Branding Begins with Employees: Analyzing the Impact of 4E's on Employee Branding in Telecom Sector of Pakistan

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Abstract

In the contemporary business world today, employee branding has emerged as a new concept within organizations. The purpose behind conducting this study is to develop a common understanding about the 4e's on employee branding. In order to conduct this study, a convenience sampling strategy was used for data collection and data was collected from 306 respondents working in the telecommunication sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, through a structured questionnaire. Results are drawn using correlation and regression analysis, indicating that employee engagement, empowerment and equity have a positive effect on employee branding except employee education. This study will help human resource managers to consider 4e's in order to increase employee branding. Employee branding is a vital aspect of any human resource activity and plays an important role in up lifting the awareness of employees outside an organization and will help produce committed employees.

Keywords: Employee Branding, Employee Engagement, Employee Empowerment, Employee Education, Employee Equity.

Introduction

Employee branding is somehow a new approach which is a soul of human resource and marketing fields. It is a key of retaining top talent to build organizational productivity. Organizations do best to make planning part effective at every level. They plan to make marketing plans and advertising campaigns to launch their brand. Therefore, training the employees is also a very crucial level; otherwise building brand for organization might go flop. Organization's brand grows meritoriously when they represent and sell the brand effectively to their target customers and for this reason, every company searches for the best talent around. Therefore an employee brand is what that draws interest of the employees towards a company[1]. Employee branding focuses on branding employees. It is how organizations train, build and retain their employees. It is a strategy that increases employee satisfaction which results in high productivity and performance[2]. Therefore, this study targets on identifying the Impact of 4E's i.e. employee education, employee equity, employee empowerment, employee engagement on employee branding. The study aim is that how 4E's influence employee branding and up to what extent it contribute towards the organization success.

Research Objective(s): To examine the effect of employee engagement, employee empowerment, employee education and employee equity on employee branding.

Research Question(s): How employee engagement, employee empowerment, employee education and employee equity effects on employee branding?

Employee Branding: Employee branding is up to what extent employee's value and understand the brand image of the company, and they input their efforts to organizational success[3]. Delivery of the employee brand image to customers influences the organizational outcomes[4]. Brand image is portrayed in the light of organization mission and values with the help of their trained employees. Therefore, employee branding forms the foundation for what organization want employees to project image to their target customers[5].

Employee Engagement: it is a valuable concept for understanding and improving individual and seeking organization success[6]. This was postulated by Kahn[7] as the "connection of organizational members" to their job. The objective of engaging employees is to express themselves physically, cognitively and passionately during their work. It is an important factor of organizational behaviour. Employee engagement is actually the commitment and faithfulness to the organizations and its core values. An engaged employee fully understands the business objectives and works dedicatedly with his/her co-workers to further progress and improve for the benefit of the organization[8].

Employee Empowerment: In this dynamic business world, change is obvious because of the rapid changing technology and trends of business environment. So, it is also important to change the way of managing and handling employees. Mangers should be able to deal with their employees when there is more competitive environment and employee empowerment is one of the main ingredients of organization success if managed

properly[9]. Empowerment relates when the power of making decision is transferred from upper level to lower level because it provides more motivation to the employees[10]. It has been found that the empowerment provides several organizational benefits such as decrease in job stress, motivates the employees to contribute in organizational performance and provides quality of work. Unfortunately, it is also seen that in many organizations empowerment concept is failed because employees hesitate to be empowered and some managers were reluctant in giving authority to the employees[11]. Most employees to certain extent like to being empowered in one's organization because psychologically, they appreciate the greater responsibility and decision making powers given to them[12].

Employee Education: Education refers to development of skills, knowledge and abilities of a person; it includes professional knowledge, expertise and adaptation to the environment. The purpose to educate employees is to enhance the abilities of employees, educate them clearly about the organizational goals and objectives to satisfy the current and future needs of the organizations. Therefore employee knowledge and attitude can be enhanced and improved through constant and organized training and development programs, for achieving higher work efficiency and productivity[13]. Employee education is a process to alter attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour of employees through giving them learning experience. Developing and training plans effectively enhance employees' performance at work which helps organization to retain employees because they are satisfied and happy, thus having organization commitment, devotion and loyalty for organization[14].

Employee Equity: The utmost significant thing for any organization is the people working in it, i.e. the Human Resource of the organization. The Human Resource is the back bone to the success of any organization; therefore a great amount focus is required by the management to efficiently utilize those resources in order to gain maximum and quality output. This is the very reason that employees human assets within an organization are now referred to as "Human Capital" of that particular organization. Reason being, that these assets are representatives or ambassadors of that organization internally and externally. These employees exemplify the knowledge, skills and capabilities of the organization. Each of the individual working in the organization is the source of energy, determination and motivation that he/she convey to the other fellow employees and to the workplace[15].

Research hypotheses: H1: Employee engagement has a positive impact on employee branding. H2: Employee empowerment has a positive impact on employee branding. H3: Employee education has a positive impact on employee branding. H4: Employee equity has a positive impact on employee branding

Methodology

The instrument used for the data collection was a survey questionnaire containing structured close-ended questions. The questionnaire had two sections. Section 'A' comprised of demographic information such as job tenure and job status, section 'B' comprised the questions which enclosed of different items to measure responses on the variables. All questions were adapted using the fivelikert scale[16], form ranging from 1 (strongly dissatisfied) to 5 (strongly satisfied). Population of the study was the employees from telecom sector of Pakistan. The sample size of the study included 306workers of Telecom industry from Islamabad/Rawalpindi. The sampling strategy used for this study is convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire comprised of adopted items.

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of 4e's on employee branding of employees working in telecom sector of Pakistan. Analysis of the data is presented in the below tables followed by findings and conclusions.
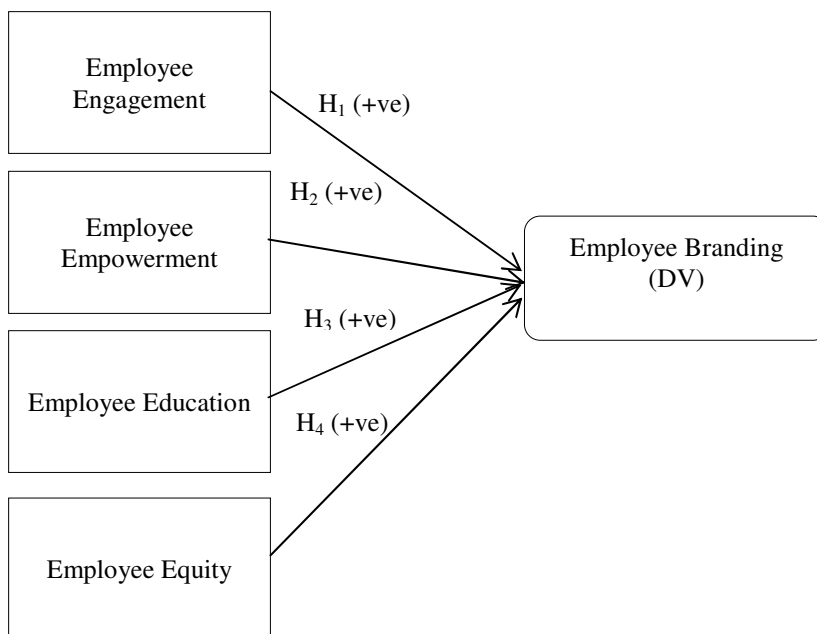
Table-1
Demographic Analysis

Category	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Tenure	Less than a year	48	15.7
	1-2 years	94	30.7
	2-5 years	106	34.6
	5-10 years	58	19.0
	Total	306	100.0
Job Status	Full-time	196	64.1
	Part-time	110	35.9
	Total	306	100.0

Table-1 indicates that there were 106 respondents out of 306 whose job tenure is between 2-5 years. This table also shows that there were 196 employees out of total 306 whose job status was full-time.

Table-2 shows the values of cronbach alpha which shows us the reliability of the question used in the questionnaire. The ideal range of cronbach is 0.7 and all the values showing reliability, which shows that, the questionnaire was reliable.

Table-3 shows that employee engagement, employee empowerment, employee education, and employee equity has a positive and strong relationship with employee branding with respective values of .569, .471, .710, .806, .936 and .931.

Figure-1
Research Framework

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">**Table-2**
Reliability Analysis</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Description**</td><td>**Cronbach's Alpha**</td><td>**N of items**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Employee branding</td><td>.891</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Employee engagement</td><td>.710</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Employee empowerment</td><td>.734</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Employee education</td><td>.789</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Employee equity</td><td>.851</td><td>5</td></tr>
</table>

Table-3
Correlation

	EB	ENG	EMP	EDU	EQU
EB	1	-	-	-	-
ENG	.569**	1	-	-	-
EMP	.471**	.493**	1	-	-
EDU	.710**	.534**	.491**	1	-
EQU	.806**	.420**	.306*	.666**	1

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

Table-4
Regression Analysis

-	B	Beta	t	P	VIF
-	-1.237		-3.579	.001	-
ENG	.255	.198	2.398	.021	1.573
EMP	.461	.270	3.394	.001	1.467
EDU	.145	.124	1.247	.219	2.290
EQU	.546	.544	6.125	.000	1.824

N=306, R= .879, R^2= .805, Adjusted R^2= .788, F= 46.573

The coefficients Table-4 above shows the values of beta for all independent variables. These values of beta tell that how much dependent variable is being affected by independent variable. The significance values of impact of employee engagement, empowerment and equity are less than 0.05 so, H_1, H2 and H_4 are accepted which means that employee engagement, employee empowerment and employee equity significantly impact employee branding. Value of t of these three variables is more than 2 which also shows the strength of the relationship. Values of tolerance and VIF are also in range so, there is no multi-co linearity in the independent variables.

The results favour the researcher initial assumptions with the exception of the impact of employee education on employee branding. The results were in accordance with majority of the researchers backed in literature. The three independent variables (employee engagement, employee empowerment and employee equity) all have positive impact on employee branding making H1, H2, and H4 true for the outcome. The opinion about employee education remains divided among researchers that whether it is important for employee branding or not. Cultural constraints leans to negate the ascertained relationships since the discussion of researchers in confirmed to certain cultural boundaries. In Pakistan, employee education is not practiced in organizations utmost level, and the results were also negative. People in Pakistan emphasize learning from the experiences of others rather than to be self-motivated and confident to polish one's abilities. Our culture creates strong impact on our beliefs. Accordingly, people in Pakistan manage themselves by focusing more on collectivism rather than individualism which support Hofstede's culture index in which Pakistan was rated at lower level in individualism[17].

Conclusion

The purpose of the paper was to find out the impact of employee engagement, employee empowerment, employee education and employee equity on employee branding. After the analysis of data this research found out that employee engagement, employee empowerment and employee equity have a positive relationship with employee branding. Future success, profitability and sustainability of modern companies depend on intellectual capital of the organization and its ability to deal with employees. It is therefore suggested that employee branding should be articulated with vision, mission, and strategic goals. It should transform into practices.

However, employees who are more engaged with their work have more chances to become an employee brand for their organization. Similarly, employees who are given more authority to make their own decisions also have a chance to become an employee brand for their organization. In the last, employee equity also showed a positive impact that employee who are considered a real and valuable assets and the employees who are being utilized well by the human resource managers and they give maximum output are considered to be an employee brand for the organization as well. This paper showed that employee engagement, employee empowerment and employee equity are more effective then employee education. The researchers observed that the impact of employee engagement, employee empowerment and equity on employee branding was more than employee education across different employees with their job tenure and job status thus indicating the effectiveness of employee engagement, employee empowerment and employee equity for nurturing employee branding.

Limitations and Future Recommendations: This paper can serve as a starting point for future analysis; for instance: 4 E's model as proposed in this research offers basic implication for Human resource and Marketing relationship with respect to employee branding. Further research should be done on exploring key aspects and dimensions of employee branding in manufacturing firms and businesses. As employee education has a negative impact on employee branding, so it is recommended that future research could be carried on why there is negative effect of employee education on employee branding. Focused research should be carried out with human resource managers because up till now no research on employee branding is carried out with human resource managers, Marketing Managers and Branding experts.

Acknowledgement

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