample and sampling procedure. The chapter concluded with a brief explanation of the data analysis strategy. The next two chapters of this thesis present the results of the study. Chapter 5 focuses on the preliminary analysis, development of measurement, reliability and validity and Chapter 6 presents the findings from the path model and multi-group analysis.

Chapter 5: Study Results (Measurement, Reliability and Validity)

5.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out the results of this study and offers an explanation for the approach and steps followed in the data analysis, which was performed using SPSS and AMOS (Version 21) software. This chapter begins by providing details of the preliminary analysis conducted. Notably, the assumptions for using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) were checked, including data cleaning and preparation and testing normality. This chapter then describes the two samples considered by this study. Following this, the procedure used for measurement scale development and confirmation is illustrated, including in relation to the scale development for the reliability and validity examination of each construct.

Scale development was conducted in two phases. The first phase (see Section 5.4) used the employee sample to confirm the existing and adapted measurement scales. It took an exploratory nature when the scale assessment did not meet recommended guidelines. The second phase (see Section 5.6) applied the measurement scales of the first phase to the second sample of job seekers. This approach helped to ensure the reliability, validity and consistency of the measurement of each sample prior to the theoretical framework test being undertaken. Other aspects of the analysis, including specification, development and examination of the full path SEM model for each sample (employees and job seekers), hypotheses testing, competing models and multi-group analysis are reported in Chapter 6. Figure 5-1 below illustrates the data analysis steps followed in this research study.

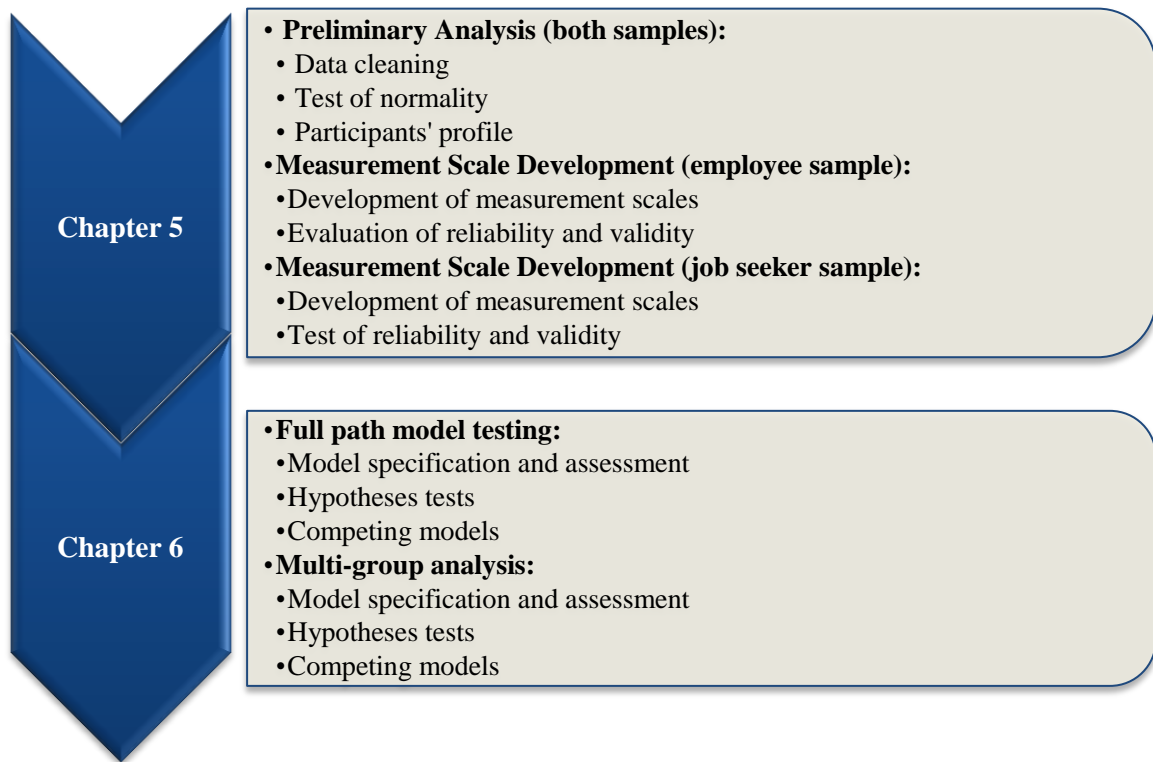


Figure 5-1: Data Analysis Steps

5.2. Preliminary Analysis

Prior to the main analysis being conducted, four preparatory steps were performed to ensure that the data met the statistical assumptions for applying SEM. These steps included data cleaning and preparation, checking for missing values, checking for outliers and conducting a normality distribution test. Each step was performed on each sample separately. Further, participants' profiles in both samples were reviewed, including for age, gender, qualification, number of years of work experience and, for the employee sample, tenure at current company.

5.2.1 Data cleaning and preparation

The data was downloaded from the online survey website into SPSS for statistical analysis. Frequency and descriptive statistics were run to ensure all scores were within the answer range for each question. Since the average retirement age in Australian in 2012-2013 was 53.8 years of age (specifically, 58 years of age for men and 50 years of age for women) (Australian

Bureau Statistics 2013b; Catalogue # 6238.0) and the item in ‘intention to stay’ construct had an upper limit of five years, participants older than 52 years of age were excluded from the analysis (Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). Additionally, participants who completed the survey very quickly were excluded from the analysis. The final sample consisted of 331 participants who were full-time employed and 337 participants who were classified as job seekers (Hardy & Ford 2014).

Data files were also checked for missing values, one of the most common and challenging issues in social science research (Rogelberg & Stanton 2007). Collecting data through a panel provider helped to ensure that there were no missing values for all constructs items; however, there were missing values in relation to demographic variables such as age (see further below). As demographic variables were only included in the multi-group analysis, the missing values in this case were considered acceptable. Further, according to Hair et al. (2010), missing values of less than 10 per cent for each case or variable is not problematic. Thus, missing values did not violate Hair’s assumption and were deemed to have no impact on the analysis. Both samples were also checked for outliers. Descriptive and frequency analyses showed that all responses were within acceptable ranges.

Meeting normality is one of the important assumptions in SEM; data must have a multivariate normal distribution that implies normality of all univariate distributions (Kline 2005). A normal distribution of data is an essential requirement; however, a lack of normality in social science research is common (Byrne 2010). As recommended by Hair et al. (2010), univariate normality was firstly assessed using a z-test to examine skewness and kurtosis. To calculate statistical value (z) for skewness and kurtosis, the two following equations were used:

$$Z_{\text{skewness}} = \frac{\text{skewness}}{\sqrt{6/N}}$$

$$Z_{\text{kurtosis}} = \frac{\text{kurtosis}}{\sqrt{24/N}}$$

Where a z value exceeds the critical value of ± 1.96 (0.05 significance level) and ± 2.58 (at 0.01 significance level) for an item, then the distribution is non-normal (Hair et al. 2010). The

analysis showed that z values for most items in both samples exceeded ± 2.58 . This indicates non-normality (see Appendix D for means, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis values). Further examination was conducted to assess the degree of non-normality. In examining skewness and kurtosis values, Lei and Lomax (2005) have stated that values less than one indicate a slight non-normality. This was the case for all observed items in both samples. Thus, both the employee and job seeker samples suffered from slight univariate non-normality and, as a result, multivariate assumption is also presumed to be slightly violated (Kline 2005). A further step was undertaken to check multivariate normality using AMOS. The results indicated a non-normal data distribution. The z value for multivariate distribution was 74.74 for the employee sample and 64.69 for the job seeker sample (z value for multivariate normal distribution < 5.00) (Byrne 2010).

Brown (2012) has stated that violation of the normality assumption in the SEM approach occurs when non-normality is extreme. Accordingly, a range of procedures were employed to address this issue. A variety of goodness of fit indices to minimise the effect of assumption violation, including Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Normative Fit Index (NFI) (Lei & Lomax 2005), was used. Additionally, for model estimation (both measurement and path models), a Maximum Likelihood (ML) technique was used due to its robust behaviour against violations of normality assumptions in medium-sized samples and its ability to estimate parameters (Hair et al. 2010). Further, Bollen-Stine bootstrapping for adjusted *p*-value was also used (Byrne 2010). The use of fit indices and Bollen-Stine bootstrapping techniques are discussed in more detail in Section 5.3.

5.2.2 Respondents' profiles

As discussed in Chapter 4, this study examines the conceptual framework for two different audiences of EBE. Thus, two samples were used; the first consisted of employees and the second of job seekers. A summary of the participants' profiles in each sample is shown in Table 5-1.

The majority of participants in the employee sample were between 24 and 40 years of age; however, 18.5 per cent were between 41 and 52 years of age. Participants from the youngest

group (i.e., < 24 years) represented the smallest portion of the sample (6.9 per cent). The sample had a nearly equal gender representation; males accounted for 46.8 per cent of total participants (155 responses). More than 79 per cent of participants held a diploma or higher. In terms of work experience, approximately 73 per cent had from five to twenty years of experience, while 10.9 per cent had less than five years of experience. The average length of experience was 13.4 years and the median was 12 years. The majority of participants (i.e., 83 per cent) had less than 10 years tenure with their current employer and only 3.3 per cent had over 20 years tenure.

The job seeker sample had a different age distribution; indeed, 73.4 per cent were aged between 24 and 40 years old; the younger age group and elder age group were equally represented (i.e., 13.1 per cent and 13.3 per cent, respectively). There were more females than males in the job seekers group (56.1 per cent); however, the sample remains a relatively balanced representation. The sample also had an equal representation of single and married participants (i.e., 39.8 per cent and 38.6 per cent, respectively). The educational qualifications of job seekers had more participants with high school certificates than post-graduate degrees. In terms of work experience, the participants in this sample had less average and median years of work experience; that is, 11.4 years and 10 years, respectively.

Comparing the characteristics of the two samples, differences existed in terms of age distribution and there was a larger portion of females than males. Generally, the job seeker sample had more singles and a younger representation. Additionally, consistent with the actual nature of the Australian labour market according to the Australian Bureau Statistics (2013a; Catalogue # 6222.0), participants in this sample had less educational qualifications and work experience.

Table 5-1: Respondents' Demographic Profiles

Characteristics	Employees		Job seekers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Age				
18 – 23	23	6.9	44	13.1
24 – 29	84	25.4	90	26.7
30 – 34	89	26.9	89	26.4
35 – 40	74	22.4	68	20.2
41 – 46	32	9.7	24	7.1
47 – 52	29	8.8	21	6.2
Missing values			1	0.3
Gender				
Male	155	46.8	147	43.6
Female	176	53.2	189	56.1
Missing values			1	0.3
Marital status				
Single	108	32.6	134	39.8
Married	159	48	130	38.6
De facto	57	17.2	62	18.4
Divorced	7	2.1	10	3.0
Missing values			1	0.3
Education				
High school	70	21.1	87	25.8
Diploma	68	20.5	70	20.8
Bachelor	150	45.3	132	39.2
Masters	38	11.5	45	13.4
PhD	5	1.5	2	0.6
Missing values			1	0.3
Years of work experience				
< 5 years	36	10.9	66	18.0
5 – 10	116	35	109	32.3
11 – 20	124	37.5	119	35.3
> 20 years	53	16	39	11.6
Missing values	2	0.6	4	1.2
Tenure				
< 5	159	48	132	39.1
5 – 10	116	35	86	25.5
11 – 20	41	12.4	22	6.5
> 20 years	11	3.3	1	0.3
Missing values	4	1.3	96	28.5
Sample Total	331	100	337	100

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not add precisely to 100

5.3. Structure Equation Modelling (SEM)

SEM is a statistical approach used to perform factor analysis and linear regression simultaneously for theory testing (Williams, Vandenberg & Edwards 2009). Before a structural model can be developed, it is essential to address issues related to the measurement of latent variables. To do this, Gerbing and Anderson (1988) recommended a two-step approach to develop a full path model. The first step is to establish a valid measurement model for each construct and ensure adequacy of fit and relation to its indicators via one-congeneric model. The second step is to estimate the structural relationships for the theoretical model using a regression analysis. This approach increases the likelihood of establishing an acceptable model that has resulted from reliable and valid measures (Gerbing & Anderson 1988).

As discussed in the Chapter 4, the scales used in this research were taken from previous studies and operationalised as multi-indicator measures. Thus, the scales are built on strong theoretical foundations (Brown 2012; Worthington & Whittaker 2006). However, due to changes in a number of items in each scale and the adaptation of these for the context of this study, SEM was also used as an exploratory approach whereby the analysis searched for alternatives for measurement or path models (Schreiber et al. 2006). Accordingly, following Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach, the rest of this chapter illustrates the first step and shows how each construct was developed and purified using SEM measurement as exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), including an examination of validity and reliability (Brown 2012; Byrne 2010; Churchill 1979; Hinkin 1995; Kline 2005).

5.3.1 SEM model assessment

Model identification is a necessary requirement for model estimation. Kline (2005) outlined two conditions for the identification of a measurement model: (i) the number of parameters in the model must be equal to or less than the number of observations; and (ii) the latent variable must have a scale. In relation to the first requirement, the number of degrees of freedom (*df*) in each measurement model must be equal to or greater than zero. In other words, a minimum of three indicators for each latent variable recommendation satisfies this condition. In relation

to the second requirement, Kline (2005) suggested fixing the factor variance to a constant of one. These conditions are essential for model identification; however, just-identified models (in which $df = 0$) cannot be estimated. This is the case for constructs measured by three indicators. Thus, two factor paths must be fixed at one (Kline 2005).

To assess measurement models using a measurement model approach, researchers must consider the adequacy of two criteria: (i) parameter estimates; and (ii) the model as whole (this is also known as Goodness of Fit (GoF)) (Byrne 2010). To ensure the adequacy of parameter estimates, Hair et al. (2010) suggested that an indicator must have significant loading on the construct (at $p < 0.05$) and a factor loading preferably larger than 0.7 to ensure adequacy of association to the construct and to support construct validity. Additionally, to ensure that each indicator is adequately explained by its construct, squared multiple correlations (SMC) should be at least 0.5. Thus, factor loading and SMC are a useful diagnostic tools for problematic measured constructs (Williams, Vandenberg & Edwards 2009).

In relation to the second criterion, a number of fit statistics have been suggested to assess the adequacy of a SEM model. These fit statistics are used to evaluate the extent to which data fits a theoretical model. The fit indices fall into two main groups, fit statistics and incremental indices. Other assessment approaches include checking residuals and the parsimony of the model. Recommendations are consistent to report about four indices, at least one fit index from each group (e.g., Brown 2012; Hair et al. 2010). In light of this recommendation, this study used a number of widely accepted fit indices.

A fit statistics group, sometimes called absolute indices, directly measures how well a proposed theoretical model reproduces the data (Hair et al. 2010). Outlined below are the most popularly used indices.

Chi-square Statistics (χ^2): This is an index that tests the hypothesis that there is no difference between the observed and estimated covariance matrices. The acceptable p -value in this statistics is greater than 0.05. The higher the p -value associated with χ^2 , the closer the fit between the hypothesised model and the perfect fit (Byrne 2010). For complex models, χ^2

tends to increase, which makes it difficult for the p -value to be significant (< 0.05), especially in the case of the absence of a normal distribution of data (where the Bollen-Stine bootstrap p -value is used) (Byrne 2010).

Bollen-Stine bootstrap p -value: This is the adjusted p -value that accounts for non-normality (Bollen & Stine 1992). Bootstrapping is a resampling technique in which a study sample is considered to be the population (Brown 2012). Bollen-Stine bootstrap is a bootstrapped modification of χ^2 used to test the fit of a model adjusting for distributional misspecification. A Bollen-Stine bootstrap was performed in this study on 500 samples where the distribution violated the normality assumption (Brown 2012; Byrne 2010).

Normed Chi-square (χ^2/df): This is a widely simple ratio of χ^2 to the df of a model. A ratio of 3:1 or less indicates a better fitting model. More complex models tend to have bigger χ^2 and, thus, are more likely to be rejected; however, normed Chi-Square is used as it takes model complexity into account (Hair et al. 2010). Further, this index can also work as parsimony index, whereby a smaller ratio indicates more parsimony of a model. If the χ^2/df value falls below one, this can indicate an over fit for the model, which is acceptable for congeneric models (Hair et al. 2010).

Goodness of Fit Index (GFI): This index compares a hypothesised model against some standards, which is no model (Byrne 2010). Compared to other indices, it is less affected by the estimation method (Fan, Thompson & Wang 1999); however, it is sensitive to sample size (Hair et al. 2010). A good model fit should have a value greater than 0.9 (Byrne 2010).

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA): This shows how well a model fits a population, not just how the sample fits the theoretical model. RMSEA favours parsimonious model and is independent of sample size (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger & Müller 2003). An acceptable range for a RMSEA value is less than 0.08 (Hair et al. 2010).

Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR): This is standardised value of RMR, which is the measure of the mean absolute value of the covariance residuals (Kline 2005).

This index shows how far-off the theoretical model is from the estimated model (Iacobucci 2010). Good fitting models should have a value of less than 0.1 (Kline 2005).

An incremental fit indices group evaluates how well an estimated model fits by comparing it to an alternative baseline model. The following two indices have been reported in this thesis.

Comparative Fit Index (CFI): This is a commonly used incremental index that has the advantage of insensitivity to model complexity (Hair et al. 2010). The values of CFI range from 0 to 1 and values greater than 0.95 indicate a good fitting model (Hu & Bentler 1999). This index controls for Type I and Type II errors and is independent of sample size (Iacobucci 2010).

Normed Fit Index (NFI): The NFI is the relative improvement of the hypothesised model over independence (Byrne 2010). It is good index to use for samples with less than 500 cases that have a non-normal distribution (Lei & Lomax 2005). Similar to CFI, the values of NFI range from 0 to 1 and values over 0.90 indicate a good fitting model (Hu & Bentler 1999).

Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI): In addition to using χ^2/df as an indicator of model parsimony, there are also a few indices, including PNFI, that help to assess model parsimony. PNFI is computed similarly to NFI and takes model complexity into account. This index has no cut-off value, but a value of zero indicates lack of parsimony and a value of one indicates unity (Byrne 2010); thus, higher values are more preferable. Since this index is more relevant for path model testing than measurement model testing, it is used for the examination of the theoretical framework (see Chapter 6).

AMOS software: This software also provides a standardised residuals covariance (SRC) matrix and is a useful diagnostic tool for a model fit. Standardised residuals should be less than 2.5 and values greater than 4 indicate an unacceptable degree of error (Hair et al. 2010). AMOS software also offers a Modification Indices tool (MI) that suggests modifications that might assist in improving the model fit based on every possible relationship not included in the assessed model and fixed to zero (Kline 2005). Table 5-2 presents a summary of the 'rules of thumb' used in the analysis index.

Table 5-2: Criteria Values Used for SEM Model Assessment

Category	Index	Abbreviation	Acceptable Level
Fit statistics	Chi-square statistics	χ^2	$p > 0.05$
	Normed Chi-square	χ^2/df	$1 < \chi^2/df < 5$
	Goodness of Fit Index	GFI	> 0.90
	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	< 0.08
	Standardised Root Mean Square Residual	SRMR	< 1.00
Incremental indices	Comparative Fit Index	CFI	> 0.95
	Normed Fit Index	NFI	> 0.90
Parsimony indices	Parsimony Normed Fit Index	PNFI	No cut-off and a larger value is better

5.3.2 Assessment of measurement models

As indicated previously, the first step of the Gerbing and Anderson (1988) approach focuses on measurement model development and mixes the two procedures of factor analysis (i.e., EFA and CFA, although it primarily follows CFA). Prior to full path model development and hypothesis testing, data analysis was conducted on the employee sample, Phase 1. This analysis did not rely exclusively on CFA, but took a combined approach using EFA and CFA (Brown 2012; Gerbing & Anderson 1988). Measurement scales of EBE antecedents and marketing concepts from previous research served as a theoretical base for this stage of the analysis. Thus, data from the employee sample was used to confirm the structure. As a part of EFA, modifications were made to ensure that the measures confirmed the structure of the research constructs. Exclusive tests were there performed on the job seeker sample to confirm measurements. Adopting this approach prior to the examination of the research model ensured that the benefits of Gerbing and Anderson’s (1988) approach were gained and that the measurement scales were reliable and valid measures for the two targeted employer brands.

5.4. Congeneric Models for Measurement Constructs (Employee Sample)

As part of the measurement development, each construct was assessed as a one-factor congeneric model in accordance with the recommendations discussed in the previous section, including factor loadings, SMC values and the overall GoF of the model (see Table). The

assessment of the EBE elements is reported first, followed by the antecedents and outcomes. Due to the length of measurement items, abbreviated labels have been used as set out in Appendix E.

5.4.1 Familiarity with the employer brand

The original measurement scale for the familiarity with an employer brand construct consisted of five items. A model of five indicators did not meet the criteria for p -value and RMSEA was close to cut-off value (0.009 and 0.79, respectively). An inspection of SRC matrix and MI showed that eliminating Fam_1 would improve the model fit significantly. Thus, this item was removed and the results then showed that the model fit the data well (see Table 5-3). It not clear why removing this item improved the model fit; however, it may have been due to a lack of clear vision in some companies or poor internal communication. Figure 5-2 shows the model after this item had been deleted, including factor loadings and SMC values.

Table 5-3: Assessment of Familiarity Construct Measurement Model

Model	p	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (5 items)	0.009	3.080	0.981	0.79	0.016	0.991	0.987
Model 2 (4 items)	0.970	0.300	1.000	0.000	0.001	1.000	1.000

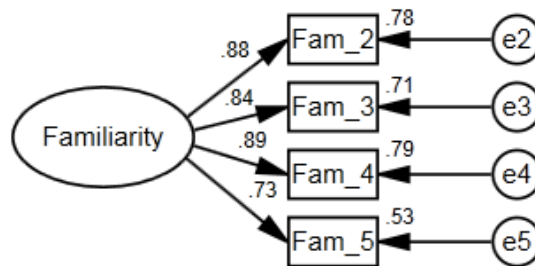


Figure 5-2: Congeneric Model of Familiarity with Employer

5.4.2 Employer brand associations

Measurement of this construct comprised five items. An examination of the measurement model (Model 1) showed that the model did not meet recommended cut-offs of p -value, χ^2/df

and RMSEA. To improve the model, item As_4, which cross loaded onto As_2 and As_5, was dropped (see MI for Model 1). The removal resulted in χ^2/df falling within an acceptable range and a better model fit; however, Model 2 failed to show an adequate fit for p -value and RMSEA, and further inspection was required. SRC suggested that deletion of As_2 would improve the model and, thus, this item was removed from Model 3. The results showed a good fit model (see Table 5-4). The item As_4 did not make one construct with other items; it may reflect the value of working for a company rather than impressions towards the employer. Similarly, As_2 specifically focused on feelings about working for the organisation. The final measurement items for the construct of employer brand associations are set out in Figure 5-3, including factor loadings and SMC.

Table 5-4: Assessment of Employer Brand Associations Construct Measurement Model

Model	p	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (5 items)	0.000	12.133	0.932	0.184	0.027	0.971	0.968
Model 2 (4 items)	0.018	4.044	0.989	0.096	0.007	0.996	0.995
Model 3 (3 items)	0.849	0.036	1.000	0.000	0.001	1.000	1.000

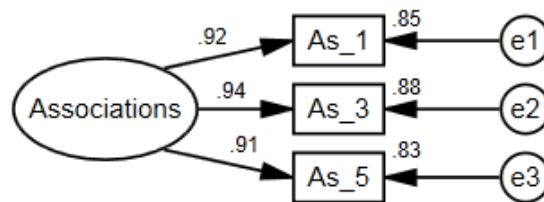


Figure 5-3: Congeneric Model of Employer Brand Associations

5.4.3 Experience with the employer brand

The construct of employee experience with the employer originally consisted of four indicators; however, despite having acceptable goodness of fit values in indices, including GFI and CFI, the congeneric model for the construct did not meet the required p -value or RMSEA. The factor loading for Exp_1 was significant. Indeed, it had the lowest factor loading and SMC. Additionally, an inspection of SRC suggested that the removal of Exp_1 would improve the model. Thus, a decision to eliminate items was made. This resulted in a significant improvement for Model 2 (see Table 5-5 below). Item Exp_1 described

experiences of employees with an employer; however, it also compared this experience to alternative employers and, thus, was inconsistent with the other items designed to measure this construct. Figure 5-4 shows factor loadings and SMC for Model 2 in relation to employees' assessment of experience with their employers.

Table 5-5: Assessment of Experience with the Employer Construct Measurement Model

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (4 items)	0.013	4.314	0.987	0.100	0.014	0.994	0.992
Model 2 (3 items)	0.108	2.586	0.995	0.069	0.005	0.998	0.998

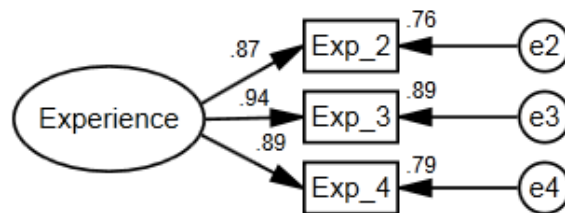


Figure 5-4: Congeneric Model of Experience with the Employer

5.4.4 Loyalty to the employer brand

The original model of loyalty to an employer brand fitted the data well. Indeed, all fit indices indicated a good fit and factor loadings and SMC were well above the cut-off (see Table 5-6). Figure 5-5 presents the model, including factor loadings and SMC. In light of these results, the measures for this construct remained unchanged.

Table 5-6: Assessment of Loyalty to an Employer Brand Construct Measurement Model

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (3 items)	0.591	0.289	0.999	0.000	0.003	1.000	1.000

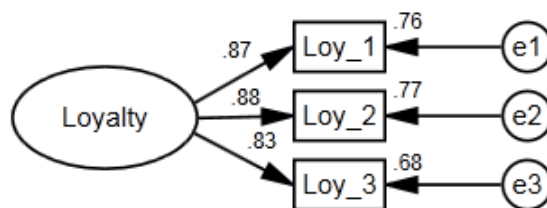


Figure 5-5: Congeneric Model of Loyalty to the Employer Brand

EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Construct

Measurements of EBE elements are newly developed. Thus, it essential to examine whether the four elements made up one construct; that is, to ensure that measurements developed in this study formed the EBE concept in the employment context (Shemwell & Yavas 1999). This step used SEM and formed part of the validation process for the concept of EBE. Additionally, this step also helped to ensure that each element was distinct from the other and to confirm that the measurements had no cross loadings.

Based on the analysis, the model fitted the data well. All factor loadings were significant and SMC values were over the 0.5 cut-off. However, as indicated by MI, Loy_3 had cross loadings with the familiarity construct. Additionally, an inspection of SRC matrix showed high values for another item (i.e., 2.00 with Exp_2). Thus, the item was removed. The model assessment improved after the removal of this item and there were no other factor-cross loadings. The model is referred to as Model 2 in Table 5-7. The final EBE multi-dimensional concept scales are shown in Figure 5-6.

Table 5-7: Assessment of Model for EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Construct

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (4 factors – 13 items)	0.160*	1.805	0.954	0.049	0.026	0.989	0.976
Model 2 (4 factors – 12 items)	0.257*	1.708	0.961	0.046	0.019	0.992	0.980

*Note: * Bollen-Stine bootstrap p-value*

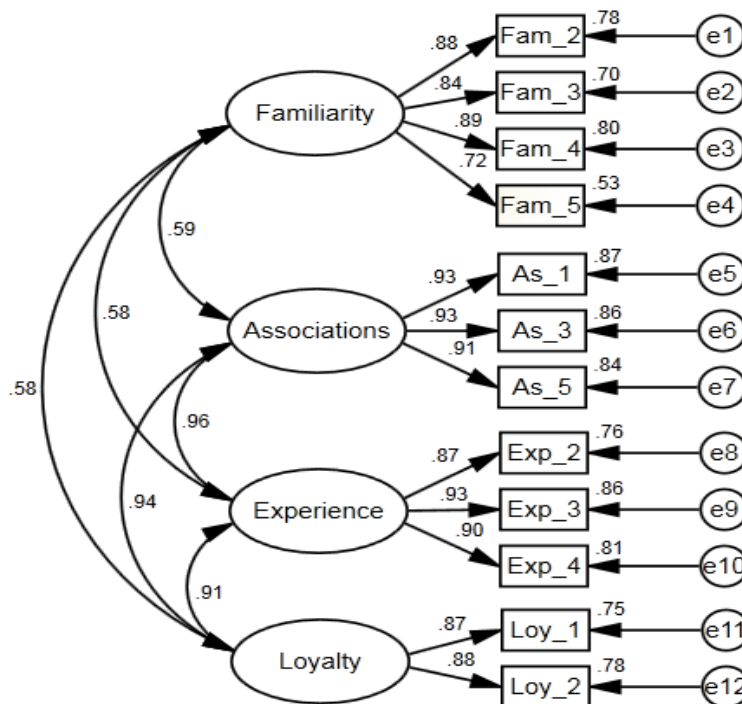


Figure 5-6: CFA Model of EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Concept

Figure shows that the constructs of employer brand associations, experience with the employer and loyalty to the employer are highly correlated. These results were not surprising; as noted before, and confirmed by research in the marketing area (e.g., Berry 2000; Biswas & Suar 2014), elements of EBE theoretically interrelate. The high correlations between these constructs and the implications of the correlations are further discussed in Section 5.5. .

5.4.5 Corporate reputation

The measurement model for corporate reputation consisted of four items. All items loaded on the construct significantly with at least 0.78 for factor loadings and 0.61 for SMC (see Figure 5-7). The overall fit indices also indicated a good fit for the model as shown in Table 5-8. Thus, the construct not modified for further analysis.

Table 5-8: Assessment of Corporate Reputation Construct Measurement Model

Model	P	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (4 items)	0.253	1.375	0.996	0.034	0.009	0.999	0.997

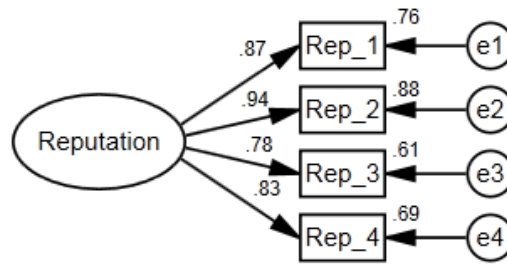


Figure 5-7: Congeneric Model of Corporate Reputation

5.4.6 CSR

Measurement of the CSR construct comprised three items. The factor loadings in the model were significant and higher than 0.7 and SMC values were also higher than the 0.5 cut-off (see Table 5-9). The assessment of fit indices showed a good model fit (see Figure 5-8). Thus, the construct structure of CSR was confirmed and the construct remained unchanged.

Table 5-9: Assessment of CSR Construct Measurement Model

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (3 items)	0.817	0.053	1.000	0.000	0.001	1.000	1.000

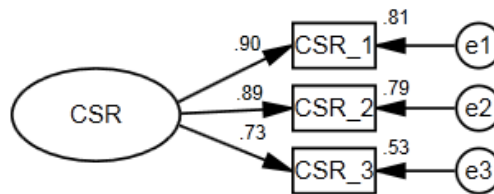


Figure 5-8: Congeneric Model of CSR

5.4.7 Job content

The original measurement for the job content construct consisted of five items. Item Tent_5 loaded significantly on the factor, but did not meet the recommended cut-off for factor loading (0.61), this also made the variance explained by the construct (SMC value) less than the cut-off value of 0.5. Additionally, the *p*-value for the measurement model was less than 0.05. Thus, this item was removed from Model 1. This removal resulted in a good fit model

for the construct as indicated by fit indices in Model 2 (see Table 5-10). The factor loadings and variance explained by each indicator are set out in Figure 5-9.

Table 5-10: Assessment of Job Content Construct Measurement Model

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (5 items)	0.005	3.354	0.981	0.084	0.022	0.989	0.985
Model 2 (4 items)	0.639	0.448	0.999	0.000	0.029	1.000	0.999

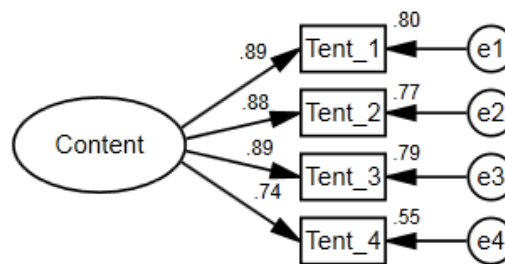


Figure 5-9: Congeneric Model of Job Content

5.4.8 Work context

The fourth antecedent of EBE is work context. The development of measurement began with seven-indicator model that failed to meet recommended values for fit indices, including *p*-value, χ^2/df and RMSEA (see Model 1 in Table 5-11). Text_1 had high values in the SRC matrix such as Text_6 and Text_2. Thus, the item was excluded from further analysis. The exclusion of this item improved the overall model fit (Model 2); however, it did not reach the required values for the three fit indices. Notably, Text_3 loaded on and predicted other items such as Text_1 (as indicated in MI and SRC). A decision was made to delete the item. This deletion produced a good model fit for work context construct (see Model 3 in Table 5-11). Factor loadings and SMC for context measurement model are set out in Figure 5-10.

Table 5-11: Assessment of Work Context Construct Measurement Model

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (7 items)	0.000	5.994	0.928	0.123	0.041	0.948	0.938
Model 2 (6 items)	0.000	5.629	0.951	0.118	0.035	0.961	0.954
Model 3 (5 items)	0.250	1.324	0.992	0.031	0.016	0.998	0.992

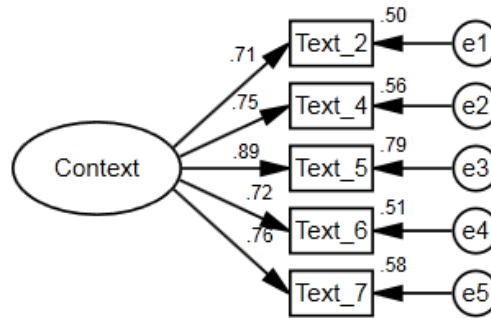


Figure 5-10: Congeneric Model of Work Context

CFA for Antecedents of EBE

A further CFA model was developed to ensure that there were no cross loading among the antecedents of EBE, corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context. The results showed that the item CSR_3 had cross loaded onto the work context construct and the SRC indicated that CSR_3 had high values with items Text_2 (1.023), Text_6 (2.283) and Text_7 (2.640). Accordingly, a decision to exclude item CSR_3 from further analysis.

5.4.9 Intention to stay

The dependent variable in the theoretical model for the employee sample was intention to stay. The data fitted the CFA model for this construct as shown in Table 5-12. Factor loadings and SMC values are presented in Figure 5-11.

Table 5-12: Assessment of Intention to Stay Construct Measurement Model

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (3 items)	0.164	1.939	0.996	0.053	0.006	0.999	0.997

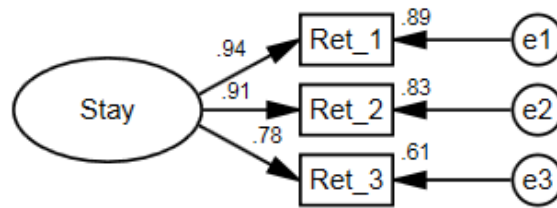


Figure 5-11 Congeneric Model of Intention to Stay

5.5. Reliability and Validity (Employee Sample)

CFA is central for scale development and measurement testing and is also indicative of measurement reliability and validity as factor loadings and SMC values form a crucial part of a reliable and valid scale (Gerbing & Anderson 1988). This section further discusses the reliability of each construct using Cronbach’s alpha and Average Extracted Variance (AVE) and the validity of each construct, including convergent and discriminant validity.

Reliability is used to ensure that the measurement procedure produces consistent scores when a measured concept does not change. It is also an essential prerequisite for measurement validity (Schutt 2009). Reliability is often measured by Cronbach’s alpha (α), which produces a score from 0 to 1.0 (a score above 0.7 is considered reliable) (Hair et al. 2010). For this study, Cronbach’s alpha (α value for all final constructs was greater than 0.7. Thus, the scales used in the present study were reliable and it was shown that the scale items measured the same concept (see Table). In addition to using Cronbach’s alpha, the present study also examined construct reliability, which is also used to measure individual construct reliability. Garver and Mentzer (1999), developed this measure, which is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Construct reliability} = \frac{(\sum \lambda)^2}{(\sum \lambda)^2 + \sum (1 - \lambda^2)}$$

This type of reliability was calculated based on the factor loading (λ) of items of the construct and error variance (Garver & Mentzer 1999). Cronbach’s alpha scores for internal consistency

and reliability for each construct are set out in Table 5-13, both indicated a high degree of reliability.

Table 5-13: Reliability Scores for Measurement Construct (Employee Sample)

Construct	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Construct Reliability	
Familiarity with employer brand	4	0.902	0.904	Reliable
Employer brand associations	3	0.946	0.946	Reliable
Experience with the employer	3	0.927	0.929	Reliable
Employer brand loyalty	2	0.866	0.866	Reliable
Corporate reputation	4	0.916	0.917	Reliable
CSR	2	0.890	0.890	Reliable
Job content	4	0.910	0.913	Reliable
Work context	5	0.871	0.876	Reliable
Intention to stay	3	0.911	0.914	Reliable

Construct validity can be established by showing how a construct is related to other constructs. A scale is valid when it measures the construct that it was intended to measure and not other constructs (Bagozzi, Yi & Phillips 1991). There are different aspects of validity, including face validity, content validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Face validity represents a researcher's confidence that the used items pertain to the meaning of the measured concept (Schutt 2009). Content validity covers the full range of the concept meaning that the items are intended to measure. These aspects of validity were examined as part of the instrument development process by seeking experts' opinions, conducting a pilot test and reviewing the literature. Established scales were used that referred to definitions of the concepts in the theoretical model. Through a rigorous approach that was subject to review during the instrument design stage, existing marketing scales were adapted and developed for elements of EBE (see Section 4.6). Both content and face validity are non-statistical; however, convergent and discriminant validity are statistical and discussed in further detail below.

Convergent validity is established when the indicators of a construct share a high proportion of variance (Hair et al. 2010). Several approaches are available to estimate the convergent

validity of a construct; for example, size of factor loadings can establish convergent validity where values greater than 0.7 indicate the convergent validity of a construct. Construct reliability is a good indicator of the convergent validity of a construct. Fornell and Larcker (1981) developed Average Variance Extracted (AVE), a widely accepted method for examining convergent validity. AVE is calculated according to the following equation:

$$AVE = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n L_i^2}{n}$$

When AVE exceeds 0.5, convergent validity is established. The results of AVE check in this study are reported in Table 5-14. All scores were above 0.5 suggesting that the indicators were representative of the latent construct and that there was convergent validity for all constructs.

Table 5-14: Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for Convergent Validity

Construct	AVE	
Familiarity with employer brand	0.703	Convergent
Employer brand associations	0.853	Convergent
Experience with the employer	0.813	Convergent
Employer brand loyalty	0.763	Convergent
Corporate reputation	0.738	Convergent
CSR	0.802	Convergent
Job content	0.726	Convergent
Work context	0.587	Convergent
Intention to stay	0.781	Convergent

5.5.1 Multi-collinearity and singularity

Several marketing studies reported high correlations among BE dimensions, associations, experience (quality) and loyalty (e.g., Chen & Tseng 2010; Davis, Golicic & Marquardt 2009). Checks of the correlations matrix revealed similar findings (see Table). Such high correlations may indicate multi-collinearity issue between predictors and singularity issues. According to Hair et al. (2010) and Tabachnick, Fidell and Osterlind (2007), high correlations

between predictors of 0.9 and above is an indication of multi-collinearity. In this sample, correlations between predictors were less than 0.9; however, some factors were highly correlated, which indicated a possible singularity issue. Highly correlated factors may share same information and lack of discriminant validity (Hair et al. 2010). Thus, it was crucial for the discriminant validity among all constructs to be checked.

Discriminant validity is of particular importance where constructs highly inter-correlate as in the case of elements of EBE. Discriminant validity is used to ensure that each construct is distinct from the other (Bryman 2003). Fornell and Larcker's (1981) approach to discriminant validity suggests that discriminant validity holds if the AVE for two constructs is greater than the square correlation between those constructs. Table 5-15 shows AVE for each construct as well as the correlation matrix. The results supported the discriminant validity of the constructs in this research. However, six coefficients (highlighted in bold) did not meet the requirement of Fornell and Larcker's (1981) condition. In addition to work context, the coefficients included the three EBE constructs (employer brand associations, experience with the employer and employer brand loyalty) where AVE was less than the squared correlation.

Thus, additional investigation was undertaken using Bagozzi, Yi and Phillips's (1991) approach for SEM models. In this approach, a Chi-square (χ^2) test of difference is used to compare the un-constrained model of the two constructs by freeing the correlation to a constrained model that fixes correlation to 1. If the χ^2 difference test shows that constraining the correlation does not significantly worsen the model fit, then the hypothesis that the two constructs are different fails, which means discriminant validity holds (Shemwell & Yavas 1999). Table 5-16 shows that the constructs were distinct from each other and, thus, the measurement had discriminant validity.

Table 5-15: Correlation Matrix with AVE (Employee Sample)

	Familiarity	Associations	Experience	Loyalty	Reputation	CSR	Content	Context	Stay	
Familiarity	0.703									Discriminant
Associations	0.592** (0.340)	0.853								Not Discriminant
Experience	0.577** (0.333)	0.957** (0.916)	0.813							Not Discriminant
Loyalty	0.581** (0.338)	0.942** (0.887)	0.908** (0.824)	0.763						Not Discriminant
Reputation	0.536** (0.287)	0.663** (0.438)	0.645** (0.416)	0.571** (0.326)	0.738					Discriminant
CSR	0.350** (0.123)	0.481** (0.231)	0.467** (0.218)	0.444** (0.197)	0.474** (0.225)	0.714				Discriminant
Content	0.548** (0.300)	0.715** (0.511)	0.687** (0.472)	0.691** (0.477)	0.521** (0.271)	0.397** (0.158)	0.726			Discriminant
Context	0.614** (0.377)	0.880** (0.774)	0.908** (0.824)	0.858** (0.736)	0.593** (0.351)	0.447** (0.200)	0.701** (0.491)	0.587		Not Discriminant
Stay	0.291** (0.085)	0.669** (0.448)	0.627** (0.393)	0.763** (0.582)	0.300** (0.09)	0.376** (0.141)	0.456** (0.208)	0.546** (0.300)	0.781	Discriminant

Note: AVE is presented on the shaded diagonal of the matrix

The squared correlation is shown between brackets, cell in bold indicates squared correlation is larger than AVE of one or more construct.

** Correlation is significant at 0.001 level (2-tailed)

Table 5-16: Chi-Square Difference Test for Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Un-constrained		Constrained		Difference in <i>df</i>	Difference in χ^2	
	df	χ^2	df	χ^2			
Associations & Experience	8	13.367	9	61.777	1	48.41	Discriminant
Associations & Loyalty	4	9.099	5	64.542	1	55.443	Discriminant
Associations & Work Context	19	46.422	20	59.462	1	13.04	Discriminant
Experience & Loyalty	4	9.301	5	39.660	1	30.359	Discriminant
Experience & Work Context	19	47.554	20	60.057	1	12.503	Discriminant
Loyalty & Work Context	13	34.749	14	44.924	1	10.175	Discriminant

Note: Difference in one df requires at least 3.84 ($p=0.05$) difference in χ^2 to be significantly different

5.5.2 Common method variance

Common method Variance (CMV) is “variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent” (Podsakoff et al. 2003, p. 879). A potential bias from Common Method Variance (CMV) may be present since the study used data from self-report method (Crampton & Wagner 1994). It may artificially affect the relationship between the predictor and the dependent variable. Although the study design included some techniques that are recommended to minimise CMV effect, such as assuring response confidentiality, single-factor technique can identify whether CMV is a major problem for the construct under examination (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Recently, researchers have used CFA to conduct the single-factor technique as a more sophisticated test of the hypothesis whether a single factor can account for all variance in the data” (Podsakoff et al. 2003, p. 889). In other words, the technique tests whether loading all construct items in the study provides acceptable fit.

Following this technique, two CFA models were established and compared. The first model (Model 1) loaded all items onto a single construct. The other CFA model (Study Model) included all the study constructs, and each item was loaded onto its original construct. Model 1 produced a poor fit for the data (Table 5-17). On the other hand, the Study Model fitted the data well indicating that CMV is not a major problem for the employee sample.

Table 5-17: Single-Factor Test Outcome (Employee Sample)

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (single factor)	0.002	8.075	0.549	0.146	0.0983	0.684	0.656
Study Model	0.136	1.617	0.894	0.043	0.0348	0.975	0.937

5.6. Congeneric Models for Measurement Constructs: Job Seeker Sample

The previous section detailed the development of the measurement scales for the study and confirmed their reliability and validity. It took an exploratory approach and used the job seeker sample to confirm the structure of the measurement scales and examine the reliability and validity of the constructs from the perspective of a second target of employer branding (Worthington & Whittaker 2006). Applying the same criteria adopted for the development of measurement models (see to Section 5.3.2), the results reported in this section show the congeneric measurement models for elements of EBE, including familiarity with the employer brand, employer brand associations and experience with the employer constructs, followed by the antecedents of EBE and company preference (the ultimate dependent variable in the job seeker model).

Table 5-18 summarises the results for the model constructs, including the factor loadings, SMC, *p*-value and fit indices for each measurement model. Using the same indicators as the employee sample, all congeneric models met the minimum recommended values for factor loadings and SMCs. The *p*-values were greater than 0.05, which is evidence that the models were correct (Byrne 2010). The fit indices met the recommended ranges for χ^2/df , GFI, RMSEA, SRMR, CFI and NFI (see Table 5-2). Given that CSR had only two items (an unidentified model), a congeneric measurement model was not tested (Brown 2012). Generally, the congeneric models for the job seeker sample strongly supported the measurements used to examine the constructs and provided an initial indication of good reliability and validity in relation to the relevant constructs (Byrne 2010; Kline 2005).

Table 5-18: Assessment of Measurement Models (Job Seeker Sample)

Construct	Item	Factor loading	SMC	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Familiarity	Fam_2	0.927	0.860	0.309	1.176	0.997	0.023	0.006	1.000	0.998
	Fam_3	0.912	0.831							
	Fam_4	0.920	0.846							
	Fam_5	0.770	0.592							
Associations	As_1	0.901	0.812	0.494	0.469	1.000	0.000	0.002	1.000	0.999
	As_3	0.913	0.833							
	As_5	0.941	0.886							
Experience	Exp_2	0.919	0.854	0.677	0.173	1.000	0.000	0.001	1.000	1.000
	Exp_3	0.913	0.881							
	Exp_4	0.924	0.844							
Reputation	Rep_1	0.921	0.848	0.115	2.164	0.994	0.059	0.007	0.998	0.997
	Rep_2	0.958	0.917							
	Rep_3	0.902	0.813							
	Rep_4	0.845	0.715							
Content	Tent_1	0.885	0.784	0.068	2.690	0.992	0.071	0.011	0.996	0.994
	Tent_2	0.899	0.807							
	Tent_3	0.862	0.742							
	Tent_4	0.772	0.596							
Context	Text_2	0.879	0.772	0.562	0.783	0.995	0.000	0.007	1.000	0.997
	Text_4	0.839	0.704							
	Text_5	0.922	0.851							
	Text_6	0.855	0.730							
	Text_7	0.875	0.765							
Preference	Att_1	0.926	0.858	0.413	0.670	0.999	0.000	0.001	1.000	0.999
	Att_2	0.949	0.900							
	Att_3	0.939	0.882							

EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Concept (Job Seeker Sample):

Similar to the measurement confirmation undertaken for the employee sample, a CFA model was developed for elements of EBE in the job seeker model consisting of familiarity with employer brand, employer brand associations and experience with the employer. This step was undertaken to confirm the structure of EBE as a multi-dimensional concept and

determine if there was any cross loadings for the measures. This step also ensured that EBE measures would be valid for use in measuring the EBE concept.

The data from this sample fitted the model well; significant loadings met the recommended values. SMCs exceeded the 0.5 cut-off value (see Figure 5-12). The model also met the criteria required for a good model fit (see Table 5-19).

Table 5-19: Assessment of EBE Multi-Dimensional Construct Measurement Model

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (3 factors – 10 items)	0.064*	2.036	0.962	0.056	0.025	0.991	0.983

Note: * Bollen-Stine bootstrap *p*-value

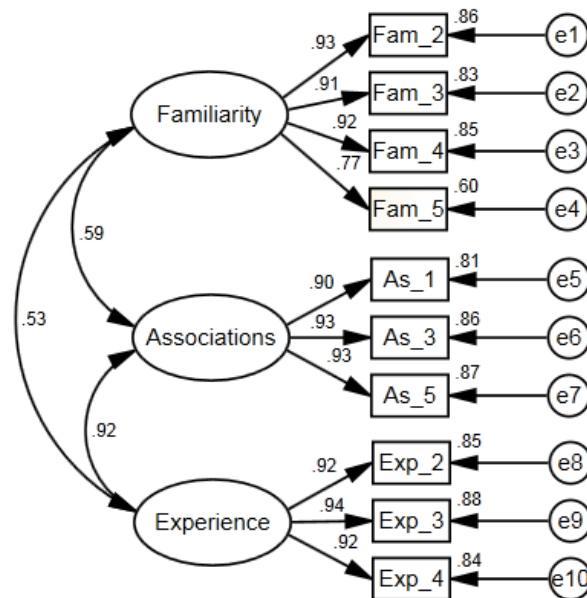


Figure 5-12: CFA Model of EBE Multi-Dimensional Concept (Job Seeker Sample)

Similar to Phase 1 of the analysis (i.e., the employee sample), an additional CFA was performed on all antecedents of EBE to ensure that there was no cross loading among the predictors of EBE elements. The results showed no cross loading and the SRC did not have high values (Hair et al. 2010). In this step, the loading of CSR items and SMC was inspected. The loading for items CSR_1 and CSR_2 were 0.938 and 0.939, respectively. These results confirmed the capability of the CSR measurement for further analysis.

5.7. Reliability and Validity (Job Seeker Sample)

The same approach used for the job seeker sample was adopted to check the reliability and validity of the employee sample. Table 5-20 sets out the findings for the job seeker sample, including the correlation among the model constructs. Both Cronbach's alpha and construct approaches showed a high degree of reliability across all constructs. Further, AVE values met the 0.5 requirement for convergent validity.

Correlations between antecedents of EBE (predictors) were less than 0.9 (Hair et al. 2010; Tabachnick, Fidell & Osterlind 2007); however, some correlations were considered high, indicating a possible singularity and discriminant validity issue that required further investigation. It was somewhat concerning that the AVE was not greater than the squared correlation between the following pairs of constructs: employer brand associations and experience with employer; employer brand associations and work context; experience with employer and work context; and work context and job content. Thus, the analysis followed Bagozzi, Yi and Phillips's (1991) approach for discriminant validity testing using SEM models. A Chi-square (χ^2) test of difference was used to ensure that the highly correlated constructs were distinct. Table 5-21 shows the χ^2 tests of difference between constrained and un-constrained models. The results show that these constructs were distinct and also provides evidence of discriminant validity. A further step examined whether CMV is a major issue in this data set. Table 5-22 reports the single-factor test result, which indicates that CMV is not a major problem in the job seeker sample since the one-factor model (Model 1) produced a poor fit while the Study Model fitted the data well.

Table 5-20: Correlation Matrix with Cronbach's Alpha (α), Construct Reliability and AVE (Job Seeker Sample)

	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Construct Reliability	Familiarity	Associations	Experience	Reputation	CSR	Content	Context	Preference		
Familiarity	0.933	0.935	0.782								Convergent	Discriminant
Associations	0.941	0.942	0.588** (0.346)	0.842							Convergent	Not Discriminant
Experience	0.948	0.949	0.533** (0.284)	0.922** (0.850)	0.859						Convergent	Not Discriminant
Reputation	0.948	0.949	0.470** (0.221)	0.831** (0.691)	0.779** (0.607)	0.823					Convergent	Discriminant
CSR	0.936	0.937	0.594** (0.353)	0.682** (0.465)	0.667** (0.444)	0.665** (0.442)	0.937				Convergent	Discriminant
Content	0.915	0.916	0.497** (0.247)	0.828** (0.686)	0.851** (0.724)	0.666** (0.449)	0.539** (0.290)	0.733			Convergent	Not Discriminant
Context	0.941	0.942	0.565** (0.319)	0.881** (0.776)	0.937** (0.878)	0.766** (0.586)	0.671** (0.450)	0.864** (0.746)	0.587		Convergent	Not Discriminant
Preference	0.960	0.960	0.478** (0.228)	0.812** (0.660)	0.753** (0.567)	0.642** (0.412)	0.527** (0.278)	0.659** (0.434)	0.679** (0.461)	0.890	Convergent	Discriminant

Note: AVE is presented on the shaded diagonal of the matrix

The squared correlation is shown between brackets, cell in bold indicates squared correlation is larger than AVE of one or more construct

** Correlation is significant at 0.001 level (2-tailed)

Table 5-21: Chi-Square Difference Test for Discriminant Validity (Job Seeker Sample)

Constructs	Un-constrained		Constrained		Difference in <i>df</i>	Difference in χ^2	
	<i>df</i>	χ^2					
Associations & Experience	8	13.367	9	61.777	1	48.41	Discriminant
Associations & Work context	19	33.486	20	54.589	1	21.103	Discriminant
Experience & Work context	19	30.583	20	51.012	1	20.429	Discriminant
Work context & Content	26	53.899	27	58.654	1	4.755	Discriminant

Note: Difference in one df requires at least 3.84 ($p=0.05$) difference in χ^2 to be significantly different

Table 5-22: Single-Factor Test Result (Job Seeker Sample)

Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI
Model 1 (single factor)	0.002	10.156	0.519	0.156	0.0870	0.712	0.691
Study Model	0.106	1.641	0.902	0.044	0.0294	0.981	0.954

5.8. Chapter Summary

The study analysis followed a two-step approach in examining the theoretical model and the study hypotheses. Prior to the analysis, the collected data was prepared and examined to ensure its suitability and readiness. This chapter focused on the first step of the approach and described the development of the measurement models and the process use to confirm their reliability and validity. As set out above, the results of the employee sample met all the requirements for the factor loadings; SMC's and fit indices for some EFA practices. The measurement for all constructs was found to be reliable and valid and the measures were similarly confirmed for the job seeker sample. Issues arose in relation to the high correlations between some constructs; however, further investigation showed that these correlations did not have a significant impact on the study results. Thus, step one of the approach was completed and the measurement models were deemed ready for path model estimation.

The next chapter focuses on the second step of the approach; that is, the empirical examination of the theoretical framework and the exploration of the various models that applied to the study context. It also presents the results for the study hypotheses tests and illustrates the size of effect in each relationship. Additionally, Chapter 6 reports the findings for the multi-group variance analysis, which potentially exist due to the impact of moderating variables.

Chapter 6: Study Results (Path Model and Multi-group Analysis)

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents findings for the research model and multi-group analysis. It also adopts Gerbing and Anderson's (1988) approach in relation to the data analysis of SEM models. The first step of Gerbing and Anderson's approach validated the measurement models through CFA and affirmed the validity and reliability of the study constructs (see Chapter 5). Further analysis is conducted in this chapter in accordance with step two of Gerbing and Anderson's approach. Specifically, this chapter examines and explains the model specification and estimation processes. The examination of two separate models is described and the results of full path model tests for each sample are reported. Based on the significance of the model paths and Modification Indices (MI), re-specified models are introduced and examined. Finally, Chapter 6 also reports the findings for the multi-group analysis and assessments of moderating variables effects are performed.

6.2. Path Model Specification

Following the development of measurement scales, a full path model was specified. Error terms were created for endogenous latent variables (i.e., dependent variables), including familiarity with the employer brand, employer brand associations, experience with the employer, loyalty to employer brand and intention to stay (for the employee sample), and company preference (for the job seeker sample). Additionally, exogenous latent variables (corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context) were allowed to correlate (Byrne 2010; Kline 2005). Due to the complexity of the models and for clarity, indicators, co-variances between exogenous latent variables and error terms were not depicted in the figures.

6.3. Full Path Model Estimation

The path model evaluation was conducted using the guidelines suggested by Byrne (2010), Hair et al. (2010) and Kline (2005) for model fit criteria (see Table). Also, recommendations from MI provided by AMOS were used in relation to the theoretical considerations. The model analysis was run using the ML approach with the Bollen-Stine bootstrap technique for adjusted p -value enabled (500 samples) (Brown 2012). Following Cohen's (1988) classification of the strength of regression coefficients (β), the effect is considered small when the value of β is less than 0.1, medium when the value of β is approximately 0.3 and large when the value of β is greater than 0.5. The sample size for both employees and job seekers was acceptable for path model testing models (Lei & Lomax 2005). It should also be noted that GFI was reported cautiously as it is sensitive to the complexity of the model where a large number of parameters are to be estimated, as was the case in this study (Kline 2005).

Given that the aim of the study was to explore the role of EBE in the labour market and to examine whether EBE for employment customers is driven by different factors, the full path model of employees and job seekers were examined separately, allowing the different roles that EBE antecedents have in building the EBE of a company to be examined. The model from the employee perspective is presented first.

6.4. Test of Conceptual Model and Hypotheses Support (Employee Sample)

To be able to test the hypotheses from the perspective of employee, the initial theoretical model (see Figure 6-1) was first tested, and accordingly re-specified models were established and examined, this section details the results of these tests.

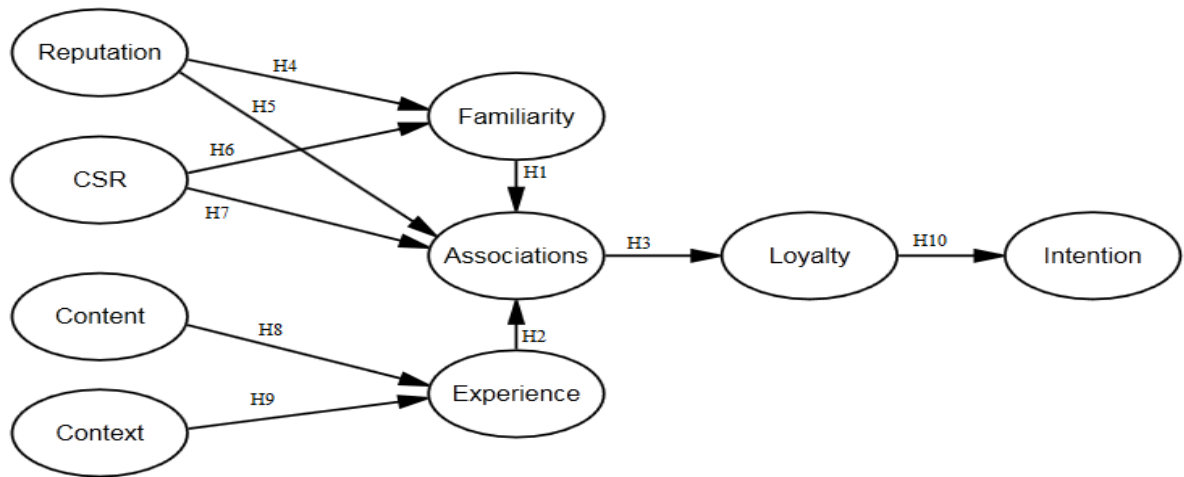


Figure 6-1: Theoretical Integrated Model of EBE (Employee Perspective)

6.4.1 Assessment of model fit

The model achieved a satisfactory level of fit. The p -value was found to be significant ($p = 0.028$), the GFI was marginally less than the 0.9 cut-off and all other fit indices showed adequate fit for the model (Table 6-1). Incremental indices showed good fit for the model with a CFI of 0.964 and a NFI of 0.925. Fit indices supported the good fit for χ^2/df , which fell within the preferred range with 1.829. RMSEA was 0.050 and SRMR was 0.072. The parsimony index for the path model was acceptable (PNFI = 0.827) (Byrne 2010). Given sensitivity of GFI in complex models and despite a significant p -value, all other indicators pointed to a good fit for this model. Accordingly, the study hypotheses were tested.

Table 6-1: Assessment of Initial Research Path Model (Employee Sample)

Path Model	p	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI	PNFI
Model 1	0.028*	1.829	0.873	0.050	0.072	0.964	0.925	0.827

Note: * Bollen-Stine bootstrap p -value

6.4.2 Path testing and hypotheses support

Given the model fit, the structural paths of the model were examined. The hypotheses testing provided support for seven of the hypotheses; however, three hypotheses were rejected (see Table 6-2).

Hypotheses 1 and 2 stated:

H_{1a}: Employees' familiarity with an employer brand is positively related to employer brand associations.

H_{2a}: Employees' perceptions of their experience with an employer are positively related to employer brand associations.

These two hypotheses examined effects within the elements of EBE. Mixed results were found. Familiarity with an employer brand was not significantly related to associations; however, experience with an employer revealed the opposite. The effects size for familiarity (β) was 0.044 ($p > 0.01$). Accordingly, Hypothesis 1a was rejected. Conversely, Hypothesis 2a was strongly supported and the results showed a large effect for experience with an employer on employer brand associations ($\beta = 0.891$ at $p < 0.001$).

Hypothesis 3 stated:

H₃: Employees' perceptions of employer brand associations are positively related to loyalty to an employer brand.

In relation to third hypothesis, within the EBE elements, employer brand associations were confirmed to be a predictor for loyalty to an employer brand at $p < 0.001$. As the only hypothesised predictor for loyalty to an employer brand, employer brand associations explained 86.5% of the variance in the loyalty latent variable.

Hypothesis 10 stated:

H₁₀: Employees' loyalty to an employer brand has a positive effect on intention to stay.

Intention to stay was the ultimate dependent variable in the employee version of the research model. Loyalty to an employer brand was expected to have a positive influence on employee intention to stay with current employer. The results supported this hypothesis and confirmed that loyalty to an employed had a large effect on employee's

intention to stay ($\beta = 0.734$ at $p < 0.001$). The total variance explained in the ultimate dependent variable in the model was 53.9%.

Hypotheses 4 and 6 stated:

H_{4a}: Employees' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.

H_{6a}: Employees' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.

It was hypothesised in Chapter 3 that corporate reputation is positively related to familiarity with the employer brand. The results supported this hypothesis and showed that corporate reputation has a strong positive impact on the level of familiarity with the employer ($\beta = 0.496$ at $p < 0.001$). However, despite the support that the results provided for Hypothesis 6a (i.e., that there was a positive relationship to familiarity with an employer brand), the effect was relatively small with $\beta = 0.129$ at $p = 0.05$. These findings confirmed the strong influence that corporate reputation has on employees' familiarity with their employers and showed the relatively small, yet significant, effect of CSR on employees. Further, these two antecedents showed a total of 32.3% explained variance in familiarity.

Hypotheses 5 and 7 stated:

H_{5a}: Employees' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on employer brand associations.

H_{7a}: Employees' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.

In the theoretical model, it was proposed that both corporate reputation and CSR have a positive impact on employer brand associations. Somewhat surprisingly, however, it was found that the predictors were not significantly related to employer brand associations. The relationship path from CSR to associations was very weak ($\beta = 0.034$); however, the effect of corporate reputation was greater ($\beta = 0.059$) and closer to

significance (with a critical ratio = 1.631). Accordingly, Hypotheses 5a and 7a were rejected. Based on findings from Hypotheses 1a, 2a, 8a and 7a, the total variance explained in employer brand associations was 92.5%.

Hypotheses 8 and 9 stated:

H_{8a}: Employees' perceptions of job content are positively related to experience with the employer.

H_{9a}: Employees' perceptions of work context are positively related to experience with the employer.

The results supported a positive relationship between job content and work context. The path from work context was very high ($\beta = 0.845$ at $p < 0.001$). Thus, Hypothesis 9a was confirmed: the context of work is an antecedent for experience with the employer. Additionally, the effect of job content on experience of the employee with the employer was significant ($\beta = 0.110$ at $p < 0.05$). Both predictors explained 85.7% of the variance in employee's experience with the employer.

Table 6-2: Results of Hypotheses Tests (Employee Sample)

Hypothesis	Path	Standardised Effect	Critical Ratio	Support
H _{1a}	Familiarity → Associations	0.044	1.492	Not Supported
H _{2a}	Experience → Associations	0.891	20.743	Supported **
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	0.930	21.341	Supported **
H _{4a}	Reputation → Familiarity	0.496	7.885	Supported **
H _{5a}	Reputation → Associations	0.059	1.631	Not Supported
H _{6a}	CSR → Familiarity	0.129	2.134	Supported *
H _{7a}	CSR → Associations	0.034	1.164	Not Supported
H _{8a}	Job content → Experience	0.110	2.240	Supported *
H _{9a}	Work context → Experience	0.845	13.529	Supported **
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	0.734	12.668	Supported **

Note: ** $p < 0.001$; * $p < 0.05$

6.4.3 Model re-specification and final model

In light of the test results, a model re-specification was undertaken to obtain a better model fit and a more parsimonious model (Gerbing & Anderson 1988). A stepwise approach for the model re-specification was followed. This approach moves from a confirmatory mode of model testing to a more exploratory analysis, which allows competitive models to be examined. Thus, better fitting and more parsimonious models are more likely obtained. First, non-significant paths were removed, one at a time, starting with the path with smallest critical ratio. Then, MI from AMOS was inspected to identify any fixed paths that could potentially be improved. It should be noted that larger MI values provide stronger evidence and statistical justification for path(s) to be added. However, such decisions are not made solely on statistical findings; rather decisions are made based on important theoretical considerations (Hair et al. 2010).

As stated above, the re-specification began the by removing the smallest regression path, which was between CSR and employer brand associations. This change resulted in a significant path being found from corporation reputation to employer brand associations (H_{5a}). This left the model with only one non-significant relationship between familiarity with the employer and employer brand associations. This path (H_{1a}) was then removed from the model. Overall, there were no change to the p -value ($p = 0.028$) and fit indices remained unchanged. The research also inspected the MI and found that a possible path from work context to familiarity with the employer brand existed. Accordingly, a new path was included in the model and a theoretical explanation sought.

A review of the literature on employee did not reveal the existence of any relationship between work context and familiarity with employer brand; however, an examination of the organisational development literature provided a basis for understanding how this relationship was established. In particular, two features of work context explain the positive impact of work context on familiarity with employer brand. According to Dymock and McCarthy (2006), supervisors are seen as a source for feedback and provide clarification of organisational issues such as goals. Further, previous research found that perceived supervisor support increases willingness to share knowledge in the

work context within the organisation (Cabrera, Collins & Salgado 2006; Kulkarni, Ravindran & Freeze 2007). Finally, having clear organisational policies makes employees feel that they know more about the workplace environment.

After a regression path from work context to familiarity with the employer was established, the path from CSR to familiarity with the employer variable (H_{6a}) became non-significant. The significant small effect of CSR on familiarity became non-significant and the effect size dropped to $\beta = 0.05$ at $p > 0.1$. Consequently, these changes left CSR with no structural paths. Thus, a χ^2 difference test was undertaken to examine whether dropping CSR from the model would significantly improve the model. The results of this test are set out in Table 6-3 and confirmed that the model improved significantly after CSR was dropped.

Table 6-3: Chi-Square Difference Test for Model Comparison

Model 2 Including CSR		Model 2 Excluding CSR		Difference in <i>df</i>	Difference in χ^2	Result
<i>df</i>	χ^2	<i>df</i>	χ^2			
391	668.484	339	560.746	52	107.738	Significantly different

*Note: Difference of 50 *df* requires at least 67.50 ($p=0.05$) difference in χ^2 to be significantly different*

Indeed, dropping CSR from the model resulted in a more parsimonious model with better fit indices. Specifically, p -value was non-significant ($p = 0.154$), indicating that the model was correct. Incremental fit indices were within the recommended range (CFI = 0.974 and NFI = 0.937) and RMSEA and SRMR indices also fell within the recommended ranges (at 0.045 and 0.045, respectively). Notably, χ^2/df (1.654) and PNFI (0.841) provided a good indication that the model was parsimonious (Byrne 2010). The assessment of model fit after modifying the initial model is detailed in Table 6-4.

Table 6-4: Assessment of Re-specified Path Model (Employee Sample)

Path Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI	PNFI
Model 2	0.154*	1.654	0.891	0.045	0.045	0.974	0.937	0.841

Note: * Bollen-Stine bootstrap *p*-value

Hypothesis Test for the Re-specified Model

The re-specification process produced a model that fitted the data better; however, some structural paths of the model were affected. The effect size for the positive impact that corporate reputation had on familiarity with the employer (H_{4a}) decreased to 0.239. Interestingly, Hypothesis 5a, which predicted a positive impact of corporate reputation on employer brand associations, became significant, albeit the effect was small ($\beta = 0.082$ at $p < 0.05$). Hypotheses 2a, 3, 8a and 9a changed slightly and the new path from work context to familiarity with the employer had medium to large effect ($\beta = 0.478$). The final model also incorporated adjustments in total variance explained by the variables predictors (see Table 6-5 and Figure 6-2). Variance explained in familiarity variable increased to 42.9%; however, explained variance in other dependent variables remained unchanged (aside from small changes of 0.01 and 0.03%).

Table 6-5: Results of Hypotheses Tests for Re-specified Model (Employee Sample)

Hypothesis	Path	Standardised Effect	Critical Ratio	Support
H_{2a}	Experience → Associations	0.912	21.456	Supported **
H_3	Associations → Loyalty	0.931	21.966	Supported **
H_{4a}	Reputation → Familiarity	0.239	3.706	Supported **
H_{5a}	Reputation → Associations	0.082	2.683	Supported *
H_{8a}	Content → Experience	0.103	2.104	Supported *
H_{9a}	Work context → Experience	0.849	13.516	Supported **
H_{10}	Loyalty → Intention	0.736	12.737	Supported **
New	Work context → Familiarity	0.478	7.041	Supported **

Note: ** $p < 0.001$; * $p < 0.05$

A comparison of the conceptual model with the final model showed that the re-specification process improved the model significantly. CSR showed clear theoretical relevance to the study context; however, surprisingly, its effects on familiarity and associations were relatively small in the presence of other antecedents, including in relation to corporate reputation for current employees. The results indicated that this could limit the role CSR plays in the presence of other factors. Removing the insignificant path between CSR and associations led to the corporate reputation to association path becoming significant at $p < 0.05$; thus, the path remained in the final model. The relationships between EBE elements were found to be significant, except in relation to paths from familiarity to associations that were not strong enough to remain in the model, such that familiarity with the employer brand had a non-significant effect on associations.

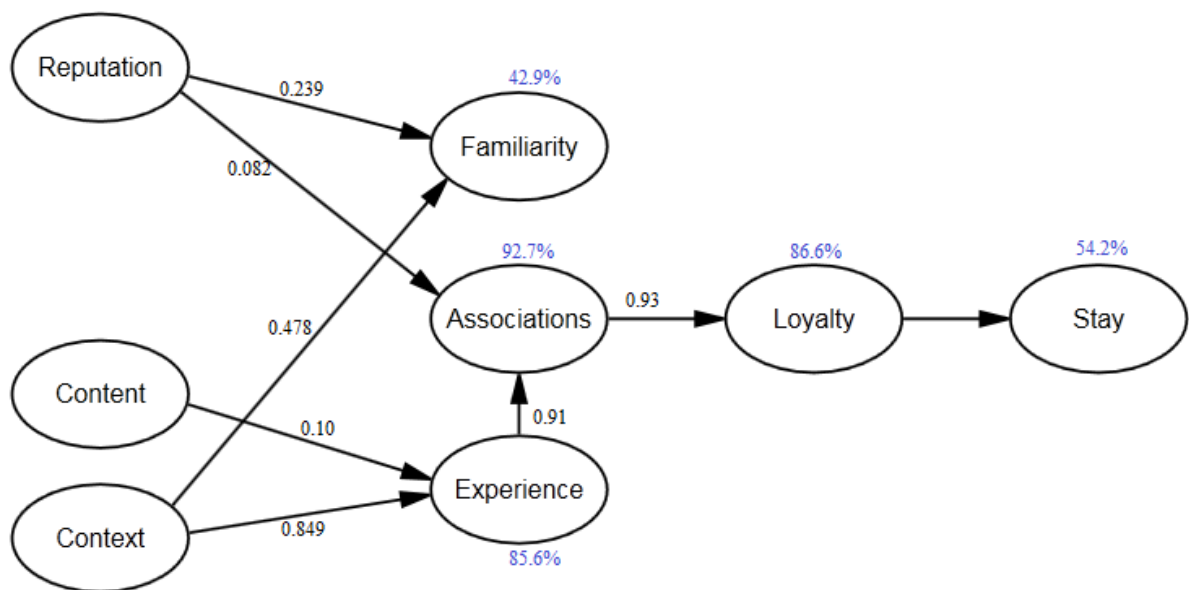


Figure 6-2: Integrated Model of EBE (Employee Perspective)

6.4.4 Multi-group analysis (Employee Sample)

A multi-group analysis of variance was also conducted to determine whether the final model was invariant across various groups (Kline 2005). Since the previous research found influence for moderating variables, the analysis considered whether these variables would moderate the paths in the final model and change the significance of

the relationships. Statistically, the analysis checked if the significant paths in the SEM model significantly differed between groups using the Chi-square test of difference. If the difference between models was found to be significant, then the equality argument for those models must be rejected (Byrne 2010).

The analysis tested the model invariance against age, gender, qualification, employees' years of experience and tenure. The analysis also examined whether industry type (product or service based) and the quality of the product/service provided by the employer moderated the model relationships. The three age groups were created based on equal intervals; however, a mean-split approach was used to form the groups for employees' years of experience, tenure, industry type (Appendix F shows the classification of each organisation based on industry) and quality of product/service. Table 6-6 shows the group classification for each variable.

Table 6-6: Group Classification for Moderating Variables (Employee Sample)

Variable	Mean	Groups
Age	N/A	18-29 years → younger 30-40 years → middle 41-52 years → older
Gender	N/A	→ Male → Female
Qualification	N/A	High school, diploma → group 1 Bachelor → group 2 Masters, PhD → group 3
Length of experience	Mean score = 13.3 years	Years ≥ 14 → Longer Years ≤ 13 → Shorter
Length of tenure	Mean score = 5.9 years	Years ≥ 6 → Longer Years ≤ 5 → Shorter
Industry type	N/A	→ Product → Service
Quality of product/service	Mean score = 5.37	Quality ≥ 6 → High Quality ≤ 5 → Low

Note: N/A = Not Applicable

The results of multi-group analysis are presented in Appendix G. As shown in the Chi-square test tables, variances existed between groups in relation to the structural paths

strength. This occurred for the path from work context to experience between employees with longer and shorter work experience. The effect of work context on employee's experience with the employer is stronger for employees with less years of work experience; however, the path remained significant for both (see Table 6-7). The other affected path was from associations to loyalty, whereby employer brand associations had a stronger effect on loyalty for newer employees (see Table 6-8). The third path found was from reputation to familiarity and was moderated by the type of industry. The strength of the effect for corporate reputation on familiarity was stronger for products (see Table 6-9). There were some significant differences in the strength of paths in the model between the groups; however, the paths remained significant, indicating that the effect from the predictor to the independent variable still exists.

Table 6-7: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Length of Work Experience Groups

Hypothesis	Path	Short		Long	
		Critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	Critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value
H _{9a}	Context → Experience	9.621	***	7.294	***

Table 6-8: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Length of Tenure Groups

Hypothesis	Path	Newer		Older	
		Critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	Critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	19.184	***	11.931	***

Table 6-9: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Product vs. Service

Hypothesis	Path	Product		Service	
		Critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	Critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value
H _{4a}	Reputation → Familiarity	3.524	***	2.193	.028

6.5. Conceptual Model Test and Hypotheses Support (Job Seeker Sample)

Following the same procedures and guidelines used for the employee sample, an analysis for the study model from the perspective of job seekers was performed. Based

on the hypotheses testing results, a re-specification of the conceptual model was also undertaken (see Figure 6-3).

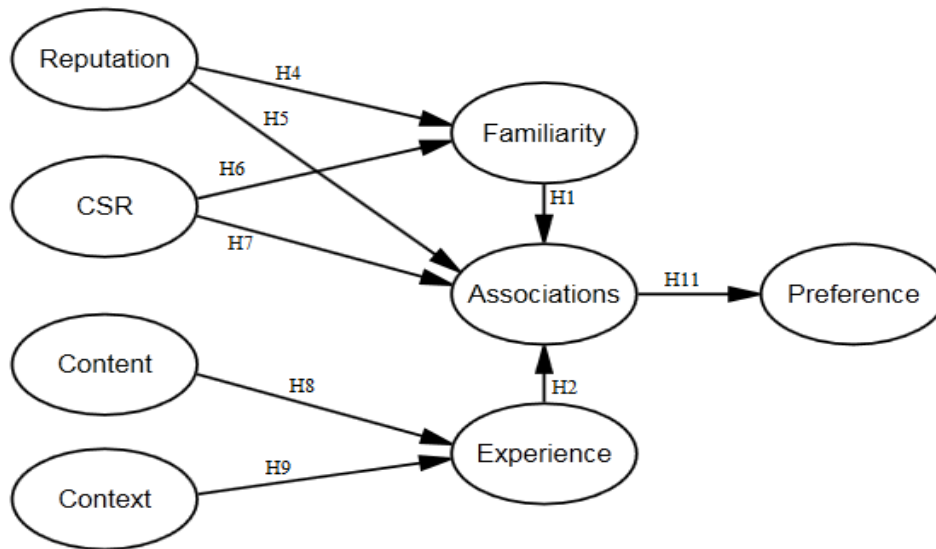


Figure 6-3: Theoretical Integrated Model of EBE (Job Seeker Perspective)

Note: H₃ and H₁₀ are not applicable to job seekers

6.5.1 Assessment of model fit

The conceptual model fitted the data well for the job seeker sample. The *p*-value was found to be significant (*p* = 0.054). Fit indices were within recommended range (χ^2/df = 1.721, RMSEA = 0.046 and SRMR = 0.047), except for the GFI value (0.891), which was slightly lower than the recommended 0.900, but still very close to the accepted range (see Table 6-10). Further, the PNFI parsimony index showed a good result of 0.842 (Byrne 2010). Overall, the model was deemed to be good. Accordingly, hypotheses testing proceeded.

Table 6-10: Assessment of Conceptual Structural Model (Job Seekers)

Path Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI	PNFI
Model 1	0.054*	1.721	0.891	0.046	0.047	0.978	0.950	0.842

*Note: * Bollen-Stine bootstrap p-value*

6.5.2 Path testing and hypotheses support

Given the good model fit, the structural paths of the model were examined. The results of hypotheses testing supported eight hypotheses and only one hypothesis was not accepted (see Table 6-11).

Hypotheses 1 and two 2 stated:

H_{1b}: Job seekers' familiarity with an employer brand is positively related to employer brand associations.

H_{2b}: Job seekers' perceptions of their experience with an employer are positively related to employer brand associations.

The results for hypotheses one and two confirmed the impact of familiarity and experience with an employer on employer brand associations. Unlike the results for the employee sample, the data from the job seeker sample supported a small effect for familiarity with employer on associations ($\beta = 0.110$ at $p < 0.001$). A stronger effect for experience with employer and associations was found at $p < 0.001$ ($\beta = 0.655$).

Hypotheses 4 and 6 stated:

H_{4b}: Job seekers' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.

H_{6b}: Job seekers' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on the level of familiarity with an employer brand.

It was predicted in the conceptual model that corporate reputation and CSR would be positively related to familiarity. The results confirmed the effects for the two antecedents on familiarity. Corporate reputation had a small effect $\beta = 0.141$ at $p < 0.05$ (H_{4b}), while CSR had a stronger effect $\beta = 0.505$ at $p < 0.001$ (H_{6b}). Both predictors explained a total of 37.1% of the variance in familiarity, accounting for less variance in familiarity compared to the findings of current employees.

Hypotheses 5 and 7 stated:

H_{5b}: Job seekers' perceptions of corporate reputation have a positive effect on employer brand associations.

H_{7b}: Job seekers' perceptions of CSR have a positive effect on employer brand associations.

The test for positive relationships between corporate reputation and CSR on associations revealed mixed findings. Corporate reputation showed a medium effect on associations ($\beta = 0.284$ at $p < 0.001$ (H_{5b}); however, the CSR prediction path to associations was not supported ($\beta = 0.002$, critical ratio = 0.040) and, thus, Hypothesis 7b was rejected. In relation to the effect of familiarity (H_{1b}) and experience with the employer (H_{2b}), corporate reputation and CSR explained 89% of the variance in employer brand associations.

Hypotheses 8 and 9 stated:

H_{8b}: Job seekers' perceptions of job content are positively related to experience with the employer.

H_{9b}: Job seekers' perceptions of work context are positively related to experience with the employer.

These two hypotheses examined the impact of job content and work context on the experience of the employee with the employer. Similar to findings in the employee sample, the results showed an effect for work context ($\beta = 0.804$ at $p < 0.001$); however, job content had a less significant effect on experience ($\beta = 0.161$ at $p < 0.05$). Collectively, the two antecedents accounted for 89.7% of variance in the experience with the employer element.

Hypotheses 11 stated:

H₁₁: Employer brand associations have a positive impact on company preference.

In predicting the ultimate dependent variable in the job seekers version of the model, the employer brand associations' element was found to be a strong predictor of job seekers' company preferences ($\beta = 0.805$ at $p < 0.001$). The total variance explained this preference and accounted for 64.7% of the variance in the associations.

Table 6-11: Results of Hypotheses Tests (Job Seeker Sample)

Hypothesis	Path	Standardised Effect	Critical Ratio	Support
H _{1b}	Familiarity → Associations	0.110	3.490	Supported **
H _{2b}	Experience → Associations	0.655	14.970	Supported **
H _{4b}	Reputation → Familiarity	0.141	2.161	Supported **
H _{5b}	Reputation → Associations	0.284	6.709	Supported **
H _{6b}	CSR → Familiarity	0.505	7.454	Supported **
H _{7b}	CSR → Associations	0.002	0.040	Not Supported
H _{8b}	Content → Experience	0.162	2.741	Supported *
H _{9b}	Work context → Experience	0.804	12.716	Supported **
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	0.805	19.250	Supported **

Note: ** $p < 0.001$; * $p < 0.05$

H₃ and H₁₀ are not applicable for job seekers

6.5.3 Model re-specification and final model

The re-specification process was performed taking into account the strong support for the model. Thus, the process started by removing the non-significant path from the model (i.e., the path from CSR to employer brand associations). This step was followed by an inspection to SRC and MI. As no significant improvement to the model was found, the model was deemed final.

Removing the non-significant path did not significantly change the model; however, it provided a slight positive enhancement to the parsimony indices. As set out in Table 6-12, p -value remained at 0.054, Normed Chi-square (χ^2/df) decreased slightly to 1.716 and PNFI increased to 0.844. However, the paths in the model and the explained variance in the dependent variables (almost) otherwise remained unchanged. For a list of the final supported hypotheses see Table 6-13.

Table 6-12: Assessment of Re-specified Path Model (Job Seeker Sample)

Path Model	<i>p</i>	χ^2/df	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR	CFI	NFI	PNFI
Model 2	0.054*	1.716	0.891	0.046	0.047	0.978	0.950	0.844

Note: * Bollen-Stine bootstrap *p*-value

Table 6-13: Results of Hypotheses Tests for Re-specified Model (Job Seeker Sample)

Hypothesis	Path	Standardised Effect	Critical Ratio	Support
H _{1b}	Familiarity → Associations	0.111	3.910	Supported *
H _{2b}	Experience → Associations	0.655	15.471	Supported **
H _{4b}	Reputation → Familiarity	0.141	2.161	Supported **
H _{5b}	Reputation → Associations	0.284	6.999	Supported **
H _{6b}	CSR → Familiarity	0.505	7.488	Supported **
H _{8b}	Content → Experience	0.162	2.732	Supported **
H _{9b}	Work context → Experience	0.804	12.395	Supported **
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	0.805	19.200	Supported **

Note: ** $p < 0.001$; * $p < 0.05$

H₃ and H₁₀ are not applicable for job seekers

Aside from removing a single structural path, the final model for the job seeker sample did not have any significant changes. All hypotheses (except H_{6b}) were accepted; this provided support for the conceptual model. In relation to rejection of Hypothesis 4b, the CSR effect on associations was not supported and CSR only effected familiarity with the employer, albeit the effect was strong. Relationships between EBE elements were supported, providing evidence for the effects of familiarity and experience with the employer on employer brand associations. In particular, the results supported a strong influence for associations on company preference of job seekers, accounting for 64.7% of variance in the construct. The final model, including standardised path size and variance, is presented in Figure 6-4.

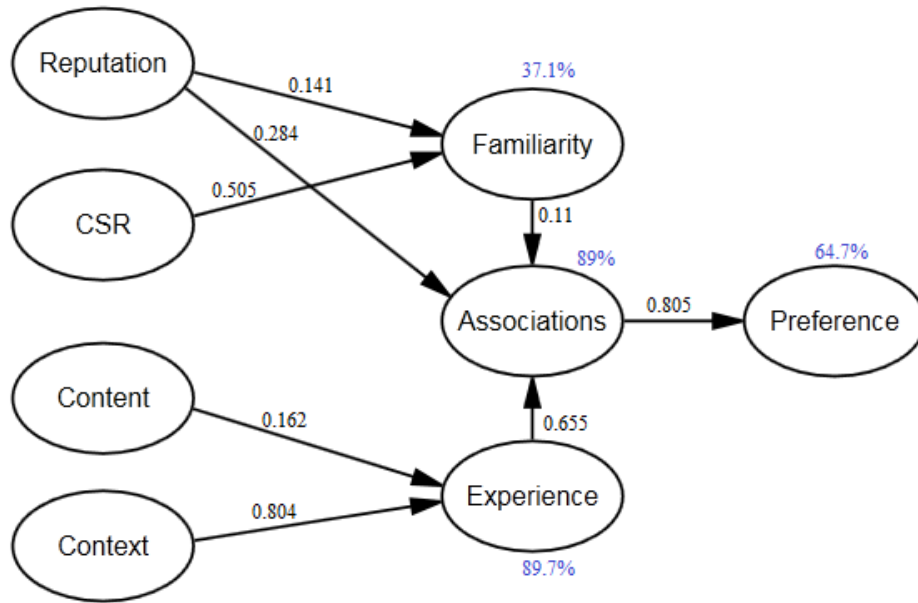


Figure 6-4: Integrated Model of EBE (Job Seeker Perspective)

6.5.4 Multi-group analysis (Job Seeker Sample)

The multi-group analysis for the job seeker sample followed the same approach as in the employee sample. As the average of work experience job seekers and quality of product/service differed, the mean scores have been calculated and reported in Table 6-14.

Table 6-14: Group Classification for Moderating Variables (Job Seeker Sample)

Variable	Mean	Groups
Length of experience	Mean score = 11.4 years	Years \geq 12 → Longer Years \leq 11 → Shorter
Quality of product/service	Mean score = 4.95	Quality \geq 5 → Higher quality Quality \leq 4 → Lower quality

The results of the multi-group analysis for job seekers are presented in Appendix H. the analysis revealed that length of work experience, qualification, industry type and quality of product/service moderated some significant paths in the model. The path from corporate reputation to employer brand associations was significant for the

younger and middle-aged groups, but not for older job seekers. This indicated that corporate reputation had no impact on employer brand associations for job seekers between 41 and 52 years of age. There was also a significant difference for the path from employee’s experience to employer brand associations and this path remained significant across the three groups (see Table 6-15).

Table 6-15: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Age Groups

Path	Younger		Middle-aged		Older	
	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value
Reputation → Associations	2.737	.006	6.388	***	1.178	.239
Experience → Associations	10.451	***	9.642	***	5.677	***

Additionally, the qualifications of job seekers moderated two paths in the final model (see Table 6-16). In relation to job seeker with Masters or PhD qualifications, corporate reputation had no significant effect on employer brand associations. The path from job content to experience was significant for the same group (Group 3); however, it was weaker for job seekers with bachelor degrees (at $p = 0.01$) and for job seekers with lower qualifications, job content had no effect on employee’s experience. Thus, the lower qualification of the job seeker the weaker the path from job content to experience becomes. A third path moderated by job seekers’ qualifications was found from experience to associations. Such that, the higher the qualifications of the job seekers, the weaker the effect employee experience had on employer brand associations. However, for the three groups this path remained significant. Overall, job seekers’ qualifications showed an impact on the strength of three paths in the model and for corporate reputation to employer brand associations and content to experience it converted the path to become insignificant for Groups 3 and 1, respectively.

Table 6-16: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Qualification Groups

Path	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3	
	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value
Reputation → Associations	4.579	***	6.332	***	-.765	.445
Content → Experience	.958	.338	1.673	.094	4.459	***
Experience → Associations	10.008	***	9.521	***	7.244	***

The type of industry moderated one path in the model: CSR to familiarity. The effect for CSR on familiarity was weaker for services than products; but, it remained significant at $p = 0.05$ (see Table 6-17). The quality of the product/service produced by an employed moderated three paths in the model (see Table 6-18). The path of content to experience was insignificant for lower quality products/services, this indicated that employees' perceptions of job content did not affect their perceived experience with the employer when the company produced lower quality products/services. Conversely, the quality of the product/service moderated the effect for work context on employee experience with employers' and employees' experience of employer brand associations. The quality decreased the effect for the former path and increased it for the later path (both paths remained significant).

Table 6-17: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Product vs. Service

Path	Product		Service	
	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value
CSR → Familiarity	6.928	***	2.794	.005

Table 6-18: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – Quality of Product/Service

Path	Lower		Higher	
	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value	critical ratio	<i>p</i> -value
Content → Experience	-.594	.553	4.491	***
Context → Experience	9.390	***	6.841	***
Experience → Associations	7.051	***	12.759	***

In summary, the multi-group analysis for the job seeker sample showed a more moderating effect for the examined variables compared to the employee sample. Work experience, tenure and type of industry moderated some paths in the current employee analysis, but the model paths remained significant across all groups. Conversely, moderating length of work experience, qualification and quality of product/service led to some paths in the job seeker model becoming insignificant. In particular, the effect of job content on employee experience with the employer was affected by job seekers' qualifications and the quality of the employers' product/service.

6.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter detailed the completion of the second step of Gerbing and Anderson's (1988) approach and examined the structural path model for both the employee and job seeker samples. It presented an assessment of the original models and explained the steps followed to achieve the final model for each sample. The research hypotheses were then examined and reported for each sample. Familiarity with the employer brand was found to significantly impact employer brand associations for job seekers; however, it had no significant effect for employees. The other relationships among the elements of EBE were significant. In terms of the antecedents, corporate reputation predicted familiarity with the employer brand and employer brand associations in the employee sample. Job content and work context had a significant effect on employee experience with the employer. CSR, however, had no effect on familiarity with the employer brand and employer brand associations in the presence of other antecedents; thus, it was removed from the model. The also analysis revealed an additional path from work context to familiarity with employer brand, which was supported by theory. Conversely, the test of hypotheses for the job seeker sample provided support for all proposed relationships except for the impact of CSR on employer brand associations.

The chapter also explored invariances among the groups within a set of variables and showed some differences between the groups in the job seeker model. Length of work experience, qualification and quality of product/service led to four paths in the job

seeker model becoming insignificant. However, while the moderating variables affected some paths in the employee sample, the model paths remained significant. The results reported in this chapter provided empirical evidence that helped to address the research questions. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusions

7.1. Introduction

The scant employer branding studies in academic research motivated this study, which is aimed at exploring the role that EBE plays in the labour market. In particular, this study examines the effect of EBE on job seekers and employees. Based on an extensive review of the employee attraction and retention literature and an understanding of branding and brand equity theories from marketing, a conceptual framework was developed that incorporates influential factors, elements of EBE and employer branding outcomes. Data from job seekers and employees were collected and analysed to provide empirical evidence for the conceptual framework. The results were presented in Chapters 2 and 3. In addition to developing a valid and reliable measurement scale for the elements of EBE, the antecedents of EBE were examined simultaneously for each model (job seeker and employee).

In this chapter, the study findings are discussed in more detail in eight sections. The chapter begins with a discussion of EBE and its elements for both job seekers and employees. The findings from the employee model are then interpreted, followed by a discussion of the findings from the job seeker model. The fourth section compares and contrasts the findings of the two models. Next, theoretical contributions to the knowledge of employer branding are provided, as well as managerial implications for practice. The chapter concludes by acknowledging some limitations in the present study and directions for future research.

7.2. EBE as a Multi-Dimensional Construct

Despite the considerable interest in EBE (e. g. Berthon, Ewing & Hah 2005; Collins & Kanar 2013), there have been no empirical attempts to investigate it. Some researchers, such as Moroko and Uncles (2008) and Edwards (2010), have called for the use of marketing theories to understand the nature and role of EBE in the labour market. However, EBE has remained an unclear concept, even though it offers the potential to

boost attraction and retention outcomes. Thus, empirical support for a conceptual structure of EBE was needed in order to understand the extent to which marketing branding theory helps in developing EBE in the employment setting. Previous conceptualisations have proposed elements of familiarity and associations (e.g., Cable & Turban 2001), as well as loyalty to the employer brand for employees (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004), as sub-constructs of EBE. This study adds experience with the employer element as an essential part of EBE.

The first part of the present study focused on identifying and examining the elements of EBE in the employment context. It established and confirmed the dimensions of the EBE construct for both internal and external audiences of employer branding. The EBE concept in the present study consists of familiarity with the employer brand, employer brand associations and experience with the employer. Further, employer brand loyalty is an additional element for those who have actually experienced the employer brand. Measurement scales for the four sub-constructs were found to be reliable and valid over the two study samples. Consistent with Biswas and Suar (2014), the employer brand constructs are highly interrelated. Accordingly, the findings of the EBE constructs provide further support for the application of the marketing branding theory to the HR setting.

In contrast to previous conceptualisations, this study has enriched the understanding of EBE by including experience with the employer. This newly introduced element was adapted from the service branding context, in which the value in individual-brand relationships is experienced. This extends the set of benefits that Ambler and Barrow (1996) listed for employer brands in earlier marketing literature. While they named psychological, economic and functional benefits for employer brands, there is still an important benefit that recent branding literature has highlighted and that is more applicable to a relational context—that is, the experience of a brand. Similarly, employees receive the value of benefits through their experience with the organisation. In an employer–employee relationship, these aspects can only be experienced; they cannot be packaged by the organisation or taken home by employees. Employees’ experience is a contact point(s) through which the employer facilitates and compensates employees’ contributions to the organisational goals. Showing care for employees and

consistently providing high-quality benefits (tangible and intangible) in a working environment that is positively perceived by the employment customer form a crucial part of EBE.

7.2.1 EBE in attraction and retention contexts

Although the three common sub-constructs of EBE showed a high degree of reliability and validity, interrelationships between these elements differed in strength, indicating divergent roles in attracting and retaining employees. While familiarity with the employer brand was found to positively relate to employer brand associations for job seekers (H_{1b}), it was not strong enough to influence the same construct for employees (H_{1a}). That is, impressions of an employer can be developed by making information available for job seekers. Thus, more signals about the organisation become available for job seekers, which more likely leads to positive and strong employer brand associations. In other words, greater familiarity provides job seekers with a reason to join the organisation, thus decreasing uncertainty about their decision when they evaluate the overall attractiveness of an organisation for future employment (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). The relationship between familiarity and employer attractiveness in previous research has been mixed. For example, Allen, Mahto and Otondo (2007) found no significant effect of familiarity on organisational attractiveness. Luce, Barber and Hillman (2001) and Lievens, Hoye and Schreurs (2005) reported a significant direct effect of familiarity on attractiveness. However, the present study proposes that the influence of familiarity on attraction is determined by the overall employer brand associations formed about an organisation (Brooks et al. 2003). Therefore, the findings supported H_{1b} and provided evidence for the effect of familiarity on employer brand associations in job seeker attraction.

Further, the impressions that job seekers form about employees' experience with the employer had a strong positive effect on employer brand associations. As conceptually defined, employee experience is an employment customer's subjective response regarding the exchange process; thus, it is employment-related and its value is perceived by job seekers. When a job seeker has a positive attitude towards his or her future experience with a potential employer, strong positive employment associations

are built, which (with other associations) form the overall impression of the organisation and the value of the benefits offered for being an employee (H_{2b}). The employer becomes more preferred for a job seeker when the organisation is perceived to have an attractive set of employment benefits. The latter link between associations and company preference (H_{11}) is similar to Cable and Turban (2003) findings, which showed that the feeling of being a member of an organisation influenced intention to pursue employment. Further, this finding supported Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) proposed effect of associations on the perception of employer attraction.

In contrast, the internal EBE model reported slightly different results. Familiarity with the employer the brand had no effect on employer brand associations (H_{1a}). This unexpected finding may be because employees build beliefs about the organisation through their experience rather than what they know, which may moderate their prior knowledge beliefs. From a customer–brand relationship perspective, the primary influence on brand meaning (associations) for those who have experienced the brand is their experience (Berry 2000). Thus, employees in the employer branding context evaluate what they know based on what they are actually experiencing. For example, when the company internally promotes features about the workplace environment, employees judge that message (knowledge) based on their real experience. Nevertheless, this finding in particular does not underestimate the role of familiarity as part of internal EBE, as it may affect other employment outcomes, such as employee engagement (Haines III et al. 2011).

However, psychological contract research provides some evidence especially for new comers to the organisation. While information prior to joining can help in creating a psychological contract for the employment relationship, employee experience with the employer will lead to contract changes and updates (Lee et al. 2011). Socialising and learning efforts help individuals develop more an accurate evaluation to the relationship and the benefits that the employer brand actually offers.

Consistent with service brand equity, the main predictor of employer brand associations for employees is their experience (H_{2a}). Employees assess the delivery of tangible and

intangible benefits in return for their contribution of time and effort. By offering a distinctive experience, employers can differentiate themselves from competitors (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). This is supported by the study results, as employees' experience appeared to be the most powerful predictor of employer brand associations. As explained by SET, having a positive relationship with an employer evolves over time (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). Greater perceived value and benefits generate loyalty (H₃), which means that the overall positive evaluation of the employer brand leads employees to attach and identify themselves with the company. Thus, they feel committed to maintain the relationship with the employer (H₁₀).

In summary, the research findings provide further support for the value of applying a marketing framework to the employment context. The results confirmed the multi-dimensions of EBE, namely, familiarity with the employer brand, employer brand associations and experience with the employer. In addition, the fourth dimension of loyalty to the employer brand was identified for EBE for employees. In the case of job seekers, employer brand associations were driven by familiarity and experience to ultimately influence company preference, explaining 64 per cent of its variance (H₁₁). For employees, employer brand associations were predicted only by employees' experience. However, the element of employer brand associations was a strong driver for loyalty to the employer brand (H₃), which in turn predicted and explained 54 per cent of employees' intention to stay (H₁₀). The next section discusses research questions two and three of the study.

7.3. Key Antecedents for EBE

The employer branding literature emphasises the importance of EBE in the labour market. A review of the employee attraction and retention literature revealed that factors at the organisational and job levels influence individuals' perceptions. Four factors in particular were examined in this study: corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context. This study investigated the effect of each of these antecedents on EBE from the perspective of employment customers. This section discusses the findings of each perspective, beginning with internal employer brand customers (employees).

7.3.1 Building internal EBE

The first part of the study analysis examined the influence of corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context on EBE from the perspective of employees. The results varied regarding these factors. While corporate reputation, job content and work context were confirmed to be key drivers for EBE elements, CSR was not related (see Section 5.4). This section interprets these findings.

7.3.1.1 Effect of corporate reputation on elements of EBE

Corporate reputation was confirmed to be an antecedent for two elements of EBE: familiarity with the employer brand and employer brand associations. The construct of corporate reputation in this study measured how employees think their organisation is perceived externally (Alniacik et al. 2011; Highhouse, Brooks & Gregarus 2009). Previous research has examined the effect of corporate reputation on employee attitudes such as organisational commitment and intention to quit (e.g., Alniacik et al. 2011). The results extended the effect of corporate reputation to employee familiarity and impressions of the organisation.

The first effect of corporate reputation in the internal EBE context was on familiarity with the employer brand (H_{4a}). A stronger reputation increases employees' familiarity with the benefits they receive for being a member of a well-recognised organisation. Corporate reputation in this instance provides employees with important information about aspects such as position in the market and the company's commitment to society (Haines III et al. 2011). When the organisation is well recognised and respected, it receives more publicity and visibility, and more external parties know and talk about it (Cable & Turban 2003), which gives employees (such as other stakeholders) exposure to more information about their employer. For example, a company with a stronger reputation is more likely to be discussed in the media and compared to other companies (e.g., Fortune 500 reports).

Analysis of the data also showed that while information received through corporate reputation contributes to employees' familiarity with the employer brand, the latter had no significant effect on employer brand associations. This seems to ignore the effect of such information on the impressions that employees form of their employer. However, it can be explained because such information (by itself) had no effect on employees' attitudes towards their employer, but the way that information is perceived by external constituents is influential (H_{5a}). Thus, corporate reputation increases employees' self-esteem and the pride they feel in being part of a well-regarded organisation (Carmeli 2004). These feelings translate into psychological benefits that contribute to the total value received from an employer brand (Cable & Turban 2003).

In general, employees prefer to join companies that have a positive reputation (Brooks et al. 2003). An average reputation may be acceptable, but avoiding a negative reputation is essential for employer attractiveness (Bourhis & Mekkaoui 2010). When the level of reputation becomes unfavourable, it creates inconsistency between what employees believe and how their employer is perceived externally. As a result of holding two conflicting beliefs, cognitive dissonance (defined by Bem (1967) as the pressure experienced as a result of inconsistent cognitions) occurs, and corporate reputation in this case will have a negative effect on employer brand associations and overall EBE (Brooks et al. 2003; Helm 2011). Although familiarity with the employer brand has no direct effect on employer brand associations, corporate reputation as part of EBE may still be important for other outcomes, such as employee performance.

7.3.1.2 Effect of job content on elements of EBE

Another antecedent for EBE is job content, which is the predicted effect on an individual's experience with the employer (H_{8a}). While there is little research exploring employer branding from the employee's perspective, there is a considerable amount of research in the OB and applied psychology literature investigating the importance of job attributes in employee satisfaction and commitment. Hackman and Lawler (1971) and Hackman and Oldham (1976) discussed the effect of a job that is perceived as challenging and that makes use of an individual's skills and abilities. From one side, job content represents the employee's contribution to the organisation. On the other side,

for employees, the role that is assigned reflects the meaningfulness of the task that the employee is responsible for, and it shows that the organisation values the employee's contribution (Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002).

This study found that a challenging and meaningful job that allows the use and development of skills and abilities had a significant effect on employees' experience with the employer and eventually overall EBE. This finding is consistent with employer branding research. In their qualitative study, Maxwell and Knox (2009) classified types of work as part of the employment attributes that were part of the attractive 'lived' benefits. The current study supported their findings and showed that job content affects employees' experience in particular. The effect is explained as a type of positive feeling of competence and worth that the employee obtains by doing a useful and challenging job (Eisenberger et al. 2001). It could also be the joy that occurs by working on an interesting task that is worth doing for its own sake (Demerouti 2006). Therefore, job content drives the experiential benefit with the employer.

7.3.1.3 Effect of work context on elements of EBE

The third key antecedent of EBE is work context, which affects two elements of EBE: experience with the employer and familiarity with the employer brand. Work context explains the condition in which the job is being performed. As was expected in this study, work context had a strong positive effect on employees' experience with the employer. It confirmed that when the organisation offers an attractive work context and benefits to employees, it improves their experience and thus builds stronger internal EBE (H_{9a}). These results supported the case study findings of Maxwell and Knox (2009), who found that the characteristics of work context were important in the internal employer branding context. Consistent with perceived organisational support literature, an attractive work context makes the value exchange between the employer and the employee more pleasant, and it gives employees a feeling that their contribution is highly regarded, so employees perceive their organisation as a 'caring employer' (Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro 1990).

The additional relationship as shown in the re-specified model was the effect of work context on familiarity with the employer (H_{New}). This relationship is supported and can be explained by the theory from the organisational development literature. For example, Dymock and McCarthy (2006) highlighted the role of work context and the immediate supervisor in particular in making employees aware of the organisation and its plans. In this, the work context facilitates learning about the organisation by sharing information, plans and goals. The findings that emerged from this relationship clearly showed that work context had a stronger effect compared to job content and other antecedents in building EBE internally. Offering jobs that employees perceive as attractive and establishing a work context that recognises employees' contributions lead to a high-quality experience with the employer. Although monitoring work context is a challenging task because of the complexity of, and interaction among, the work context determinant, giving work context priority in employer branding activities is essential because it has a greater influence over other factors.

7.3.1.4 Effect of CSR on EBE

The CSR effect in the internal EBE context was not established in the presence of corporate reputation, job content and work context (H_{6a} & H_{7a}). This study focused on organisational contributions to social and non-social stakeholders (Turker 2009). Although this is the first study to examine the effect of CSR on employees in the employer branding context, this finding was not expected because it was not consistent with earlier research that found an effect of CSR on employees' familiarity, commitment and retention. For example, like other corporate stakeholders, employees learn about their employer from CSR activities that are conducted in the wider community (Aguinis & Glavas 2012). Further, Turker (2009) reported a strong CSR relationship in employees' commitment to their employer. Hence, the present findings seem contrary to extant literature. A possible reason for this inconsistency appears to be that CSR may have an indirect effect on employees through other factors. Brammer, Brooks and Pavelin (2006) found that CSR initiatives enhance corporate reputation, which means that reputation may mediate the internal effect of CSR.

From an SET view, corporate reputation, job content and work context are perceived as core benefits because they predict the value of employer brand. Greater value for these three factors leads to higher value for the overall exchanged benefits offered by the employer (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore 2007). As seen in the study findings, work context provided a stronger effect in building value for the employer brand compared to other factors. Such findings indicate that the experienced benefits are more influential in maximising the employer's contribution in the employer brand relationship. For employers, the value that they provide encourages employees of choice to develop loyalty and stay with the employer (Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002). In the research model, loyalty to an employer brand and intention to stay are the ultimate outcomes of the two elements of internal EBE: employer brand associations and experience with the employer. Therefore, building stronger EBE encourages employees to develop loyalty over time and ultimately stay with the employer. Notably, the results were consistent among different groups of age, gender, qualification, length of employee experience and tenure, as well as the quality of the product/service that the organisation provides.

In summary, the findings of the present study confirmed the relevance of corporate reputation, job content and work context to internal EBE. More specifically, corporate reputation affects both familiarity with the employer brand and employer brand associations. Further, job content and work context affect experience with the employer. Additional effects of work context on familiarity with the employer brand were reported. However, unlike what was proposed in Chapter 3, CSR had no effect on elements of EBE in the presence of corporate reputation, job content and work context. The next section discusses the findings from the job seeker sample.

7.3.2 Building external EBE

The second part of the study examined the influence of the same factors on EBE from the perspective of job seekers. The effect of organisational and job attributes on job seekers has attracted considerable attention in the employer branding literature (e.g., Bonaiuto et al. 2013; Chhabra & Sharma 2014; Van Hoya et al. 2013). Studies such as Van Hoya et al. (2013) examined organisational and job attributes and employer personality (image) using an instrumental-symbolic framework on a student sample.

Bonaiuto et al. (2013) also examined employer brand attributes on employers' attractiveness to final-year students (using Emp Att scale from Berthon, Ewing & Hah 2005). This study extended extant knowledge by surveying actual job seekers and examining the influence of four major factors on EBE simultaneously. The results confirmed corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context as key antecedents of EBE (see Section 5.6). The next section discusses these findings in detail.

7.3.2.1 Effect of corporate reputation on elements of EBE

Corporate reputation affected two elements of EBE: familiarity with the employer brand and employer brand associations (H_{4b} & H_{5b}). The study results supported the effect of corporate reputation on familiarity with the employer brand for job seekers. These findings are consistent with findings from previous studies such as Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager (1993) and Cable and Turban (2003), which measured corporate reputation differently using Fortune 500 reports and found that it related to familiarity with the employer. However, this study measured the corporate reputation of a potential employer through how job seekers think their employer is perceived by the public. It showed that because a reputable company receives more publicity, it signals general information as well as employment-related information to job seekers, thereby increasing their familiarity with its employer brand (Turban & Greening 1996). Further, it is likely that a minimal level of familiarity with the employer (such as awareness of the company's logo) initiates a node or link in job seekers' minds, enabling easier information storing related to that company (Keller 1993). This may explain the strong role of reputation in building job seekers' cumulative knowledge.

In addition, corporate reputation had a significant effect on employer brand associations, as it provides job seekers with a reason to join (Brooks et al. 2003). In this context, it adds up to employer brand associations and positively enhances job seekers' impressions of the organisation. Reputation also signals organisational attributes and behaviours so that job seekers can make inferences about the company (Cable & Turban 2001); a job seeker links potential benefits, such as feeling proud of being a member of that company. For example, when a company is known for its high-quality

products, job seekers make inferences about the job required and the work environment that may work in if they join.

Multi-group analysis revealed an important finding, which is that corporate reputation had no effect on the employer brand associations element for two groups of job seekers. The first group was job seekers aged 41–52; the non-significance may indicate that older job seekers are more critical when they look for an employer. They are not influenced by how the organisation is perceived by others; rather, they consider the nature of the job they would do and the context in which they would like to work. This somewhat complements Wilden, Gudergan and Lings (2010) findings that younger groups may want to work for a stronger employer brand to kick-start their career. The second group was job seekers who had a postgraduate qualification (i.e., masters or PhD). Previous research has shown that education has a negative relationship with perception of reputation (e.g., Newburry, Gardberg & Belkin 2006), which means that a stronger corporate reputation leads to less positive overall impressions. However, this study found that reputation had no effect on highly educated job seekers. This finding may be interpreted as highly educated job seekers being more critical in their employment decision and placing more importance on the type of work, so they do not rely on reputation to infer the nature of their future job, and thus the overall familiarity with the employer determines their employer brand associations. With consideration to ethical aspects of the recruitment process, companies that focus on a specific segment may design an appropriate recruitment message that will work more effectively in the target segment rather than communicating generic traditional advertising.

7.3.2.2 Effect of CSR on elements of EBE

The findings for CSR in the external EBE context were mixed. While CSR had a significant positive effect on familiarity with the employer brand (H_{6b}), it had no effect on employer brand associations (H_{7b}). This finding is consistent with past research. For example, Luce, Barber and Hillman (2001) found that CSR has a significant positive influence on undergraduate students' familiarity with potential employers. Unlike Luce, Barber and Hillman (2001) study, which examined CSR using profiles of the Kinder, Lydenberg, Domini & Co. (KLD) Company, the present study examined CSR on the

basis of how CSR contributions are perceived by job seekers. It found that CSR increases familiarity with the employer in the labour market by increasing visibility of the employer brand and signalling information regarding the social activities and practices that the employer performs. Thus, job seekers become more familiar as a result of more exposure to the employer's social performance.

In contrast, the non-significant relationship between CSR and employer brand associations was unexpected. According to Greening and Turban (2000), potential employees are more likely to have a higher self-image when they join a socially responsible company. The present study's result is also contrary to Bonaiuto et al. (2013) findings of CSR as an important feature of an 'ideal' employer brand. This different finding may have occurred because the suggested potential employers in the present study met a standard contribution that may be perceived as 'usual' or 'essential' CSR practices, and thus the participants' impressions were not influenced by CSR. This is possible because respondents in Bonaiuto et al. (2013) study perceived that 'real' employer brands lacked social responsibility compared to 'ideal' employers. Another possible explanation for this finding is that CSR may not directly affect job seekers' impressions, but it may contribute to familiarity with the employer, which in turn influences employer brand associations for that company. This explanation receives support from Turban and Greening (1996), who found that unfamiliarity quickly decreases as perceptions of the company's CSR increases. A third potential reason may be the methodological difference, given that findings from using fictitious organisations may not extend to real practice (Cable & Turban 2003). Overall, using CSR for building EBE externally has a strong direct effect on familiarity with the employer brand and a potentially indirect influence (through reputation and/or familiarity) on employer brand associations, which may play an important role in attracting better-quality employees.

7.3.2.3 Effect of job content on elements of EBE

The effect of job content (such as challenging tasks) on perceived employee experience with the employer was supported (H_{8b}). The job features send signals regarding the type of work to the labour market. Thus, job attributes determine the perception of the likely experience with the employer. A more useful and challenging job that requires learning

and using skills will shape job seekers' perceptions of their future experience with the potential employer. The result is similar to previous research that examined the relevance and importance of job content to potential employees. For example, Cable and Turban (2003); Highhouse et al. (1999); Knox and Freeman (2006) examined the influence of various sets of job features on job seekers. However, while previous studies linked job content to employer attractiveness directly, this study tested its effect on the perception of employee experience as an element of EBE, thus revealing a reason behind this preference.

In terms of the group differences that emerged from the multi-group analysis for this relationship, the effect of job content on perceived employee experience was moderated by the qualification that the job seeker has. That is, the perception of employee experience with an employer for job seekers with a qualification lower than a bachelor degree was not influenced by how they perceived job content. They may believe that they have a lower chance to compete for a more attractive job compared to more educated people (Newburry, Gardberg & Belkin 2006). Trank, Rynes and Bretz Jr (2002) provided an alternative explanation, which is that job seekers with a higher qualification are more likely to have high cognitive ability and place greater importance on achievement and challenging and interesting jobs than those with a lower educational qualification.

The other moderating factor that affects the relationship between job content and experience is the quality of the product/service that the employer provides. This finding suggests that job content has a greater effect on evaluations of future experience with an employer that offers a higher-quality product/service, but it has no effect when a low-quality product/service is produced. When the product/service is of low quality, job seekers may not perceive the work as challenging and useful, which makes the job less attractive. Thus, it does not affect perceptions of experience with the employer. This highlights another intersection between marketing and HR practices, in which product quality may moderate how job content affects perceptions of experience with the employer.

7.3.2.4 Effect of work context on elements of EBE

The results also confirmed the effect of the work context (such as a supportive supervisor) on job seekers' perceptions of the experience with the employer (H_{9b}). As the strongest predictor of EBE elements, work context attributes send signals to job seekers that determine their impressions of likely experience with a potential employer. Therefore, it is more likely that job seekers' impressions of future employment are strongly shaped by work context signals that are available in the labour market. Considerable research has examined the relevance of various sets of work context characteristics in the employer branding literature (for example Bonaiuto et al. 2013; Catanzaro, Moore & Marshall 2010; Elving et al. 2013; Knox & Freeman 2006). These studies directly linked those characteristics to employer attractiveness. However, this study extended extant knowledge and showed that, in order to promote the perception of an attractive experience to future employees and enhance EBE, companies must place much consideration into conveying the best work context features.

Although the study results showed that work context is the main driver of external EBE, promoting work context to job seekers is a challenging task. While multi-group analysis did not reveal differences among groups, work context features are not equal in terms of importance for job seekers; thus, which features should be portrayed may depend on the nature of the labour market and the industry (Alshathry et al. 2014). In addition, impressions of work context features can be influenced by factors other than employer branding practices. As discussed earlier, impressions of some work context features may be drawn upon or inferred from other factors, such as CSR (Aguilera et al. 2007). Such challenges highlight the need for a clear external branding strategy for organisations.

In summary, the findings in this section confirmed that corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context are important antecedents of EBE. Corporate reputation and CSR increase familiarity with the employer brand, whereas only reputation contributes to employer brand associations. Further, both job content and work context determine the perception of employee experience with the future employer. Multi-group analysis showed that corporate reputation did not predict employer brand associations for older

as well as highly educated job seekers. Moreover, job content had no effect on perceived experience with the employer for less educated job seekers. Further, the quality of the product/service moderated the same relationship. A lower-quality product makes the effect of job content less significant. The next section discusses a comparison between the role of the four antecedents in building internal and external EBE.

7.4. Antecedents of EBE: Comparing Internal and External Perspectives

Researchers have argued for EBE to be an indicator of employer branding initiatives' success. However, these initiatives may not have the same role in promoting employer attractiveness internally and externally. Therefore, the third research question considered whether the same antecedents have a similar influence on job seekers and employees. The study results revealed that there were differences for the external factors (corporate reputation and CSR) and also in the role of familiarity with the employer brand. In addition, the study showed a consistent effect of job content and work context in both perspectives of EBE.

One fundamental difference between internal and external EBE lies in the nature of the role of employee familiarity with the employer. Although theoretical and empirical support shows that it is an essential element of EBE, it had little effect on employees' impressions of the employer and ultimately the contribution to employee retention, as employees heavily rely on their experience with the employer. Given the small effect of corporate reputation (and no effect of CSR), work context was the most powerful contributor to EBE. This makes a negative employee experience difficult for a company to overcome in its employer branding initiatives, regardless of what marketing strategies and communications it applies. It is less likely that an employee will stay with an employer that offers low-quality experiential benefits, even if it has a good reputation; however, an employee with longer work experience may enjoy working for a less reputable employer.

Conversely, level of familiarity with the organisation influenced job seekers' impressions and in turn employer attractiveness. This highlights the role of employee

familiarity in building EBE externally. Given that job seekers do not have direct employment interactions with the employer and only have a perception of experience, employer brand communications have a greater influence on building EBE. There is no other way for job seekers to evaluate experience with an employer than to interpret the available signals. Therefore, the chances for shaping job seekers' perceptions using employer branding communications are greater compared to employees. This difference highlights the importance of level of familiarity in employer branding research for employee attraction in particular.

In terms of the effect of the four examined factors, the correlation patterns for job seekers were stronger than in the employee model (see Table 6.1). This indicates similarities among employer brand attributes in employee attraction. Job seekers are more likely to evaluate the organisation as a whole entity as a result of information scarcity, thus inferring some features from each other. For Cable and Turban (2003), job seekers use corporate reputation to infer job-related attributes such as job challenges, and they also use job attributes such as salary to make inferences about others, such as opportunity for advancement. Such an understanding can be linked with the marketing branding concept, in which the overall evaluation of a brand is extended to other attributes of the product/service. Therefore, an evaluation of the attributes is based on the overall favourability of a brand (Dick, Chakravarti & Biehal 1990). A lack of perfect knowledge of the benefits and experience offered by an employer makes job seekers uncertain and perceive higher risk, particularly because an important decision such as an employment has vital personal consequences (Wilden, Gudergan & Lings 2010). Given the time and effort requirements needed to minimise risk and increase certainty, the 'inference approach' for organisational and job attributes seems to be the norm for job seekers in the evaluation process of employer brands.

However, correlations between the antecedents in the employee's model were weaker (see Table 6.2), which indicates that employees have a disaggregated perspective of employment aspects and are more likely to have an evaluation for each factor. For example, an employee may have a positive evaluation for corporate reputation but a negative impression of cooperation in the work environment. To some extent, this contradicts the recent findings of Ito, Brotheridge and McFarland (2013), who reported

that employees with longer service have a more cohesive image of the company compared to those who are new to the organisation. The difference in results could be attributed to the fact that some HR practices may reshape an individual's perception of the organisation's new employee orientation (e.g., Holton 1996). Another potential reason for the different findings is that employees in an organisation deal with different organisational agents (such as HR managers), who can be seen as representative of the organisation, and they may have a different experience with each agent (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore 2007). In smaller organisations such as childcare, which was the context for Ito, Brotheridge and McFarland (2013) study, such parties may not exist (managers and supervisors are responsible HR for practices); therefore, the employee perceives a more cohesive image because of the dual role of the parties.

7.4.1 Internal v. external EBE: antecedents' roles in the labour market

Unlike external EBE, corporate reputation and CSR did not play a significant role in influencing internal EBE evaluations. CSR had no effect on familiarity with the employer brand or employer brand associations. Corporate reputation had a greater effect on familiarity, which had no effect on employer brand associations, while a significant portion of the effect was attributed to the work context in particular. The study findings of CSR's role in employer branding are of interest. While CSR had some effect in combination with other antecedents on attracting job seekers, its effect on familiarity and associations was not strong enough to be significant for employees. Thus, the study results suggest that CSR is not an influential factor in building internal EBE and does not have a direct effect on any element of internal EBE, although there might be an indirect role through other antecedents (e.g., reputation). Thus, CSR can be primarily used to increase familiarity with the employer brand among job seekers and encourage job seekers to use it to infer job- and work-context-related attributes. For example, Heinz gives each employee two days of paid leave per year for charity or community service work (Heinz 2014). In addition to the increase in familiarity that such CSR activity provides, it shows job seekers the degree of autonomy they would have if they worked for Heinz.

According to the study findings, promoting corporate reputation and CSR externally is an effective tool in attracting job seekers because it enhances information availability and increases familiarity with the employer brand. In contrast, as a result of limited internal effects, these two antecedents may not work well in building internal EBE. This highlights the weaker role of external factors in promoting employer brands and building EBE internally. Thus, the appropriate strategy to develop strong EBE internally is to provide employees with an attractive job and work context, which will result in a better experience with the employer.

In both internal and external EBE, work context was a strong predictor compared to other antecedents. This means that employee experience (lived or perceived) is influenced more by the contextual features of the work. The promotion of less attractive jobs can be supported by conveying an attractive work context such as job security. In this way, the employer can influence employees' experience, increase their familiarity with the employer for both employment customers and counter-balance any negative messages that employees receive from external sources. As a result, the employer may also be able to minimise the negative effects of weak reputation on internal EBE and ultimately decrease the turnover rate. Therefore, work context is a key antecedent in building EBE internally and externally. It has a strong effect on the perception of experience for job seekers and the lived experience with the employer for employees.

7.4.2 Multiple approaches for building EBE

While research in employer branding suggests that employer branding efforts encourage job seekers to join and employees to stay, this study's results suggest that this effect should be the result of applying different approaches for each audience. Overall, marketing activities that aim to convey the attractiveness of an employer brand seem to be more effective in attracting job seekers. Such activities work successfully to enhance perceptions of corporate reputation and promote CSR contributions, from which job seekers can infer job- and work-related attributes. These activities increase familiarity with the employer brand. Hence, the employer brand is perceived as more attractive and successful in attracting top job seekers and has a stronger position in the labour market. As shown, marketing strategies that aim to improve reputation or CSR perceptions,

such as advertising (Collins & Stevens 2002), are not effective in building EBE internally.

Alternatively, HR practices that create an attractive work context for employees are more effective in providing an attractive experience with the employer, which helps to improve impressions of the employer, increase loyalty and encourage employees to stay longer. This study found a significant effect of job content, and particularly work context, on building EBE for employees. Although these are provided by the employer, HR agents are responsible for managing and monitoring the experiences and needs of employees. For example, policies that are related to the relationship between the employer and the employee should be accessible and clear.

7.4.3 New ways of segmenting the labour market

Further, the present findings reinforced the applicability of marketing segmentation strategies to attracting job seekers in the labour market. The results provide support for the relevance of two categories revealed by Moroko and Uncles (2009) as a segmentation base: age and profession. This study extended their findings in the employer branding context by showing how these two bases can be used to attract job seekers. In addition, the study also showed how the employer could benefit from strengths and weaknesses when using segmentation variables. For example, if an organisation does not have a strong reputation in a market and is looking for better applicants, it is more effective to target highly educated job seekers and provide more information on job and work context attributes.

In contrast, the results did not reveal any variance among groups of age, gender, qualification, length of experience, tenure and quality of product/service from the employees' perspective. This indicated that segmentation strategies using those variables might not be effective in building EBE internally. These findings are in line with those of Ito, Brotheridge and McFarland (2013), who reported that career stage, tenure and age did not significantly change the importance of benefits across groups.

Therefore, effective segmentation strategies are likely to differ between job seekers and employees in building EBE.

7.5. Summary of Contributions

This study contributed to the theory and practice of employer branding by exploring the role of EBE in attracting and retaining employees. This study examined employer branding as an employment relationship rather than as the usage of a physical product; thus, it provided a theoretical contribution and a deeper understating of the EBE concept and how it is driven from the perspective of job seekers and employees. This study also discussed managerial implications that help companies to build stronger EBE to encourage the best job seekers in the labour market to prefer the organisation, and to encourage employees of choice to stay with the organisations.

7.5.1 Theoretical contributions

This study added to the scant research on employer branding and contributed to the literature by developing an empirical model of EBE. It showed that employer brand targets—job seekers and employees—are influenced by EBE antecedents differently. Researchers have adapted brand equity models from the literature of product marketing; however, those adaptations did not go beyond theoretical development. This study developed and empirically examined a model for EBE from the perspectives of job seekers and employees that acknowledges the relational nature of the employment setting.

This research also examined the dimensions of EBE and confirmed its structure: familiarity with the employer brand (Cable & Turban 2003; Collins & Kanar 2013; Lievens, Hoye & Schreurs 2005), employer brand associations (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Collins & Kanar 2013) and experience with the employer (in addition to loyalty to an employer brand for employees: (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004)). Further, this research examined the interrelationships among the elements of EBE and clarified how EBE

affects employment customers and, notably, how it influences perceptions of company preference as well as employees' intention to stay.

To date, the majority of research has focused on an external audience, with little attention paid to employees (e. g. Bonaiuto et al. 2013; Elving et al. 2013; Knox & Freeman 2006; Lievens 2007), even though researchers have emphasised the importance and relevance of the employer brand to both job seekers and employees. At the same time, practitioners have recognised the value of employer branding and its positive effect on attraction and retention outcomes. However, from both a theoretical and practical perspective, it is important to know whether prospective job seekers and employees are influenced by the same factors. This has been the focus of this research.

This study simultaneously examined four factors as antecedents of EBE. Doing so provided a holistic view of how different factors integrate in an employment context, which may provide a closer reflection of the real influence in practice, as the effect of such factors does not occur independently (Collins 2007). In more detail, the study confirmed that perceptions of EBE for job seekers are influenced by corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context, while only corporate reputation, job content and work context affect employees' perceptions of EBE. The study also revealed that while job content and work context have a similar effect on the perceptions of employee experience for job seekers (actual for employees), corporate reputation and CSR played little role in influencing employees' associations to an employer brand. Thus, the study concluded that the factors that influence EBE for job seekers differ for employees. Employer branding strategies that aim at improving and promoting CSR contributions and corporate reputation are therefore more influential for employee attraction, but not for retaining employees of choice. In contrast, job content and work context, which are HR-centred, have a greater effect on employees and their perceptions of EBE.

While the base argument remains—that is, that cooperation between the two fields should be encouraged—such contributions may provide initial evidence for the current debate in the literature regarding whether marketing or HR people should manage

employer brands. Marketing strategies and expertise appear to be important in improving a company's visibility and managing job seekers' familiarity with the company as an employer. For example, marketers have the knowledge and experience that are required to deal with sponsorship activities and WoM (Collins & Stevens 2002; Uen et al. 2015). Conversely, HR people should be responsible for designing and managing the organisational culture and HR practices that provide employees of choice with the best experience. For example, employee development and training are areas that are usually handled by the HR department, which can have vital input into employer branding and the organisation in general (Ito, Brotheridge & McFarland 2013). HR people can also provide the base upon which external communication and messages are conveyed.

In addition, this study overcame some limitations that were observed in the previous research of employer branding. Employer brand research on attraction has heavily relied on student samples (e.g., Berthon, Ewing & Hah 2005; Bonaiuto et al. 2013; Cable & Turban 2003; Catanzaro, Moore & Marshall 2010; Knox & Freeman 2006; Rampf & Kenning 2014; Van Hove et al. 2013), but this may not generalise to the real practice of employer branding (Rynes, Heneman & Schwab 1980). To enhance generalisability, the present study recruited actual job seekers who varied in terms of age, qualification, length of work experience and employment status. Further, previous studies have used fictitious companies to measure employer attractiveness (e.g., Bonaiuto et al. 2013; Catanzaro, Moore & Marshall 2010). According to Cable and Turban (2003), research findings on fictitious companies may not generalise to actual organisations. Thus, the present study used four real employer brands and a non-student sample in order to enhance generalisability and generate more reliable results. Moreover, because of the lack of a measurement scale for EBE, the present study developed and examined a scale for EBE that was found to be reliable and valid for both job seekers and employees. This scale can be used in future research to allow employer branding, and EBE in particular, to move forward.

7.5.2 Practical implications

Managing and maintaining strong EBE that helps organisations to attract and retain employees of choice is not an easy task, but it is critical in achieving organisational objectives (Davies 2008). Companies must ensure that efforts to attract quality employees are accompanied by effective retention strategies. Failure on one side will make the organisation unable to meet the required quality of its human capital.

Antecedents of EBE are used to leverage EBE (or one of its elements) based on the evaluation of the target audience. Employer brand managers can then set priorities and allocate required resources that drive element(s) of EBE. Viewing EBE in this way provides useful insights for the successful management of EBE and employer branding programs. EBE can be a useful diagnostic tool for comparing external and internal attractiveness.

As Figure 7-1 shows, a four-cell typology evolves from comparing internal and external EBE. An organisation reaches a 'desirable' brand status when its EBE is perceived as strong by both job seekers and employees. Thus, it is expected to perform well in attracting and retaining workers and to have a minimal gap between overall perceived offerings and actual delivered benefits, or what Moroko and Uncles (2008) call the accuracy of the employer branding message. This status is optimal and gives the organisation a strong position in the labour market that enables it to secure employees of choice. Findings from the present study help to keep the balance between the internal and external perspectives of EBE by using the appropriate drivers for each target.

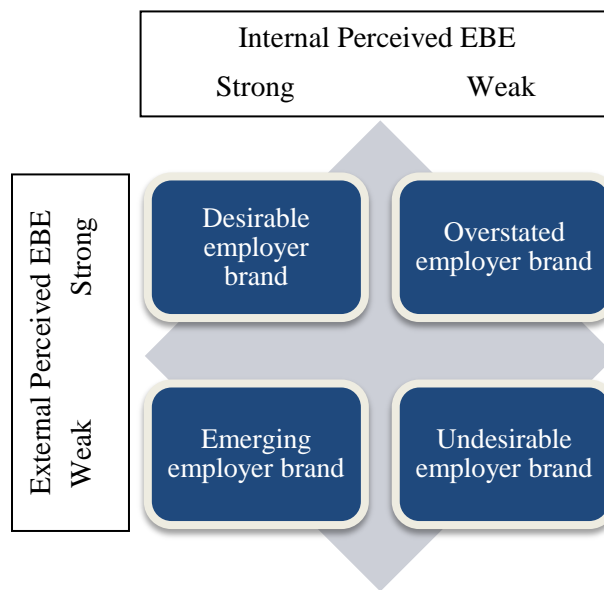


Figure 7-1: Four-cell Typology of EBE: Internal and External Comparison

The second cell is the ‘overstated’ EBE, which occurs when an employer is highly regarded by an external audience but is internally perceived as weak. In this situation, the employer is expected to generate a larger applicant pool, but it is less likely to perform well in terms of retention, as the employee experience will not match prior knowledge. As a solution, employer brand managers are encouraged to examine features of job content and work context from the employees’ perspective, and to ensure consistency between what is communicated externally and lived internally. Internal improvements should be more influential and effective in adjusting the balance.

In the third cell, the organisation has strong internal EBE, but it is not marketed well to an external audience. EBE can be called an ‘emerging’ employer brand, as successful internal branding activities and a distinctive employee experience are more likely to be communicated externally over time, which ultimately improves the external employer brand (Dutton & Dukerich 1991). The employer in this situation should focus on promoting corporate reputation and CSR activities with the aim of increasing familiarity with the employer brand and its distinctiveness. In the fourth situation, EBE is perceived as weak by both internal and external individuals. The organisation is likely to have an ‘undesirable’ employer brand, which will make the organisation more likely to receive lower-quality and quantity applicants, while employees of choice are

not expected to remain long. The key in this situation is to improve job content and work context, as they are important for both perspectives and, more importantly, they are controllable by the employer.

The second and third cells of the EBE typology can hold for a short period because of the continuous interaction and communication between internal and external audiences, which helps to minimise the gap in perceptions. Recent research has suggested that positive WoM has a positive influence on employer brand (Uen et al. 2015), and that employees can actively play a role in improving a company's external brand (Dutton & Dukerich 1991). When a company continues to deliver attractive benefits to its employees, it increases loyalty and builds upon its external attractiveness, which in turn contributes to promoting a consistent message from internal audiences, who may impart positive WoM externally (Srivastava & Bhatnagar 2010). In such situations, prospective employees view employees as a real reflection of the experience that they would have when they join (Van Hoye & Lievens 2009).

Another managerial implication is the use of the research results in segmenting job seekers. The strategy of market segmentation proved its viability in the customer marketing context. Although job seekers' segmentation is supported by past research and HR managers are aware of it, it is still not implemented in practice (Moroko & Uncles 2009). According to this study's findings, companies can take advantage of corporate reputation when they target young job seekers, and they may focus on promoting job content and work context when targeting highly educated job seekers. This helps to enhance their recruitment performance and outcomes. Further, for companies that have a lower-quality product/service, it is not an effective way to use jobs to promote the company's attractiveness, as job content will not affect job seekers' perceptions of the employee experience; however, work context may produce the required effects to develop stronger EBE in the labour market.

7.6. Limitations of the Study

Despite the theoretical contribution and practical implications of the study, the findings should be interpreted in light of a number of limitations. First, the study focused on company-related factors in terms of the employment relationship; however, there are other important external factors that influence individuals' decisions regarding their employment decision. For example, the economic environment and the unemployment rate may affect employees' willingness to stay with their current employer (Muchinsky & Morrow 1980). Examining such factors may further the understanding of why employees choose to stay. Job seekers' expectations of future employment may also be influenced by economic factors. When companies confront tough financial situations, they are more likely to offer less attractive employment packages. A longitudinal study may bridge this gap by examining the relationship between external factors and employment expectations across different periods and situations.

Second, this study measured corporate reputation and CSR concepts from the individual's perspective, which may not reflect the actual status of the organisation. Given that corporate reputation and CSR are perceptions of larger groups and incorporate different stakeholders, studies with larger resources may collect data from sources such as shareholders and customers to ensure more accurate measurements for these constructs. In addition, for statistical reasons, this study only used two items to measure the constructs of CSR and loyalty to an employer brand, which was not in line with good practice recommendations to use at least three items (Hair et al. 2010). Although some researchers (such as Edwards 2001) believe that it is sufficient and the items loaded on their relevant constructs, increasing the number of items to three or preferably four may enhance the construct reliability and face validity of the constructs (Hair et al. 2010).

Third, the study findings should be treated cautiously. Given that causes of common method variance (CMV), such as social desirability and the halo effect, were relevant in the self-report studies, the relationships might be artificially increased, and therefore the estimation may not be accurate (Podsakoff et al. 2003). This study followed recommendations in research design that help to mitigate such bias (Podsakoff,

MacKenzie & Podsakoff 2012). For example, during the data collection, the anonymity and confidentiality of the responses were assured, which made participants less likely to change their responses in order to appear socially desirable. In addition, steps were undertaken to improve the scale items. For example, the research questions were tested for clarity, and complex questions were decomposed into simpler and more focused questions. In the analytical stage, the study undertook confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as a more sophisticated approach to ensure that all research concepts were discriminant and valid (Iverson & Maguire 2000). Although the CMV was not found to be a major problem according to the single factor test, employing different methods than self-reporting may enhance confidence in the current findings. For example, combining data from job seekers with secondary data such as corporate reputation and CSR reports may help to ensure that response bias is minimised.

Fourth, although the study used non-student samples and real organisations and sought representativeness in terms of demographic characteristics to align the data with the Australian labour market, generalisability of the study findings may not extend to other contexts, as some issues still remain. As the study used an online survey and paid panels in the data collection, the findings may not extend to those who do not have access to such platforms (Walter 2010). Further, extending the study findings to other contexts, cultures and countries may be limited unless the study is replicated, which may help to increase generalisability.

7.7. Directions for Future Research

Several directions for future employer branding research have emerged from this study. First, as employer brands might work as an identity and have personality (Slaughter & Greguras 2009; Slaughter et al. 2004), incorporating a person's personality–employer brand fit to the research model will provide insights into the most influential drivers of EBE for different employer brand personalities and show how attraction and retention outcomes can be improved. Considering an individual's personality may moderate the effect of EBE antecedents; accordingly, employer branding practices may require adjustable strategies. Although the study results showed limited support for the role of CSR in the labour market, an investigation of personal values regarding the

environment may advance the understanding of CSR in the employer branding literature.

Another aspect that may enhance our understanding of building EBE at the personal level is seniority at work (Moroko & Uncles 2009). Internal EBE may be driven differently by managers and frontline workers. Research in this vein may benefit employers by showing whether management seniority moderates the effect of EBE antecedents. In addition, the present study examined internal EBE for a wide range of industries. It tested for type of industry (i.e., product/service) and showed no moderation effect. Future research should focus on a set of industries and investigate whether the nature of a specific industry modifies or moderates the model relationships for internal EBE.

Second, future research should explore the concept of employee experience. Although each employee may have his or her own experience (Edwards 2010), the nature of a high-quality experience can be investigated to enhance the value that employees receive in the value-creation process. In this case, the emerging marketing literature can be useful and integrated with extant knowledge from the employer–employee relationship literature. In particular, the co-creation concept from marketing argues that value creation in a brand relationship is created through a process in which the customer co-creates value with the organisation (Srivastava & Thomas 2010). Doing so will develop our understanding of how the employee experience creates employer brand associations, what has a stronger influence, and when employees will engage more in the value-creation process. More interestingly in the employer brand relationship is that employees not only co-create their own value with the employer, but they also co-create value for their co-workers, followers and superiors.

Further, while this study identified how the same factors play different roles in building EBE for job seekers and employees, future research may examine how the influence of these antecedents on EBE changes over different employment stages. For example, a longitudinal approach may examine how the factors that influence EBE change during the job search (e.g., online search), the recruitment process (e.g., job interview) and

after joining the organisation. In this matter, the psychological contract theory may also help to explain how the gap in expectations can affect employment-related decisions, such as the decision to quit (Edwards 2010; Moroko & Uncles 2008; Rousseau 2001). Similarly, future research may examine changes and updates that occur to psychological contracts through employee experience with the employer and how value exchange process and content influence loyalty to the employer brand over time (Freese, Schalk & Croon 2011).

Fourth, while EBE influenced individuals' perceptions such as company preference and intention to stay, it is important to examine the other effects it has on behaviours and emotions, which may also establish a link between EBE and employee performance. For example, examining the influence of EBE on employee behaviour such as employee engagement and organisational citizenship is a fruitful area for research and practice because organisational outcomes from employer branding initiatives can be better understood and the benefits can be maximised.

7.8. Chapter Conclusion

Adopting the branding theory from the marketing literature, this study investigated the difference between internal and external employment customers' perceptions. It developed a unified model that explains the role of EBE in the labour market. The study examined a model for EBE from job seekers' and employees' perspectives that recognises employee experience with the employer in the employer brand–individual relationship. The study simultaneously examined factors at the organisational and job levels, which better reflected the labour market context where employment customers perceive, and are influenced by, multiple factors. Using an adapted measure from the brand equity literature enabled a better examination of the applicability of the concept of brand equity to employer branding; however, the study also reviewed the literature of employee attraction and retention in order to achieve better integration between the two disciplines of marketing and HR.

This study developed a model of EBE that applies to both job seekers and employees, and that provides a base for further investigation of the role of EBE for employment customers. The findings supported the different roles for the antecedents of corporate reputation, CSR, job content and work context in building EBE for job seekers and employees. Consequently, employer branding practices should differ between attracting and retaining employees of choice. The findings also showed how EBE can influence employees' intention to stay with the employer, and how a preference for a company develops among job seekers in the employment context.

Further, the study showed that the branding literature has the potential to improve our understanding of employer brands and advance organisational performance in the labour market. However, while the segmentation concept shows applicability to job seekers, it may not apply in the same way to employees when considering the same variables.

Observing the development of knowledge of employer branding in academic research and practice, it is obvious that the concept has not reached its potential. Integration between the two disciplines in research and practice can advance our understanding of the concept and lead to better performance and outcomes of companies facing emerging challenges in the labour market.

Appendices

Appendix A. Survey for Employees



Are you a Full Time Employee?

- Yes
 No



Next



Dear Participant,

Thank you very much for taking time and participate in this survey, which forms a part of Mr. Sultan Alshathry's PhD requirements and is carried out under the supervision of Dr. Steve Goodman and Dr. Marilyn Clarke from The University of Adelaide Business School.

The research project aims to examine what attracts employees to organisations and which factors make value for a company in employees' minds. The purpose of this survey is to collect data from employees in order to find out what they think about certain job/company characteristics that might be considered important and attractive. It consists of 10 questions and will take around 13 minutes to complete.

We would like to assure you that your answers are anonymous and completely confidential. No information that can specifically identify you, or indicate your participation in the study, will be collected.

If you would like to learn more about the project or have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of the researchers on the details below.

Thank you for your participation
Research Team
May 6, 2015

Mr. Sultan Alshathry
Email: sultan.alshathry@adelaide.edu.au

Dr. Steve Goodman
Email: steve.goodman@adelaide.edu.au

Dr. Marilyn Clarke
Email: marilyn.clarke@adelaide.edu.au

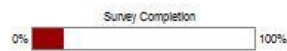


Next

Question 1/10:

How much do you feel you know about your current employer in terms of these categories:

	A Little 1	2	3	4	5	6	A Lot 7
Vision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workplace environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsibility and commitment to society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Position in the market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Back Next

Question 2/10:

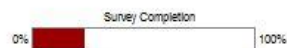
The following question aims to evaluate your current employer in different aspects regarding reputation.
Highlight 1 star for "Strongly Disagree" and 7 stars for "Strongly Agree"

In general, this company has an excellent reputation

In general, this company is widely admired and respected

In general, this company is among the best in the industry

In general, people believe that this company is reputable



Back Next



Question 3/10:

The following question aims to evaluate your current employer in different aspects regarding responsibility and commitment to society. Highlight 1 star for "Strongly Disagree" and 7 stars for "Strongly Agree"

Responsibility to Stakeholders

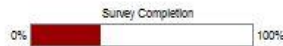
This company participates in activities that aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment



This company implements special programs to minimise its impact on the natural environment



This company contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of society



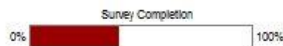
Back Next



Question 4/10:

The statements below describe various job-related features. For each statement, please indicate to what extent you agree that it describes your job at your current employer?

	Strongly Disagree							Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6		7
My job allows me to use different skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job is challenging work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job includes a variety of activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job requires learning new technical skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My job allows me the freedom to do the job in my own way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree							Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6		7



Back Next

Question 5/10:

The following statements describe various work-related features. For each statement, please indicate to what extent you agree it describes work/work environment at your current employer

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
Supportive co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supportive supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity to learn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Desirable location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appropriate working conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have job security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company has clear policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



[Back](#) [Next](#)

Question 6/10:

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
I have positive personal feelings about this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy working for this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel proud of being an employee of this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working for this company improves the way I am perceived	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I admire this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



[Back](#) [Next](#)

Question 7/10:

How would each statement describe your experience with your current employer?

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
Compared to others, this company offers a very distinctive employment experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company has an impressive work environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company lives up to its promises	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company cares about its employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



[Back](#) [Next](#)

Question 8/10:

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
I consider myself as loyal to this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important for me to maintain my relationship with this company in the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



[Back](#) [Next](#)

Question 9/10:

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements

	Totally Disagree						Totally Agree
I plan to work at my present employer for as long as possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I plan to be with the company I work for five years from now	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not intend to pursue alternative employment in the foreseeable future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



[Back](#) [Next](#)

Question 10/10:
Please choose the most appropriate answer for you

What is your age?

- 18 – 23
- 24 – 29
- 30 – 34
- 35 – 40
- 41 – 46
- 47 - 52

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your highest qualification?

- High School
- Diploma
- Bachelor
- Masters
- PhD

How many years of work experience do you have?

How long have you been working at your current employer? (in years)

Which industry do you currently work in?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Aerospace | <input type="radio"/> Food & Beverage | <input type="radio"/> Research |
| <input type="radio"/> Agriculture | <input type="radio"/> Government | <input type="radio"/> Retail |
| <input type="radio"/> Architecture | <input type="radio"/> Health & Medical | <input type="radio"/> Services |
| <input type="radio"/> Banking & financial services | <input type="radio"/> Information technology | <input type="radio"/> Sport |
| <input type="radio"/> Construction | <input type="radio"/> Manufacturing | <input type="radio"/> Telecommunication |
| <input type="radio"/> Consulting | <input type="radio"/> Media | <input type="radio"/> Tourism |
| <input type="radio"/> Education | <input type="radio"/> Mining | <input type="radio"/> Transportation |
| <input type="radio"/> Employment | <input type="radio"/> Not for profit | <input type="radio"/> Utilities |
| <input type="radio"/> Energy | <input type="radio"/> Oil | <input type="radio"/> Wholesale distribution |
| <input type="radio"/> Engineering | <input type="radio"/> Petrochemicals | <input type="radio"/> Other <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Environment | <input type="radio"/> Realestate | |

Survey Completion  0% 100%

[Back](#) [Next](#)

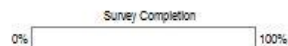
Appendix B. Survey for Job Seekers

Note: Commonwealth Bank is the randomised employer in this demonstration



Are you considering a new job in the next 12 months?

- Yes
 No



Next



Dear Job Seeker,

Thank you very much for taking time and participate in this survey, which forms a part of Mr. Sultan Alshathry's PhD requirements and is carried out under the supervision of Dr. Steve Goodman and Dr. Marilyn Clarke from The University of Adelaide Business School.

The research project aims to examine what attracts employees to organisations and which factors make value for a company in employees' minds. The purpose of this survey is to collect data from job seekers in order to find out what they think about certain job/company characteristics that might be considered important and attractive. It consists of 9 questions and will take around 12 minutes to complete.

We would like to assure you that your answers are anonymous and completely confidential. No information that can specifically identify you, or indicate your participation in the study, will be collected.

If you would like to learn more about the project or have concerns, please do not hesitate to contact one of the researchers on the details below.

Thank you for your participation
Research Team
May 6, 2015

Mr. Sultan Alshathry
Email: sultan.alshathry@adelaide.edu.au

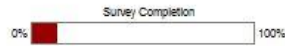
Dr. Steve Goodman
Email: steve.goodman@adelaide.edu.au

Dr. Marilyn Clarke
Email: marilyn.clarke@adelaide.edu.au



Next

By answering the survey questions, please tell us what you think about "Commonwealth Bank" as a place to work

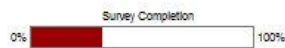


Back Next

Question 1/9:

How much do you feel you know about Commonwealth Bank in terms of these categories:

	A Little 1	2	3	4	5	6	A Lot 7
Vision	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workplace environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responsibility and commitment to society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Position in the market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Next

Question 2/9:

The following question aims to evaluate Commonwealth Bank in different aspects regarding reputation.

Highlight 1 star for "Strongly Disagree" and 7 stars for "Strongly Agree"

In general, this company has an excellent reputation

In general, this company is widely admired and respected

In general, this company is among the best in the industry

In general, people believe that this company is reputable



Back Next

Question 3/9:

The following question aims to evaluate Commonwealth Bank in different aspects regarding responsibility and commitment to society. Highlight 1 star for "Strongly Disagree" and 7 stars for "Strongly Agree"

Responsibility to Stakeholders

This company participates in activities that aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment



This company implements special programs to minimise its impact on the natural environment



This company contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of society



Back Next

Question 4/9:

The statements below describe various job-related features. For each statement, please indicate to what extent you agree that it describes a job at Commonwealth Bank?

	Strongly Disagree							Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6		7
The job would allow me to use different skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The job would be challenging work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The job would include a variety of activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The job would require learning new technical skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The job would allow me the freedom to do the job in my own way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly Disagree							Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6		7



Back Next

Question 5/9:

The following statements describe various work-related features. For each statement, please indicate to what extent you agree it describes work/work environment at Commonwealth Bank

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
Supportive co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supportive supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity to learn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Desirable location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appropriate working conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have job security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company has clear policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

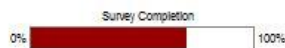


[Back](#) [Next](#)

Question 6/9:

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements describing Commonwealth Bank

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree 7
I have positive personal feelings about this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would enjoy working for this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would feel proud of being an employee of this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working for this company would improve the way I am perceived	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I admire this company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



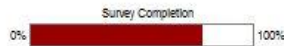
[Back](#) [Next](#)



Question 7/9:

How would each statement describe your expected experience at Commonwealth Bank?

	Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Agree
Compared to others, this company offers a very distinctive employment experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company has an impressive work environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company lives up to its promises	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company cares about its employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



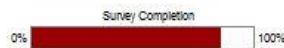
Back Next



Question 8/9:

Please, indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements, use the scale provided next to each statement to indicate your view.

	Totally Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	Totally Agree
For me, this company would be a good place to work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This company is attractive to me as a place for employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A job at this company is very appealing to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Back Next

Question 9/9:

Please choose the most appropriate answer for you

What is your age?

- 18 – 23
- 24 – 29
- 30 – 34
- 35 – 40
- 41 – 46
- 47 - 52

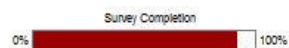
What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your highest qualification?

- High School
- Diploma
- Bachelor
- Masters
- PhD

How many years of work experience do you have?



[Back](#) [Next](#)

Appendix C. Corporate Reputation Index



2012 Corporate Reputation Index – Overall Rankings

Ranking	COMPANY	Ranking	COMPANY
1	Apple Australia	31	QBE Insurance Group
2	Australia Post	32	Ford Australia
3	JB HI-FI	33	RioTinto
4	Toyota Motor Corporation	34	Insurance Australia Group
5	Nestle Australia	35	Optus
6	Virgin Australia	36	AMP
7	GM Holden	37	Allianz Australia
8	ING Direct	38	Caltex Australia
9	Myer	39	Macquarie Group
10	Mazda Australia	40	Zurich Financial Services
11	Air New Zealand	41	7-Eleven
12	The Good Guys	42	Visy Industries
13	Woolworths/Safeway	43	AGL Energy
14	David Jones	44	Tatts Group
15	Nissan Australia	45	Telstra
16	Hewlett-Packard Australia	46	Westpac
17	ALDI Australia	47	Australian Taxation Office
18	BlueScope Steel	48	CBA
19	IBM Australia	49	ANZ
20	Bendigo and Adelaide Bank	50	TRUenergy
21	Coca-Cola Amatil	51	Shell Australia
22	Medibank Private	52	BP Australasia
23	Suncorp-Metway	53	Origin Energy
24	Wesfarmers	54	NAB
25	Qantas Airways	55	Citigroup
26	Lion Nathan National Foods	56	Fairfax Media
27	BHP Billiton	57	Centrelink
28	Harvey Norman	58	Tabcorp
29	Foxtel	59	News Limited
30	Westfield Group	60	Vodafone Hutchison Australia

Source: amr-Australia (2012) “2012 Corporate Reputation Index – Overall Rankings”

Note: the chosen companies in the study Phase 2 are indicated in the ranking list

Appendix D. Normality Tests

Table D-1: Normality assessment using Skewness and Kurtosis for employee sample

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	z (Skewness)	z (Kurtosis)
Fam_1	331	5.31	1.38	-0.74	0.36	-5.53	1.34
Fam_2	331	5.20	1.36	-0.65	0.04	-4.79	0.13
Fam_3	331	5.14	1.39	-1.06	0.90	-7.84	3.36
Fam_4	331	5.29	1.42	-0.87	0.71	-6.43	2.62
Fam_5	331	5.35	1.40	-0.89	0.82	-6.62	3.04
Rep_1	331	4.41	1.71	-0.74	0.62	-5.48	2.32
Rep_2	331	4.28	1.74	-0.77	0.73	-5.69	2.72
Rep_3	331	4.76	1.72	-0.82	0.47	-6.10	1.76
Rep_4	331	5.07	1.45	-0.85	0.50	-6.32	1.84
CSR_SH_1	331	5.08	1.49	-0.42	-0.54	-3.13	-2.00
CSR_SH_2	331	5.08	1.47	-0.33	-0.70	-2.46	-2.62
CSR_SH_3	331	4.70	1.60	-0.56	-0.38	-4.19	-1.40
Tent_1	331	4.89	1.53	-0.58	0.10	-4.33	0.39
Tent_2	331	5.15	1.47	-0.53	-0.27	-3.94	-1.00
Tent_3	331	5.03	1.63	-0.67	0.12	-4.98	0.44
Tent_4	331	4.93	1.62	-0.46	-0.38	-3.42	-1.42
Tent_5	331	5.26	1.51	-0.51	-0.25	-3.80	-0.94
Text_1	331	5.40	1.34	-0.78	0.41	-5.83	1.52
Text_2	331	5.24	1.44	-0.78	0.05	-5.81	0.17
Text_3	331	5.22	1.50	-0.68	-0.20	-5.02	-0.73
Text_4	331	4.91	1.52	-0.73	0.03	-5.43	0.11
Text_5	331	5.03	1.51	-0.67	0.02	-4.99	0.09
Text_6	331	5.01	1.53	-0.91	0.57	-6.74	2.12
Text_7	331	4.58	1.63	-0.95	0.69	-7.06	2.56
As_1	331	4.76	1.53	-0.69	0.27	-5.15	1.00
As_2	331	4.94	1.49	-0.81	0.40	-6.05	1.47
As_3	331	4.76	1.55	-0.72	0.24	-5.32	0.90
As_4	331	4.80	1.54	-0.56	-0.30	-4.14	-1.11
As_5	331	4.79	1.60	-0.51	-0.01	-3.78	-0.04
Exp_1	331	5.10	1.66	-0.75	0.44	-5.58	1.62
Exp_2	331	4.90	1.62	-0.61	-0.03	-4.50	-0.13
Exp_3	331	4.59	1.84	-0.60	-0.03	-4.45	-0.11
Exp_4	331	4.89	1.79	-0.56	-0.14	-4.19	-0.54
Loy_1	331	4.63	1.90	-0.89	0.18	-6.57	0.67
Loy_2	331	4.65	1.87	-0.66	-0.03	-4.89	-0.11
Loy_3	331	5.31	1.38	-0.61	-0.60	-4.52	-2.22
Ret_1	331	5.20	1.36	-0.73	-0.36	-5.45	-1.32
Ret_2	331	5.14	1.39	-0.51	-0.77	-3.75	-2.85
Ret_3	331	5.29	1.42	-0.51	-0.81	-3.77	-3.02

N = sample size

Table D-2: Normality assessment using Skewness and Kurtosis for job seeker sample

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis	z (Skewness)	z (Kurtosis)
Fam_1	337	3.68	1.72	-.07	-.92	-0.51	-3.43
Fam_2	337	3.53	1.71	.07	-.84	0.50	-3.16
Fam_3	337	3.53	1.78	.07	-1.04	0.49	-3.91
Fam_4	337	3.57	1.80	.09	-1.03	0.71	-3.84
Fam_5	337	4.29	1.69	-.40	-.62	-3.03	-2.31
Rep_1	337	4.69	1.52	-.46	-.16	-3.46	-0.58
Rep_2	337	4.61	1.56	-.39	-.23	-2.90	-0.87
Rep_3	337	4.66	1.63	-.56	-.29	-4.18	-1.10
Rep_4	337	5.05	1.51	-.77	.28	-5.77	1.05
CSR_SH_1	337	3.80	1.56	-.14	-.45	-1.02	-1.68
CSR_SH_2	337	3.77	1.62	-.05	-.50	-0.34	-1.88
CSR_SH_3	337	3.88	1.67	-.13	-.70	-0.97	-2.62
Tent_1	337	4.55	1.37	-.47	.36	-3.53	1.33
Tent_2	337	4.62	1.37	-.56	.42	-4.20	1.58
Tent_3	337	4.56	1.40	-.46	.25	-3.48	0.94
Tent_4	337	4.82	1.41	-.75	.59	-5.64	2.19
Tent_5	337	4.03	1.59	-.28	-.45	-2.12	-1.67
Text_1	337	4.38	1.32	-.26	.38	-1.97	1.42
Text_2	337	4.35	1.32	-.46	.45	-3.41	1.70
Text_3	337	4.69	1.43	-.56	.33	-4.19	1.25
Text_4	337	4.45	1.40	-.37	.10	-2.77	0.38
Text_5	337	4.59	1.34	-.57	.75	-4.25	2.83
Text_6	337	4.45	1.42	-.37	.11	-2.80	0.43
Text_7	337	4.60	1.39	-.57	.34	-4.30	1.26
As_1	337	4.28	1.62	-.30	-.51	-2.23	-1.92
As_2	337	4.30	1.59	-.32	-.47	-2.38	-1.76
As_3	337	4.34	1.63	-.29	-.56	-2.14	-2.10
As_4	337	4.14	1.62	-.23	-.61	-1.70	-2.30
As_5	337	4.28	1.61	-.40	-.50	-2.97	-1.87
Exp_1	337	4.35	1.40	-.28	-.10	-2.13	-0.38
Exp_2	337	4.45	1.46	-.48	.01	-3.59	0.03
Exp_3	337	4.41	1.45	-.43	-.04	-3.19	-0.16
Exp_4	337	4.35	1.46	-.39	-.05	-2.91	-0.18
Att_1	337	4.47	1.62	-.52	-.42	-3.90	-1.58
Att_2	337	4.39	1.68	-.42	-.66	-3.14	-2.48
Att_3	337	4.48	1.73	-.47	-.61	-3.55	-2.30

N = sample size

Appendix E. List of Study Items

Table E-1: List of items used in the study instrument

	Abbreviation	Item
Familiarity	Fam_1	Vision
	Fam_2	Leadership
	Fam_3	Workplace environment
	Fam_4	Responsibility and commitment to society
	Fam_5	Position in the market
Reputation	Rep_1	In general, this company has an excellent reputation
	Rep_2	In general, this company is widely admired and respected
	Rep_3	In general, this company is among the best in the industry
	Rep_4	In general, people believe that this company is reputable
CSR	CSR_SH_1	This company participates in activities that aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment
	CSR_SH_2	This company implements special programs to minimise its impact on the natural environment
	CSR_SH_3	This company contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of society
Job content	Tent_1	My job allows me to use different skills
	Tent_2	My job is challenging work
	Tent_3	My job includes a variety of activities
	Tent_4	My job requires learning new technical skills
	Tent_5	My job allows me the freedom to do the job in my own way
Work context	Text_1	Supportive co-workers
	Text_2	Supportive supervisor
	Text_3	Opportunity to learn
	Text_4	Desirable location
	Text_5	Appropriate working conditions
	Text_6	Have job security
	Text_7	This company has clear policies
Employer brand associations	As_1	I have positive personal feelings about this company
	As_2	I enjoy working for this company
	As_3	I feel proud of being an employee of this company
	As_4	Working for this company improves the way I am perceived
	As_5	I admire this company
Experience with the employer	Exp_1	Compared to others, this company offers a very distinctive employment experience
	Exp_2	This company has an impressive work environment
	Exp_3	This company lives up to its promises
	Exp_4	This company cares about its employees
Loyalty to employer brand	Loy_1	I consider myself as loyal to this company
	Loy_2	It is important for me to maintain my relationship with this company in the future
	Loy_3	I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this company
Intention to stay	Ret_1	I plan to work at my present employer for as long as possible
	Ret_2	I plan to be with the company I work for five years from now
	Ret_3	I do not intend to pursue alternative employment in the foreseeable future

Appendix F. Industry Classification

Table F-1: Classification of industry into Product and Service

	Industry	Number of organisations	Type
1	Aerospace	1	Product
2	Agriculture	4	Product
3	Architecture	1	Service
4	Banking & financial services	38	Service
5	Construction	11	Product
6	Consulting	6	Service
7	Education	19	Service
8	Employment	1	Service
9	Engineering	8	Service
10	Environment	3	Service
11	Food & Beverage	10	Product
12	Government	40	Service
13	Health & Medical	27	Service
14	Information technology	26	Product
15	Manufacturing	20	Product
16	Media	5	Service
17	Mining	7	Product
18	Not for profit	9	Service
19	Oil	4	Product
20	Petrochemical	0	Product
21	Real estate	2	Service
22	Research	3	Service
23	Retail	22	Product
24	Services (Legal - admin – insurance)	24	Service
25	Sport	3	Service
26	Telecommunication	8	Service
27	Tourism	3	Service
28	Transportation	16	Service
29	Utilities	4	Service
30	Wholesale distribution	6	Service
	Total	331	

Product = 105 cases, Services = 226 cases

Appendix G. Multi-group Analysis – Employee Sample

Note: All tests used *p*-value of 0.05

$\Delta\chi^2$ = difference in chi-square

Table G-1: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – age groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1762.099	1017	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1765.473	1019	No
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	1764.145	1019	No
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1762.611	1019	No
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1763.053	1019	No
H ₈	Content → Experience	1767.405	1019	No
H ₉	Context → Experience	1766.776	1019	No
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	1762.946	1019	No
H _{New}	Context → Familiarity	1763.410	1019	No

Table G-2: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – gender groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1149.917	678	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1150.164	679	No
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	1149.996	679	No
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1152.356	679	No
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1150.098	679	No
H ₈	Content → Experience	1152.641	679	No
H ₉	Context → Experience	1153.227	679	No
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	1150.014	679	No
H _{new}	Context → Familiarity	1150.377	679	No

Table G-3: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – qualification groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1886.576	1017	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1890.102	1019	No
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	1886.683	1019	No
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1889.914	1019	No
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1887.305	1019	No
H ₈	Content → Experience	1889.773	1019	No
H ₉	Context → Experience	1889.884	1019	No
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	1887.899	1019	No
H _{new}	Context → Familiarity	1889.122	1019	No

Table G-4: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – length of experience groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1168.560	678	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1169.562	679	No
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	1169.312	679	No
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1170.202	679	No
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1168.756	679	No
H ₈	Content → Experience	1171.957	679	No
H ₉	Context → Experience	1175.135	679	Yes
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	1168.966	679	No
H _{new}	Context → Familiarity	1170.610	679	No

Table G-5: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – length of tenure groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1106.464	678	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1109.677	679	No
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	1116.532	679	Yes
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1106.844	679	No
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1109.161	679	No
H ₈	Content → Experience	1107.360	679	No
H ₉	Context → Experience	1106.464	679	No
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	1106.761	679	No
H _{new}	Context → Familiarity	1107.106	679	No

Table G-6: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – product vs. service

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1123.775	678	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1123.980	679	No
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	1124.282	679	No
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1128.017	679	Yes
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1125.085	679	No
H ₈	Content → Experience	1125.428	679	No
H ₉	Context → Experience	1123.905	679	No
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	1125.800	679	No
H _{new}	Context → Familiarity	1126.461	679	No

Table G-7: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – quality of product/service

hypothesis	path	χ^2	<i>df</i>	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1128.612	678	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1128.638	679	No
H ₃	Associations → Loyalty	1129.214	679	No
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1130.480	679	No
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1128.734	679	No
H ₈	Content → Experience	1128.677	679	No
H ₉	Context → Experience	1128.716	679	No
H ₁₀	Loyalty → Intention to stay	1128.649	679	No
H _{new}	Context → Familiarity	1128.701	679	No

Appendix H. Multi-group Analysis – Job Seeker Sample

Note: The test used *p*-value of 0.05

Table H-1: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – age groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	<i>df</i>	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1706.021	1008	
H ₁	Familiarity → Associations	1706.728	1010	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1712.506	1010	Yes
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1707.179	1010	
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1712.632	1010	Yes
H ₆	CSR → Familiarity	1706.483	1010	
H ₈	Content → Experience	1706.112	1010	
H ₉	Work context → Experience	1706.226	1010	
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	1706.493	1010	

Table H-2: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – gender groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	<i>df</i>	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1028.836	672	
H ₁	Familiarity → Associations	1029.452	673	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1029.832	673	
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1031.628	673	
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1028.958	673	
H ₆	CSR → Familiarity	1029.679	673	
H ₈	Content → Experience	1029.693	673	
H ₉	Work context → Experience	1028.848	673	
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	1029.895	673	

Table H-3: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – qualification groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	<i>df</i>	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1800.699	1008	
H ₁	Familiarity → Associations	1801.970	1010	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1808.169	1010	Yes
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1803.639	1010	
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1814.894	1010	Yes
H ₆	CSR → Familiarity	1803.622	1010	
H ₈	Content → Experience	1809.962	1010	Yes
H ₉	Work context → Experience	1803.826	1010	
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	1803.446	1010	

Table H-4: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – length of experience groups

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1132.447	672	
H ₁	Familiarity → Associations	1132.467	673	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1132.486	673	
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1132.635	673	
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1132.633	673	
H ₆	CSR → Familiarity	1133.186	673	
H ₈	Content → Experience	1132.587	673	
H ₉	Work context → Experience	1132.455	673	
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	1134.065	673	

Table H-5: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – product vs. service

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1081.212	672	
H ₁	Familiarity → Associations	1081.641	673	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1082.919	673	
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1083.900	673	
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1084.571	673	
H ₆	CSR → Familiarity	1088.071	673	Yes
H ₈	Content → Experience	1081.436	673	
H ₉	Work context → Experience	1081.668	673	
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	1082.088	673	

Table H-6: $\Delta\chi^2$ Test – quality of product/service

hypothesis	path	χ^2	df	Sig.
	Baseline Model	1116.246	672	
H ₁	Familiarity → Associations	1116.278	673	
H ₂	Experience → Associations	1122.366	673	Yes
H ₄	Reputation → Familiarity	1117.508	673	
H ₅	Reputation → Associations	1116.259	673	
H ₆	CSR → Familiarity	1117.647	673	
H ₈	Content → Experience	1128.159	673	Yes
H ₉	Work context → Experience	1124.061	673	Yes
H ₁₁	Associations → Preference	1116.671	673	

List of Reference

- Aaker, D 1991, *Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name*, Maxwell Macmillan International, New York.
- Aaker, D 1996, 'Measuring brand equity across products and markets', *California Management Review*, vol. 38, no. 3, pp. 102-120.
- Aaker, J 1997, 'Dimensions of brand personality', *Journal of Marketing Research*, pp. 347-356.
- Aggerholm, HK, Andersen, SE & Thomsen, C 2011, 'Conceptualising employer branding in sustainable organisations', *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 105-123.
- Agrawal, R & Swaroop, P 2009, 'Effect of employer brand image on application intentions of b-school undergraduates', *The Journal of Business Perspective*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 41-49.
- Aguilera, RV, Rupp, DE, Williams, CA & Ganapathi, J 2007, 'Putting the s back in corporate social responsibility: A multilevel theory of social change in organizations', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 836-863.
- Aguinis, H & Glavas, A 2012, 'What we know and don't know about corporate social responsibility a review and research agenda', *Journal of Management*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp. 932-968.
- Ali, I, Rehman, KU, Ali, SI, Yousaf, J & Zia, M 2010, 'Corporate social responsibility influences, employee commitment and organizational performance', *African Journal of Business Management*, vol. 4, no. 12, pp. 2796-2801.
- Allen, DG, Mahto, RV & Otondo, RF 2007, 'Web-based recruitment: Effects of information, organizational brand, and attitudes toward a web site on applicant attraction', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 92, no. 6, pp. 1696-1708.
- Allen, NJ & Meyer, JP 1990, 'The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance and normative commitment to the organization', *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, vol. 63, no. 1, pp. 1-18.
- Alniacik, U, Cigerim, E, Akcin, K & Bayram, O 2011, 'Independent and joint effects of perceived corporate reputation, affective commitment and job satisfaction on turnover intentions', *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 24, pp. 1177-1189.
- Alshathry, S, Clarke, M & Goodman, S 2013, 'Antecedents and consequences of employer brand equity: Towards a conceptual framework', *16th World Marketing Congress*, Melbourne, Australia.

Alshathry, S, O'Donohue, W, Wickham, M & Fishwick, S 2014, 'National culture as an influence on perceptions of employer attractiveness', *AT Business Management Review*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 101-111.

Ambler, T & Barrow, S 1996, 'The employer brand', *The Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 185-206.

Ambler, T & Styles, C 1996, 'Brand development versus new product development: Towards a process model of extension decisions', *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, vol. 14, no. 7, pp. 10-19.

American Marketing Association 2014, *Dictionary*, viewed 3/10 2014, <<https://www.ama.org/resources/Pages/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B>>.

AMR-Australia 2012, *Corporate Reputation Index*, <<http://www.amr-australia.com/asset/pdf/2012Rankings.pdf>>.

Anderson, EW & Sullivan, MW 1993, 'The antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction for firms', *Marketing Science*, pp. 125-143.

Ashforth, BE & Mael, F 1989, 'Social identity theory and the organization', *The Academy of Management Review*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 20-39.

Australian Bureau Statistics 2013a, *Job search experience, Australia, July 2013*, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6222.0July%202013?OpenDocument>>.

Australian Bureau Statistics 2013b, *Retirement and Retirement Intentions, Australia, July 2012 to June 2013*, <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/6238.0Main%20Features3July%202012%20to%20June%202013?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=6238.0&issue=July%202012%20to%20June%202013&num=&view=>>>.

Australian Government Treasury 2010, *Intergenerational Report*, <http://archive.treasury.gov.au/igr/igr2010/report/pdf/IGR_2010.pdf>.

Backhaus, K & Tikoo, S 2004, 'Conceptualizing and researching employer branding', *Career Development International*, vol. 9, no. 5, pp. 501-517.

Bagozzi, RP, Yi, Y & Phillips, LW 1991, 'Assessing construct validity in organizational research', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, pp. 421-458.

Bamert, T & Wehrli, HP 2005, 'Service quality as an important dimension of brand equity in swiss services industries', *Managing Service Quality*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 132-141.

- Barber, AE 1998, *Recruiting Employees: Individual and Organizational Perspectives*, Hogrefe & Huber.
- Barnett, ML, Jermier, JM & Lafferty, BA 2006, 'Corporate reputation: The definitional landscape', *Corporate Reputation Review*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 26-38.
- Baron, S, Harris, K & Hilton, T 2003, *Services Marketing: Text and Cases*, Palgrave.
- Barrow, S & Mosley, R 2011, *The employer brand: Bringing the Best of Brand Management to People at Work*, John Wiley & Sons.
- Bass, BM, Cascio, WF & O'Connor, EJ 1974, 'Magnitude estimations of expressions of frequency and amount', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 59, no. 3, pp. 313-320.
- Bear, S, Rahman, N & Post, C 2010, 'The impact of board diversity and gender composition on corporate social responsibility and firm reputation', *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 97, no. 2, pp. 207-221.
- Beardwell, J & Claydon, T 2010, *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Approach*, Pearson Education.
- Beaverstock, JV & Hall, S 2012, 'Competing for talent: Global mobility, immigration and the city of london's labour market', *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, pp. 271-287.
- Bem, DJ 1967, 'Self-perception: An alternative interpretation of cognitive dissonance phenomena', *Psychological Review*, vol. 74, no. 3, pp. 183-200.
- Berry, LL 2000, 'Cultivating service brand equity', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 128-137.
- Berthon, P, Ewing, M & Hah, LL 2005, 'Captivating company: Dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding', *International Journal of Advertising*, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 151-172.
- Biswas, MK & Suar, D 2014, 'Antecedents and consequences of employer branding', *Journal of Business Ethics*, pp. 1-16.
- Bodderas, M, Cachelin, JL, Maas, P & Schlager, T 2011, 'The influence of the employer brand on employee attitudes relevant for service branding: An empirical investigation', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 25, no. 7, pp. 497-508.
- Bollen, KA & Stine, RA 1992, 'Bootstrapping goodness-of-fit measures in structural equation models', *Sociological Methods & Research*, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 205-229.

- Bonaiuto, M, De Dominicis, S, Illia, L, Rodríguez-Cánovas, B & Lizzani, G 2013, 'Managing employer brand attributes to attract potential future leaders', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 20, no. 9, pp. 779-792.
- Boudreau, JW & Rynes, SL 1985, 'Role of recruitment in staffing utility analysis', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 70, no. 2, pp. 354-366.
- Bourhis, A & Mekkaoui, R 2010, 'Beyond work-family balance: Are family-friendly organizations more attractive?', *Industrial Relations*, vol. 65, no. 1, pp. 98-117.
- Boxall, P & Purcell, J 2011, *Strategy and human resource management: Third edition*, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brakus, JJ, Schmitt, BH & Zarantonello, L 2009, 'Brand experience: What is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty?', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 73, no. 3, pp. 52-68.
- Brammer, S, Brooks, C & Pavelin, S 2006, 'Corporate social performance and stock returns: Uk evidence from disaggregate measures', *Financial Management*, vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 97-116.
- Brammer, S, Millington, A & Rayton, B 2007, 'The contribution of corporate social responsibility to organizational commitment', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 18, no. 10, pp. 1701-1719.
- Breaugh, JA & Frye, NK 2007, 'An examination of the antecedents and consequences of the use of family-friendly benefits', *Journal of Managerial Issues*, pp. 35-52.
- Brodie, RJ 2009, 'From goods to service branding an integrative perspective', *Marketing Theory*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 107-111.
- Brooks, ME, Highhouse, S, Russell, SS & Mohr, DC 2003, 'Familiarity, ambivalence, and firm reputation: Is corporate fame a double-edged sword?', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 88, no. 5, pp. 904-914.
- Brown, TA 2012, *Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Applied Research*, Guilford Press.
- Brown, WA & Yoshioka, CF 2003, 'Mission attachment and satisfaction as factors in employee retention', *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 5-18.
- Bryman, A 2003, *Research Methods and Organization Studies*, 2nd edn, vol. 20, Psychology Press, Philadelphia, US.
- Burke, RJ & Ng, E 2006, 'The changing nature of work and organizations: Implications for human resource management', *Human Resource Management Review*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 86-94.

Byrne, BM 2010, *Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS: Basic Concepts, Applications, and Programming*, Multivariate Applications Series, Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, New York, NY, US.

Cable, DM & Graham, ME 2000, 'The determinants of job seekers' reputation perceptions', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, vol. 21, no. 8, pp. 929-947.

Cable, DM & Turban, DB 2001, 'Establishing the dimensions, sources, and value of job seekers' employer knowledge during recruitment', *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, vol. 20, pp. 115-164.

Cable, DM & Turban, DB 2003, 'The value of organizational reputation in the recruitment context: A brand equity perspective', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, vol. 33, no. 11, pp. 2244-2266.

Cabrera, A, Collins, WC & Salgado, JF 2006, 'Determinants of individual engagement in knowledge sharing', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 245-264.

Cardy, RL, Miller, JS & Ellis, AD 2007, 'Employee equity: Toward a person-based approach to HRM', *Human Resource Management Review*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 140-151.

Carless, SA 2005, 'Person–job fit versus person–organization fit as predictors of organizational attraction and job acceptance intentions: A longitudinal study', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 78, no. 3, pp. 411-429.

Carless, SA & Imber, A 2007, 'Job and organizational characteristics', *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, vol. 67, no. 2, pp. 328-341.

Carmeli, A 2004, 'The link between organizational elements, perceived external prestige and performance', *Corporate Reputation Review*, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 314-331.

Carsten, JM & Spector, PE 1987, 'Unemployment, job satisfaction, and employee turnover: A meta-analytic test of the muchinsky model', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 72, no. 3, pp. 374-381.

Catanzaro, D, Moore, H & Marshall, TR 2010, 'The impact of organizational culture on attraction and recruitment of job applicants', *Journal of Business and Psychology*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 649-662.

Celani, A & Singh, P 2011, 'Signaling theory and applicant attraction outcomes', *Personnel Review*, vol. 40, no. 2, pp. 222-238.

Chang, HH & Liu, YM 2009, 'The impact of brand equity on brand preference and purchase intentions in the service industries', *The Service Industries Journal*, vol. 29, no. 12, pp. 1687-1706.

- Chapman, DS, Uggerslev, KL, Carroll, SA, Piasentin, KA & Jones, DA 2005, 'Applicant attraction to organizations and job choice: A meta-analytic review of the correlates of recruiting outcomes', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 90, no. 5, pp. 928-944.
- Chen, CF & Tseng, WS 2010, 'Exploring customer based airline brand equity: Evidence from taiwan', *Transportation Journal*, vol. 49, no. 1, pp. 24-35.
- Chhabra, NL & Sharma, S 2014, 'Employer branding: Strategy for improving employer attractiveness', *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 48-60.
- Cho, S & Johanson, MM 2008, 'Organizational citizenship behavior and employee performance: A moderating effect of work status in restaurant employees', *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 307-326.
- Chowdhury, S, Schulz, E, Milner, M & Van De Voort, D 2014, 'Core employee based human capital and revenue productivity in small firms: An empirical investigation', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 67, no. 11, pp. 2473-2479.
- Christine, MR, Robert, DG & Jodi, B 1997, 'Corporate image: Employee reactions and implications for managing corporate social performance', *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 401-412.
- Chun, R 2005, 'Corporate reputation: Meaning and measurement', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 91-109.
- Churchill, GA 1979, 'A paradigm for developing better measures of marketing constructs', *Journal of Marketing Research*, pp. 64-73.
- Cobb-Walgren, CJ, Ruble, CA & Donthu, N 1995, 'Brand equity, brand preference, and purchase intent', *Journal of Advertising*, pp. 25-40.
- Cohen, J 1988, *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*, Routledge.
- Collins, C & Han, J 2004, 'Exploring applicant pool quantity and quality: The effects of early recruitment practice strategies, corporate advertising, and firm reputation', *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 685-717.
- Collins, C & Kanar, AM 2013, 'Employer brand equity and recruitment research', *The Oxford Handbook of Recruitment*, pp. 284-297.
- Collins, CJ 2007, 'The interactive effects of recruitment practices and product awareness on job seekers' employer knowledge and application behaviors', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 92, no. 1, pp. 180-190.

Collins, CJ & Stevens, CK 2002, 'The relationship between early recruitment-related activities and the application decisions of new labor-market entrants: A brand equity approach to recruitment', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 87, no. 6, pp. 1121-1133.

Cotton, JL & Tuttle, JM 1986, 'Employee turnover: A meta-analysis and review with implications for research', *Academy of Management Review*, pp. 55-70.

Coyle-Shapiro, J, Shore, L & Taylor, S 2005, *The Employment Relationship: Examining Psychological and Contextual Perspectives*, Wiley Online Library.

Coyle-Shapiro, JA & Shore, LM 2007, 'The employee–organization relationship: Where do we go from here?', *Human Resource Management Review*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 166-179.

Crewson, PE 1997, 'Public-service motivation: Building empirical evidence of incidence and effect', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 499-518.

Cropanzano, R & Mitchell, MS 2005, 'Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review', *Journal of Management*, vol. 31, no. 6, pp. 874-900.

Cunningham, GB, Fink, JS & Sagas, M 2005, 'Extensions and further examination of the job embeddedness construct', *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 319-335.

Davies, G 2008, 'Employer branding and its influence on managers', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 42, no. 5/6, pp. 667-681.

Davis, DF, Golicic, SL & Marquardt, A 2009, 'Measuring brand equity for logistics services', *The International Journal of Logistics Management*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 201-212.

de Chernatony, L, Cottam, S & Segal-Horn, S 2006, 'Communicating services brands' values internally and externally', *The Service Industries Journal*, vol. 26, no. 8, pp. 819-836.

de Chernatony, L & Segal-Horn, S 2001, 'Building on services' characteristics to develop successful services brands', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 17, no. 7-8, pp. 645-669.

de Leeuw, ED, Hox, J & Dillman, DA 2008, *International Handbook of Survey Methodology*, Taylor & Francis.

del Rio, AB, Vazquez, R & Iglesias, V 2001, 'The effects of brand associations on consumer response', *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol. 18, no. 5, pp. 410-425.

Demerouti, E 2006, 'Job characteristics, flow, and performance: The moderating role of conscientiousness', *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 266-280.

Devi, A 2009, 'Corporate social responsibility: The key role of human resource management', *Business Intelligence Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 205-213.

Dick, A, Chakravarti, D & Biehal, G 1990, 'Memory-based inferences during consumer choice', *Journal of Consumer Research*, pp. 82-93.

Dick, AS & Basu, K 1994, 'Customer loyalty: Toward an integrated conceptual framework', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 99-113.

Dowling, G 2000, *Creating Corporate Reputations: Identity, Image and Performance*, Oxford University Press.

Dutton, JE & Dukerich, JM 1991, 'Keeping an eye on the mirror: Image and identity in organizational adaptation', *Academy of Management Journal*, pp. 517-554.

Dymock, D & McCarthy, C 2006, 'Towards a learning organization? Employee perceptions', *Learning Organization, The*, vol. 13, no. 5, pp. 525-537.

Easterby-Smith, MP, Thorpe, R & Jackson, P 2008, *Management research: Theory and research*.

Edmondson, AC & McManus, SE 2007, 'Methodological fit in management field research', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 1246-1264.

Edwards, JR 2001, 'Multidimensional constructs in organizational behavior research: An integrative analytical framework', *Organizational Research Methods*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 144-192.

Edwards, M 2010, 'An integrative review of employer branding and OB theory', *Personnel Review*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 5-23.

Edwards, M 2012, 'Employer branding: Developments and challenges', in S Bach & M Edwards (eds), *Managing Human Resources: Human Resource Management in Transition*, John Wiley & Sons.

Eisenberger, R, Armeli, S, Rexwinkel, B, Lynch, PD & Rhoades, L 2001, 'Reciprocation of perceived organizational support', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 86, no. 1, p. 42.

Eisenberger, R, Fasolo, P & Davis-LaMastro, V 1990, 'Perceived organizational support and employee diligence, commitment, and innovation', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 75, no. 1, p. 51.

Elving, WJ, Westhoff, JJ, Meeusen, K & Schoonderbeek, J-W 2013, 'The war for talent & quest: The relevance of employer branding in job advertisements for becoming an employer of choice', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 20, no. 5, pp. 355-373.

Erdem, T & Swait, J 1998, 'Brand equity as a signaling phenomenon', *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 131-157.

Ewing, MT, Pitt, LF, de Bussy, NM & Berthon, P 2002, 'Employment branding in the knowledge economy', *International Journal of Advertising*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 3-22.

Fan, X, Thompson, B & Wang, L 1999, 'Effects of sample size, estimation methods, and model specification on structural equation modeling fit indexes', *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 56-83.

Farquhar, P 1989, 'Managing brand equity', *Marketing Research*, vol. 1, pp. 24-33.

Feldman, DC 1995, 'The impact of downsizing on organizational career development activities and employee career development opportunities', *Human Resource Management Review*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 189-221.

Fornell, C & Larcker, DF 1981, 'Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error', *Journal of Marketing Research*, pp. 39-50.

Foster, C, Punjaisri, K & Cheng, R 2010, 'Exploring the relationship between corporate, internal and employer branding', *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 19, no. 6, pp. 401-409.

Freese, C, Schalk, R & Croon, M 2011, 'The impact of organizational changes on psychological contracts: A longitudinal study', *Personnel Review*, vol. 40, no. 4, pp. 404-422.

Garver, MS & Mentzer, JT 1999, 'Logistics research methods: Employing structural equation modeling to test for construct validity', *Journal of Business Logistics*, vol. 20, pp. 33-58.

Gatewood, RD, Gowan, MA & Lautenschlager, GJ 1993, 'Corporate image, recruitment image, and initial job choice decisions', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 414-427.

Gerbing, DW & Anderson, JC 1988, 'An updated paradigm for scale development incorporating unidimensionality and its assessment', *Journal of Marketing Research*, pp. 186-192.

Gifford, BD, Zammuto, RF & Goodman, EA 2001, 'The relationship between hospital unit culture and nurses' quality of work life', *Journal of Healthcare Management/American College of Healthcare Executives*, vol. 47, no. 1, pp. 13-25.

- Gladstein, DL 1984, 'Groups in context: A model of task group effectiveness', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 4, pp. 499-517.
- Gomes, D & Neves, J 2011, 'Organizational attractiveness and prospective applicants' intentions to apply', *Personnel Review*, vol. 40, no. 6, pp. 684-699.
- Gounaris, S & Stathakopoulos, V 2004, 'Antecedents and consequences of brand loyalty: An empirical study', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 283-306.
- Graen, GB & Scandura, TA 1987, 'Toward a psychology of dyadic organizing', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 175-208.
- Graves, SB & Waddock, SA 1994, 'Institutional owners and corporate social performance', *Academy of Management Journal*, pp. 1034-1046.
- Gray, DE 2009, *Doing Research in the Real World*, 2nd edn, SAGE, London, UK.
- Greening, DW & Turban, DB 2000, 'Corporate social performance as a competitive advantage in attracting a quality workforce', *Business & Society*, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 254-280.
- Griffeth, RW, Hom, PW & Gaertner, S 2000, 'A meta-analysis of antecedents and correlates of employee turnover: Update, moderator tests, and research implications for the next millennium', *Journal of Management*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 463-488.
- Hackman, JR & Oldham, GR 1976, 'Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory', *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 250-279.
- Haines III, VY, Rousseau, V, Brotheridge, CM & Saint-Onge, E 2011, 'A qualitative investigation of employee business awareness', *Personnel Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 73-87.
- Haines, VY, Rousseau, V, Brotheridge, CM & Saint-Onge, E 2012, 'A qualitative investigation of employee business awareness', *Personnel Review*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 73-87.
- Hair, JF, Black, WC, Babin, BJ, Anderson, RE & Tatham, RL 2010, *Multivariate Data Analysis: A Global Perspective*, 7th edn, Prentice Hall Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Hannon, JM 1996, 'Organizational attractiveness in japan: A screening perspective', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 489-507.
- Hansen, SD, Dunford, BB, Boss, AD, Boss, RW & Angermeier, I 2011, 'Corporate social responsibility and the benefits of employee trust: A cross-disciplinary perspective', *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 102, no. 1, pp. 29-45.

- Hardy, B & Ford, LR 2014, 'It's not me, it's you miscomprehension in surveys', *Organizational Research Methods*, p. 1094428113520185.
- Heinz 2014, *Corporate social responsiblity*, viewed 28 August 2014, <<http://www.heinz.com.au/Our-Company/Corporate-Social-Responsibility>>.
- Helkkula, A 2011, 'Characterising the concept of service experience', *Journal of Service management*, vol. 22, no. 3, pp. 367-389.
- Hellier, PK, Geursen, GM, Carr, RA & Rickard, JA 2003, 'Customer repurchase intention: A general structural equation model', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 37, no. 11/12, pp. 1762-1800.
- Helm, S 2011, 'Employees' awareness of their impact on corporate reputation', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 64, no. 7, pp. 657-663.
- Highhouse, S, Broadfoot, A, Yugo, JE & Devendorf, SA 2009, 'Examining corporate reputation judgments with generalizability theory', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 94, no. 3, p. 782.
- Highhouse, S, Brooks, ME & Gregarus, G 2009, 'An organizational impression management perspective on the formation of corporate reputations', *Journal of Management*, vol. 35, no. 6, pp. 1481-1493.
- Highhouse, S, Lievens, F & Sinar, EF 2003, 'Measuring attraction to organizations', *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, vol. 63, no. 6, p. 986.
- Highhouse, S, Thornbury, EE & Little, IS 2007, 'Social-identity functions of attraction to organizations', *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, vol. 103, no. 1, pp. 134-146.
- Highhouse, S, Zickar, MJ, Thorsteinson, TJ, Stierwalt, SL & Slaughter, JE 1999, 'Assessing company employment image: An example in the fast food industry', *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 151-172.
- Hiltrop, J-M 1999, 'The quest for the best: Human resource practices to attract and retain talent', *European Management Journal*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 422-430.
- Hinkin, TR 1995, 'A review of scale development practices in the study of organizations', *Journal of Management*, vol. 21, no. 5, p. 967.
- Hinkin, TR 1998, 'A brief tutorial on the development of measures for use in survey questionnaires', *Organizational Research Methods*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 104-121.
- Holden, SJS 1993, 'Understanding brand awareness: Let me give you a cue!', *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 383-388.

- Holtom, BC, Mitchell, TR, Lee, TW & Eberly, MB 2008, 'Turnover and retention research: A glance at the past, a closer review of the present, and a venture into the future', *The Academy of Management Annals*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 231-274.
- Holton, EF 1996, 'New employee development: A review and reconceptualization', *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 233-252.
- Homans, GC 1958, 'Social behavior as exchange', *American Journal of Sociology*, pp. 597-606.
- Hoyer, WD & Brown, SP 1990, 'Effects of brand awareness on choice for a common, repeat-purchase product', *Journal of Consumer Research*, pp. 141-148.
- Hu, Lt & Bentler, PM 1999, 'Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives', *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 1-55.
- Iacobucci, D 2010, 'Structural equations modeling: Fit indices, sample size, and advanced topics', *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 90-98.
- Iglesias, O, Singh, JJ & Batista-Foguet, JM 2011, 'The role of brand experience and affective commitment in determining brand loyalty', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 18, no. 8, pp. 570-582.
- Ito, JK, Brotheridge, CM & McFarland, K 2013, 'Examining how preferences for employer branding attributes differ from entry to exit and how they relate to commitment, satisfaction, and retention', *Career Development International*, vol. 18, no. 7, pp. 732-752.
- Iverson, RD & Maguire, C 2000, 'The relationship between job and life satisfaction: Evidence from a remote mining community', *Human Relations*, vol. 53, no. 6, pp. 807-839.
- Jacoby, J & Kyner, DB 1973, 'Brand loyalty vs. Repeat purchasing behavior', *Journal of Marketing Research*, pp. 1-9.
- Jurasic, B & Azevedo, A 2010, 'Building customer-brand relationships in the mobile communications market: The role of brand tribalism and brand reputation', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 349-366.
- Kapferer, JN 1997, *Strategic Brand management: New Approaches to Creating and Evaluating Brand Equity*, Free Press.
- Katz, D 1960, 'The functional approach to the study of attitudes', *Public Opinion quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 163-204.

- Keller, K 1993, 'Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity', *The Journal of Marketing*, vol. 57, no. 1, pp. 1-22.
- Keller, K & Kotler, P 2006, *Marketing Management*, 12 edn, Pearson Prentice Hall. ISBN 0-13-145757-8.
- Keller, KL 2008, *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*, Pearson/Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, N.J.
- King, C & Grace, D 2009, 'Employee based brand equity: A third perspective', *Services Marketing Quarterly*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 122-147.
- King, C & Grace, D 2010, 'Building and measuring employee-based brand equity', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 44, no. 7/8, pp. 938-971.
- Kline, RB 2005, *Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling*, The Guilford Press.
- Knox, S & Freeman, C 2006, 'Measuring and managing employer brand image in the service industry', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 22, no. 7, pp. 695-716.
- Krishnan, BC & Hartline, MD 2001, 'Brand equity: Is it more important in services?', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 5, pp. 328-342.
- Krishnan, HS 1996, 'Characteristics of memory associations: A consumer-based brand equity perspective', *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 389-405.
- Kulkarni, UR, Ravindran, S & Freeze, R 2007, 'A knowledge management success model: Theoretical development and empirical validation', *Journal of Management Information Systems*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 309-347.
- Kunerth, B & Mosley, R 2011, 'Applying employer brand management to employee engagement', *Strategic HR Review*, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 19-26.
- Kwok, C-L, Lloyd, CJ & Yip, PS 2013, 'Aging population scenarios: An Australian experience', *Journal of Population Research*, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 335-345.
- Lambert, EG, Hogan, N & Barton, SM 2001, 'The impact of job satisfaction on turnover intent: A test of a structural measurement model using a national sample of workers', *The Social Science Journal*, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 233-250.
- Lee, C, Liu, J, Rousseau, DM, Hui, C & Chen, ZX 2011, 'Inducements, contributions, and fulfillment in new employee psychological contracts', *Human Resource Management*, vol. 50, no. 2, p. 201.

- Lei, M & Lomax, RG 2005, 'The effect of varying degrees of nonnormality in structural equation modeling', *Structural Equation Modeling*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 1-27.
- Leone, RP, Rao, VR, Keller, KL, Luo, AM, McAlister, L & Srivastava, R 2006, 'Linking brand equity to customer equity', *Journal of Service Research*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 125-138.
- Lepak, DP & Snell, SA 1999, 'The human resource architecture: Toward a theory of human capital allocation and development', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 31-48.
- Liao, YW 2012, 'Applying RFM model to evaluate the e-loyalty: The moderate role of switching cost', *Business and Information Conference*, Sapporo.
- Lievens, F 2007, 'Employer branding in the belgian army: The importance of instrumental and symbolic beliefs for potential applicants, actual applicants, and military employees', *Human Resource Management*, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 51-69.
- Lievens, F & Highhouse, S 2003, 'The relation of instrumental and symbolic attributes to a company's attractiveness as an employer', *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 56, no. 1, pp. 75-102.
- Lievens, F, Hoye, G & Schreurs, B 2005, 'Examining the relationship between employer knowledge dimensions and organizational attractiveness: An application in a military context', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 78, no. 4, pp. 553-572.
- Lievens, F, Van Hoye, G & Anseel, F 2007, 'Organizational identity and employer image: Towards a unifying framework', *British Journal of Management*, vol. 18, pp. S45-S59.
- Lissitz, RW & Green, SB 1975, 'Effect of the number of scale points on reliability: A monte carlo approach', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 60, no. 1, p. 10.
- Locander, WB & Spivey, WA 1978, 'A functional approach to attitude measurement', *Journal of Marketing Research*, pp. 576-587.
- Luce, RA, Barber, AE & Hillman, AJ 2001, 'Good deeds and misdeeds: A mediated model of the effect of corporate social performance on organizational attractiveness', *Business & Society*, vol. 40, no. 4, pp. 397-415.
- Lynn, P 2008, 'The problem of nonresponse', in ED de Leeuw, J Hox & DA Dillman (eds), *International Handbook of Survey Methodology*, Taylor & Francis.

Madden, TJ, Fehle, F & Fournier, S 2006, 'Brands matter: An empirical demonstration of the creation of shareholder value through branding', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 224-235.

March, JG & Simon, HA 1958, *Organizations*, Wiley, Oxford, England.

Martensen, A & Grønholdt, L 2010, 'Measuring and managing brand equity: A study with focus on product and service quality in banking', *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 300-316.

Martin, G, Beaumont, P, Doig, R & Pate, J 2005, 'Branding: A new performance discourse for hr?', *European Management Journal*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 76-88.

Martin, G, Gollan, PJ & Grigg, K 2011, 'Is there a bigger and better future for employer branding? Facing up to innovation, corporate reputations and wicked problems in shrm', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 22, no. 17, pp. 3618-3637.

Mathieu, JE & Zajac, DM 1990, 'A review and meta-analysis of the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of organizational commitment', *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 108, no. 2, p. 171.

Matzler, K, Bidmon, S & Grabner-Kräuter, S 2006, 'Individual determinants of brand affect: The role of the personality traits of extraversion and openness to experience', *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 15, no. 7, pp. 427-434.

Maurer, SD, Howe, V & Lee, TW 1992, 'Organizational recruiting as marketing management: An interdisciplinary study of engineering graduates', *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 45, no. 4, pp. 807-833.

Maxwell, R & Knox, S 2009, 'Motivating employees to "live the brand": A comparative case study of employer brand attractiveness within the firm', *Journal of Marketing management*, vol. 25, no. 9-10, pp. 893-907.

McKinsey Global Institute 2012, *The world at work: Jobs, pay, and skills for 3.5 billion people*, viewed 19 Oct 2014, <http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/employment_and_growth/the_world_at_work>.

McNulty, E 2006, *It's time to rethink what you think you know about managing people*, Harvard Business Review Magazine, viewed 8/7/2014 2014, <<http://hbr.org/product/its-time-to-rethink-what-you-think-you-know-about-managing-people/an/U0602C-PDF-ENG>>.

Merz, MA, He, Y & Vargo, SL 2009, 'The evolving brand logic: A service-dominant logic perspective', *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 328-344.

Meyer, JP, Bobocel, DR & Allen, NJ 1991, 'Development of organizational commitment during the first year of employment: A longitudinal study of pre-and post-entry influences', *Journal of Management*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 717-733.

Meyer, JP & Smith, CA 2000, 'Hrm practices and organizational commitment: Test of a mediation model', *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, vol. 17, no. 4, pp. 319-331.

Meyer, JP, Stanley, DJ, Herscovitch, L & Topolnytsky, L 2002, 'Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates, and consequences', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, vol. 61, no. 1, pp. 20-52.

Michaels, E, Handfield-Jones, H & Axelrod, B 2001, *The War for Talent*, Harvard Business Press.

Mitchell, TR, Holtom, BC, Lee, TW, Sablinski, CJ & Erez, M 2001, 'Why people stay: Using job embeddedness to predict voluntary turnover', *Academy of Management Journal*, pp. 1102-1121.

Moroko, L & Uncles, MD 2008, 'Characteristics of successful employer brands', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 160-175.

Moroko, L & Uncles, MD 2009, 'Employer branding and market segmentation', *The Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 181-196.

Mosley, RW 2007, 'Customer experience, organisational culture and the employer brand', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 123-134.

Muchinsky, PM & Morrow, PC 1980, 'A multidisciplinary model of voluntary employee turnover', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 263-290.

Myers, CA 2003, 'Managing brand equity: A look at the impact of attributes', *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 39-51.

Nachmias, D & Nachmias, C 1996, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 5th edn, Worth Publishers.

Nedungadi, P & Hutchinson, JW 1985, 'The prototypicality of brands: Relationships with brand awareness, preference and usage', *Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 498-503.

Netemeyer, RG, Krishnan, B, Pullig, C, Wang, G, Yagci, M, Dean, D, Ricks, J & Wirth, F 2004, 'Developing and validating measures of facets of customer-based brand equity', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 57, no. 2, pp. 209-224.

Newbury, W, Gardberg, NA & Belkin, LY 2006, 'Organizational attractiveness is in the eye of the beholder: The interaction of demographic characteristics with foreignness', *Journal of International Business Studies*, vol. 37, no. 5, pp. 666-686.

O'Cass, A & Grace, D 2004, 'Exploring consumer experiences with a service brand', *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 257-268.

O'Cass, DA & Lim, K 2002, 'The influence of brand associations on brand preference and purchase intention', *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, vol. 14, no. 2-3, pp. 41-71.

O'Cass, A & Grace, D 2003, 'An exploratory perspective of service brand associations', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 17, no. 5, pp. 452-475.

O'Neil, KM & Penrod, SD 2001, 'Methodological variables in web-based research that may affect results: Sample type, monetary incentives, and personal information', *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments, & Computers*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 226-233.

Oliver, RL 2009, *Satisfaction: A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer*, ME Sharpe Inc.

Ong, LD 2011, 'Employer branding and its influence on potential job applicants', *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, vol. 5, no. 9, pp. 1088-1092.

Padgett, D & Allen, D 1997, 'Communicating experiences: A narrative approach to creating service brand image', *Journal of Advertising*, pp. 49-62.

Palmer, A 2010, 'Customer experience management: A critical review of an emerging idea', *Journal of Services Marketing*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 196-208.

Pietersis, J, van Leeuwen, B & Crawford, T 2005, 'Building philips' employer brand from the inside out', *Strategic HR Review*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 16-19.

Podsakoff, PM, MacKenzie, SB, Lee, J-Y & Podsakoff, NP 2003, 'Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 88, no. 5, pp. 879-903.

Podsakoff, PM, MacKenzie, SB & Podsakoff, NP 2012, 'Sources of method bias in social science research and recommendations on how to control it', *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 63, pp. 539-569.

Podsakoff, PM & Organ, DW 1986, 'Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects', *Journal of Management*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 531-544.

Powell, GN 1984, 'Effects of job attributes and recruiting practices on applicant decisions: A comparison 1', *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 37, no. 4, pp. 721-732.

Powell, GN & Goulet, LR 1996, 'Recruiters' and applicants' reactions to campus interviews and employment decisions', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 39, no. 6, pp. 1619-1640.

Punniyamoorthy, M & Raj, MPM 2007, 'An empirical model for brand loyalty measurement', *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 222-233.

Rampl, LV & Kenning, P 2014, 'Employer brand trust and affect: Linking brand personality to employer brand attractiveness', *European Journal of Marketing*, vol. 48, no. 1/2, pp. 218-236.

Rea, LM & Parker, RA 2005, *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide*, Jossey Bass Public Administration Series.

Rhoades, L & Eisenberger, R 2002, 'Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 87, no. 4, pp. 698-714.

Richardson, S 2007, *What is a skill shortage?*, Australian bulletin of labour, vol. 35, NCVET, Adelaide, Australia.

Riezebos, R, Kist, B & Kootstra, G 2003, *Brand Management: A Theoretical and Practical Approach*, Financial Times Prentice Hall.

Rindfleisch, A, Malter, AJ, Ganesan, S & Moorman, C 2008, 'Cross-sectional versus longitudinal survey research: Concepts, findings, and guidelines', *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 45, no. 3, pp. 261-279.

Rogelberg, SG & Stanton, JM 2007, 'Introduction understanding and dealing with organizational survey nonresponse', *Organizational Research Methods*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 195-209.

Rosethorn, MH 2012, *The Employer Brand: Keeping Faith with the Deal*, Gower Publishing, Ltd.

Rousseau, DM 1989, 'Psychological and implied contracts in organizations', *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 121-139.

Rousseau, DM 2001, 'Schema, promise and mutuality: The building blocks of the psychological contract', *Journal of occupational and organizational psychology*, vol. 74, p. 511-541.

Rynes, SL 1989, 'Recruitment, job choice, and post-hire consequences: A call for new research directions', *CAHRS Working Paper Series*, pp. 3-92.

Rynes, SL & Barber, AE 1990, 'Applicant attraction strategies: An organizational perspective', *Academy of Management Review*, pp. 286-310.

- Rynes, SL & Cable, DM 2003, *Recruitment research in the twenty first century*. *One:4:55–76*, Handbook of Psychology.
- Rynes, SL, Heneman, HG & Schwab, DP 1980, 'Individual reactions to organizational recruiting: A review', *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 529-542.
- Scherbaum, C & Maede, A 2009, 'Measurement in the organizational sciences: Conceptual and technological advances', in D Buchanan & A Bryman (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Organizational Research Methods*, Sage Publications Ltd.
- Schermelleh-Engel, K, Moosbrugger, H & Müller, H 2003, 'Evaluating the fit of structural equation models: Tests of significance and descriptive goodness-of-fit measures', *Methods of Psychological Research Online*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 23-74.
- Schreiber, JB, Nora, A, Stage, FK, Barlow, EA & King, J 2006, 'Reporting structural equation modeling and confirmatory factor analysis results: A review', *The Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 99, no. 6, pp. 323-338.
- Schutt, RK 2009, *Investigating the Social World: The Process and Practice of Research*, Sage Publications.
- Schworer, C & Rosen, B 1989, 'Effects of employment-at-will policies and compensation policies on corporate image and job pursuit intentions', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 74, no. 4, pp. 653-656.
- Sharfman, M 1996, 'The construct validity of the kinder, lydenberg & domini social performance ratings data', *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 287-296.
- Shemwell, DJ & Yavas, U 1999, 'Measuring service quality in hospitals: Scale development and managerial applications', *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, pp. 65-75.
- Shen, W, Kiger, TB, Davies, SE, Rasch, RL, Simon, KM & Ones, DS 2011, 'Samples in applied psychology: Over a decade of research in review', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 96, no. 5, pp. 1055-1064.
- Shore, LM & Coyle-Shapiro, JAM 2003, 'New developments in the employee–organization relationship', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, vol. 24, no. 5, pp. 443-450.
- Slaughter, JE & Greguras, GJ 2009, 'Initial attraction to organizations: The influence of trait inferences', *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 1-18.
- Slaughter, JE, Zickar, MJ, Highhouse, S & Mohr, DC 2004, 'Personality trait inferences about organizations: Development of a measure and assessment of construct validity', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 89, no. 1, pp. 85-103.

Social Security Administration 2014, *Retirement age*, Social Security, viewed 12 Sep 2014, <<http://www.ssa.gov/planners/retire/background.html>>.

Spence, M 1973, 'Job market signaling', *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, pp. 355-374.

Srivastava, P & Bhatnagar, J 2010, 'Employer brand for talent acquisition: An exploration towards its measurement', *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*, vol. 14, no. 1-2, pp. 25-34.

Srivastava, RK & Thomas, GM 2010, 'Managing brand performance: Aligning positioning, execution and experience', *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 17, no. 7, pp. 465-471.

Stahl, F, Heitmann, M, Lehmann, DR & Neslin, SA 2012, 'The impact of brand equity on customer acquisition, retention, and profit margin', *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 76, no. 4, pp. 44-63.

Stahl, G, Björkman, I, Farndale, E, Morris, SS, Paauwe, J, Stiles, P, Trevor, J & Wright, P 2012, 'Six principles of effective global talent management', *Sloan Management Review*, vol. 53, no. 2, pp. 25-42.

Stevens, M 2010, 'Crossrail promises it will leave a skills legacy', *People Management*, 9 Feb, p. 11.

Streb, CK, Voelpel, SC & Leibold, M 2008, 'Managing the aging workforce:: Status quo and implications for the advancement of theory and practice', *European management journal*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 1-10.

Tabachnick, BG, Fidell, LS & Osterlind, SJ 2007, *Using Multivariate Statistics*, Allyn and Bacon Boston.

Tajfel, H & Turner, JC 1979, 'An integrative theory of intergroup conflict', *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, pp. 33-47.

Tanova, C & Holtom, BC 2008, 'Using job embeddedness factors to explain voluntary turnover in four european countries', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 19, no. 9, pp. 1553-1568.

Teixeira, J, Patrício, L, Nunes, NJ, Nóbrega, L, Fisk, RP & Constantine, L 2012, 'Customer experience modeling: From customer experience to service design', *Journal of Service Management*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 362-376.

Tett, RP & Meyer, JP 1993, 'Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and turnover: Path analyses based on meta analytic findings', *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 259-293.

The Department of Employment 2012, *Workforce Ageing*, Australia, viewed 12 Sep 2014, <<http://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/6263670>>.

The Department of Employment 2014, *Skills shortages australia*, <https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/skillshortagesaustralia_0.pdf>.

Thorsteinson, TJ 2003, 'Job attitudes of part-time vs. Full-time workers: A meta-analytic review', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 76, no. 2, pp. 151-177.

Tikkanen, T 2011, 'From managing a problem to capitalizing on talent and experience of older workers', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 22, no. 6, pp. 1217-1220.

Tomprou, M & Nikolaou, I 2011, 'A model of psychological contract creation upon organizational entry', *Career Development International*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 342-363.

Trank, CQ, Rynes, SL & Bretz Jr, RD 2002, 'Attracting applicants in the war for talent: Differences in work preferences among high achievers', *Journal of Business and Psychology*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 331-345.

Trevor, CO 2001, 'Interactions among actual ease-of-movement determinants and job satisfaction in the prediction of voluntary turnover', *Academy of Management Journal*, pp. 621-638.

Turban, D & Greening, D 1996, 'Corporate social performance and organizational attractiveness to prospective employees', *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp. 658-672.

Turban, DB 2001, 'Organizational attractiveness as an employer on college campuses: An examination of the applicant population', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, vol. 58, no. 2, pp. 293-312.

Turban, DB & Cable, DM 2003, 'Firm reputation and applicant pool characteristics', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, vol. 24, no. 6, pp. 733-751.

Turban, DB, Eyring, AR & Campion, JE 1993, 'Job attributes: Preferences compared with reasons given for accepting and rejecting job offers', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 66, no. 1, pp. 71-81.

Turban, DB, Forret, ML & Hendrickson, CL 1998, 'Applicant attraction to firms: Influences of organization reputation, job and organizational attributes, and recruiter behaviors', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 24-44.

- Turban, DB, Lau, CM, Ngo, HY, Chow, IHS & Si, SX 2001, 'Organizational attractiveness of firms in the people's republic of china: A person–organization fit perspective', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 86, no. 2, pp. 194-206.
- Turker, D 2009, 'How corporate social responsibility influences organizational commitment', *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 89, no. 2, pp. 189-204.
- Uen, JF, Ahlstrom, D, Chen, S & Liu, J 2015, 'Employer brand management, organizational prestige and employees' word-of-mouth referrals in taiwan', *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, vol. 53, no. 1, pp. 104-123.
- UK Houses of Parliament 2011, 'An ageing workforce', *Research briefings*, no. 391, viewed 14 Sep 2014, <<http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/post-pn-391.pdf>>.
- Van Hove, G, Bas, T, Cromheecke, S & Lievens, F 2013, 'The instrumental and symbolic dimensions of organisations' image as an employer: A large scale field study on employer branding in turkey', *Applied Psychology*, vol. 62, no. 4, pp. 543-557.
- Van Hove, G & Lievens, F 2009, 'Tapping the grapevine: A closer look at word-of-mouth as a recruitment source', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 94, no. 2, pp. 341-352.
- Vivek, SD, Beatty, SE & Morgan, RM 2012, 'Customer engagement: Exploring customer relationships beyond purchase', *The Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 122-146.
- Walker, K 2010, 'A systematic review of the corporate reputation literature: Definition, measurement, and theory', *Corporate Reputation Review*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 357-387.
- Wallace, M, Lings, I & Cameron, R 2012, 'Industry branding: Attracting talent to weaker profile industries', *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, vol. 50, no. 4, pp. 483-502.
- Walter, M 2010, *Social Research Methods*, 2nd edn Oxford University Press.
- Wells, GL & Windschitl, PD 1999, 'Stimulus sampling and social psychological experimentation', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, vol. 25, no. 9, pp. 1115-1125.
- Wilden, R, Gudergan, S & Lings, I 2006, 'Employee-based brand equity', *Australian Newzeland Marketing Academy Conferenc*, Brisbane, Australia.
- Wilden, R, Gudergan, S & Lings, I 2010, 'Employer branding: Strategic implications for staff recruitment', *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 56-73.

Williams, LJ, Vandenberg, RJ & Edwards, JR 2009, 'Structural equation modeling in management research: A guide for improved analysis', *The Academy of Management Annals*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 543-604.

Wong, IA 2013, 'Exploring customer equity and the role of service experience in the casino service encounter', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, vol. 32, pp. 91-101.

Worthington, RL & Whittaker, TA 2006, 'Scale development research a content analysis and recommendations for best practices', *The Counseling Psychologist*, vol. 34, no. 6, pp. 806-838.

Yoo, B & Donthu, N 1997, 'Developing and validating a consumer-based overall brand equity scale for americans and koreans: An extension of aaker's and keller's conceptualizations', *AMA Summer Educators Conference, Chicago*.

Yoo, B & Donthu, N 2001, 'Developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 52, no. 1, pp. 1-14.

Zikmund, WG, Ward, S, Lowe, B & Winzar, H 2010, *Marketing Research*, Cengage Learning.