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THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ON BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL BRANDING

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore the historical development of organizational commitment and link it to employer branding, then propose a framework to study the influence of brand loyalty, organizational culture, and organizational identity on organizational commitment. For this, an intensive literature review is conducted to track the historical development of organizational commitment and its components, and their influence on employer branding. At each level, studies on employer branding are divided into several categories, such as employer brand association, employer brand loyalty, organizational culture, and organizational identity. An examination of the historical development of organizational commitment shows a relation between organizational commitment and brand loyalty, then another proposed relation between both organizational culture and organizational identity from one side and organizational commitment on the other side. There is little understanding of the interdependent relation between organizational commitment and employer branding. This paper delivers a new field of study to human resource management which can enhance our understanding of the relationship between organizational commitment and employer branding. This exploration can lead to many relevant research ideas. Very few papers have studied the relation between employer branding and organizational commitment. This paper is of interest to managers of organizations undertaking employer-branding activities because the information enhances the subject of human resource management.

Keywords Organizational commitment, Employer branding, Employer brand association, Employer brand loyalty, Organizational culture, Organizational identity

INTRODUCTION

In today's business environment, firms know that employees are their inimitable assets and that they should be considered an endowment from the labor market to the firm. Theorists and practitioners of this subject have inferred that organizations are structured by three main paradigms: (1) organizations are social systems in which activities are ruled by social work laws and psychological laws; (2) organizations are formed based on people's common interests, through which management and employees work in collaboration to achieve organizational objectives and individuals' goals; and (3) organizations endeavor to recruit and maintain good employees through ethical practices and stable job environments (Davis and Newstrom, 2002). Hence, an organization's success depends on having a constant and skillful workforce who can be self-motivated and bring quality and human commitment as an added value to the organization (O'Malley, 2000). To achieve this indispensable objective, therefore, successful organizations continually strive to implement an effective human resource management strategy.

Various research studies show that organizational commitment has continued to be a subject of great attention since the early 1950s, when it was introduced into the field of organizational behavior (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Theorists and practitioners speculate that the influence of strong organizational commitment can bring benefits to any company, such as improved performance, organizational efficacy, low turnover, and reduced absenteeism (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Mowday, 1998; Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005). Even though abundant literature has corroborated the benefits of organizational commitment, it is still not clear how the organizational factors are connected with commitment or contribute to its development, or how these organizational factors can be controlled to endorse it (Kacmar et al., 1999). An organization's prosperity depends on having a solid, secure talented work force, which can add value to the organization's operations and structure. To realize these priorities, therefore, organizations have renovated the role of human resource management strategy and studied its relation to employer branding. The employer brand puts forth an image showing the organization as a good place to work (Sullivan, 2004). Many firms have developed formal employer branding or are interested in developing such a program.

Against this background, this conceptual paper aims to identify and measure the notion of the organizational commitment and link the elements of that commitment to the employer branding.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Development of Organizational Commitment

The main focus for industrialists at the dawn of the 20th century was on how to manage their employees to maximize productivity and profit by applying Taylor's scientific management theories (Wagner-Tsukamoto, 2008). Even though application of Taylor's method boosted productivity and compensation, it created high levels of stress and excessive employee turnover, because workers were expected to surpass their normal working objectives (Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert, 1996). However, through the outcome of Hawthorne's studies in the 1930s, managers detected that employees increased productivity when they were given personal attention, even when working conditions were inadequate (Muldoon, 2012; Adair, 1984). Because of the positive outcomes, therefore, organizational psychologists began investigating employees' behavior, which resulted in several theories on job satisfaction and motivation, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 2000), Herzberg's Two Factor theory (Herzberg, 1957), and Theory X and Theory Y of McGregor (Sorensen and Minahan, 2011; McGregor, 1960).

By the 1970s, organizational commitment had achieved broad popularity, especially in the United States (Allen and Meyer, 1990). This advance was spurred by shortage in productivity, demotivated workforces, and tough competition that American industries were facing from foreign companies and industries, especially those in Japan (Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1990). Hence, an interest in organizational commitment stemmed from the prominent management practices at that time in Japan, where employee organizational commitment was observed to be the most competitive advantage boosting organizational prosperity (Vaszkun, and Tsutsui, 2012; Luthans et al., 1985).

There was a consistent lack of consensus on one unified definition for organizational commitment. Mowday et al. (1982) accentuated that researchers and practitioners from different fields who were investigating organizational commitment were applying their own personal interpretations to the subject, thereby increasing the difficulty of formulating a unified understanding of the subject of organizational commitment. O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) inferred that some researchers imposed a pattern of formulating their own organizational commitment definition rather than elaborating one of the existing definitions. The consequence is that commitment theory is characterized by redundancy and contamination, leading to weak theory development.

Theorists inferred that commitment is different from the notion of motivation or general attitude. Commitment can direct individuals to act in a manner that, from the perspective of neutral observers, is contrary to their own self-interest – for example, a part-time employee in the corporate sector can perform at a high level of productivity even though he or she has no job security (Meyer et al., 2002). On the other hand, some studies have concluded that organizational commitment should be viewed as one-dimensional (Porter et al., 1974), while others have concluded it is multi-dimensional (Allen and Meyer, 1990). More confusion resulted from the use of two approaches to describe the notion of organization commitment: an "exchange approach" and a "psychological approach", in what became known as the behavioral and attitudinal schools of thought.

Meyer and Allen (1991) responded to the confusion over the definitions of organizational commitment by disseminating a model of three components of organizational commitment that describes commitment as a process that reflects a desire, a need, or an obligation to sustain rapport with the organization. In a nutshell, there are numerous points of conformity and discrepancy on the definition of organizational commitment. The major definitions of commitment usually assert that commitment is a stabilizing and an obliging force, and (b) gives direction to behavior (e.g., limits freedom, connects the person to a course of action).

Theoretical Approach to Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment research has experienced a clear dichotomy between three schools of thought: the social exchange theory, the attitudinal commitment, and the behavioral approach (Aryee, Budhwar, and Chen, 2002 and Mowday et al., 1982). In addition, a few researchers have demonstrated the multi-dimensional nature to organizational commitment (Reichers, 1985). These diverse approaches to the study of organizational commitment are discussed next.

Social Exchange Theory (Individual Organization Exchange)

The core idea of social exchange theory is the act of reciprocity, which stipulates that people should support or help those who have supported or helped them (Gouldner, 1960). Therefore, the social exchange theory can reflect the relation between employees and the organization that is based on social or economic exchanges (Aryee et al., 2002). The economic exchange mechanism at work has been described as an individual–organization exchange relationship, in which the individual exerts effort and loyalty to an organization in exchange for certain features of his or her employment – so long as these are in line with the individual's preferences (Porter et al., 1974). The social exchanges are non-obligatory actions, which can be initiated by the organization's treatment of its employees with the expectation that these same employees will reciprocate with actions favorable to the organization. To simplify, according to this approach, employees join an organization bringing particular knowledge, skills, and goals, linked to the expectation of a work environment where his or her knowledge and skills will be used and goals fulfilled. The employees' perception of beneficial rewards will result in increased commitment towards the organization (Mello, 2002; Daley, 2002). On the other hand, any failure by the organization to deliver satisfactory rewards in exchange for the employees' efforts will lead to declining commitment to the organization (Martocchio, 2009).

To implement the social exchange theory, employees respond to desirable working conditions by paying back in ways that are beneficial to the organization and to their colleagues, such as with high commitment, increased job effort, and low turnover (Mowday et al., 1982). In practice, this could support the brand image of the organization as an attractive work environment in which build a career. Hence, such a condition will help to attract more well-qualified employees to work at these organizations where it can enhance the performance. On the contrary, employees react negatively to dissatisfying working conditions by holding negative work attitudes demonstrated by absenteeism, tardiness, low morale, job dissatisfaction and reduced organization commitment (Crede et al., 2007). In summary, the exchange theory speculates that the concept of commitment stems from employees' satisfaction with the rewards and beneficial working conditions offered by the organization.

Attitudinal Commitment

The second approach to the study of organizational commitment perceives commitment as the individual's psychological attachment to the organization. The attitudinal commitment speculates that if the employee's values and objectives agree with those of the organization, then the commitment flourishes (Mowday et al., 1982). This approach, referred to as the affective commitment, has dominated the subject for more than three decades. Porter et al. (1974) defined it as "the identification of an individual and involvement in an organization, where this commitment is characterized by three major factors: (a) strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert major effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) confident desire to sustain organizational membership." As an example, Google's has the 10 percent rule, where engineers are allowed to use 10 percent of their working hours on anything they prefer in order to enhance their innovative ideas. In addition, for any employee who dies while working for Google, their family 50% of their salaries every year for the next decade. Such practices will flock different talents and fresh graduates to seek employment at Google, and to maintain the current employment for long-term career.

Meyer and Allen (1991) defined attitudinal commitment as the employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. According to this definition, therefore, attitudinal commitment speculates that employees are involved in a form of psychological bond with the organization. The outcomes of such a relationship between employees and the organization are increased work productivity, lower absenteeism, and reduced turnover. In another approach to explain attitudinal commitment, Wiener (1982) depicted that the employee's commitment can be an outcome of adopted normative pressures by the company, not of rewards or retributions. An employee with strong normative commitment may feel obliged to strive to fulfill organizational goals.

The main difference between the exchange theory and the attitudinal approach is that in the former, employees give-and-take their loyalty and commitment in return for incentives from their organization, while the latter approach emphasizes that employees willingly commit themselves to the organization and its welfare, regardless of reciprocal treatment, believing "it is the right and moral thing to do". The focal point for this approach is that the commitment results from personal considerations by the employee before joining the organization, such as family and cultural socialization or the organization's values, but not rewards and remunerations (Wiener, 1982). This feeling of indebtedness may come from the support the organization offers employees, such as tuition reimbursements, training, and career development programs. Hence, the ethical obligation of repayment might be motivating the employee until she or he considers the debt paid (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

To summarize, it is proposed that employees with affective or attitudinal commitment are attached to organization's goals and values, while normative commitment results from the smooth alignment of the employees' and the organization's goals and standards, so that the employees feel ethically obliged to repay.

Behavioral Approach

Practitioners generally agree that the origin of behavioral commitment can be traced to Becker (1960), whereby the behavioral approach perceives commitment as an instrumental factor rather than a psychological one. The focal point of this approach is that employees remain with their organization because the cost of leaving would be high. To compare attitudinal and behavioral approaches to commitment, Mowday and his colleagues (1982) distinguished between them as follows: "Attitudinal commitment or affective commitment focuses on the practice by which an employee comes to think about his/her relationship with the organization. […] Behavioral commitment, on the other hand, relates to the process by which individuals become locked into a certain organization and how they deal with this problem." The behavioral approach is now referred to as continuance commitment.

Becker's studies in the 1960s delineated the structure of the behavioral approach as one type of commitment that is engaged in a consistent line of activity where an employee remains with the organization because of the accumulation of "side bets" that would be lost if the activity were discontinued. To simplify, this type of commitment reflects the benefits correlated with continued participation and the cost associated with leaving the organization.

Continuance of commitment reflects a type of relation in which, over a period of employment, certain costs increase, making it much more difficult for the employee to leave the organization. Hence, the greater the costs and investment, the more difficult the disengagement becomes. Becker (1960) labeled these costs as "side bets," where an individual acts in a committed manner because previously irrelevant situational factors had now become agents of influence or "investments" in the individual's present actions (e.g., pension plan, family requirements, desirability of work location, seniority, extended holidays). Because an employee views these side bets as rewards and benefits, accepting a different job becomes undesirable.

Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972) expanded the side bets concept, viewing commitment as a phenomenon of exchange and accrual that was "dependent on the employee's perception of the ratio of inducements to contributions and the accumulation of the side bets or investments in the employing system." This approach also accentuated the organization's role in offering side bets to employees, to lock them into continued employment through promotion and private pension plans. Alternatively, continued commitment could result in reduced rapport between an employee and the organization. Employees might wish to seek a challenge in a new workplace, but cannot afford to do so because of the risk of losing their side bets. Just to keep their jobs, therefore, these employees might perform their duties only at the organization's minimum requirement rather than perform them in the manner of the affective and normative commitment. For example, an employee might feel he will lose status and seniority if he leaves a law firm, or an employee might be reluctant to leave his current workplace because he will lose the major sum of his indemnity if he resigns. The critical issue with continuance commitment is that it can maintain employees not willing to offer their full potential, an outcome that can negatively affect job behavior and customer service.

This research investigation is based on Meyer and Allen's (1997) conceptualization of the three types of organizational commitment. First, the affective commitment reflects the emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization from the employee's perspective. An employee with high affective commitment is attached to an organization because he or she *wants to be*. Second, the continuance commitment refers to "an awareness of the costs affiliated with leaving the organization," such as loss of job position, community status, or pensions. Consequently, an employee with a high level of continuance commitment is loyal to the employer because he or she *needs to be*. Third, the normative commitment, the last component of Meyer and Allen's multidimensional model of commitment, reflects "a feeling of obligation to continue employment." Therefore, employees with normative commitment are convinced they *ought to stay* with an organization because, from their consideration, it is "morally right" to do so for the benefit of the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Figure 1 depicts Meyer and Allen's three types of organizational commitment. This research will identify the influence of these commitments on employer branding.

Figure 1: Multi-dimensional Model of Commitment

Organizational Commitment, Multi-Dimensional Approach

The three approaches of organizational commitment – the social exchange, attitudinal and behavioral approaches – describe different views of commitment such as psychological attachment, loyalty to the organization, and costs attached to leaving the organization. Mowday et al. (1982) inferred that the three approaches are not mutually exclusive but are interdependent, and stated that there is an incessant cyclical relation between the three types of commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) also claimed that the three approaches are not completely distinct concepts and that the measurement and influence of each contains elements of the other. For instance, an employee might join an organization because of attitudinal commitment but, through time and rewards, remain there long-term because of the accumulated side bets resulting in continuance commitment.

Meyer and Allen (1984) carried out the first real comprehensive study that explored the multidimensionality of organizational commitment, and introduced the notion of continuance commitment alongside the concept of affective commitment. Afterwards, by checking numerous commitment studies, Allen and Meyer (1990) concluded that organizational commitment consists of three general paradigms: affective attachment to the organization, perceived costs related to leaving the organization, and an obligation to stay in the organization. These paradigms became known in the contemporary literature as Affective, Continuance, and Normative commitment, respectively. Allen and Meyer (1990) developed the most prominent measurement scales for organizational commitment – the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). Using the three dimensional organizational commitment measures (multidimensionality of organizational commitment), this questionnaire was successful, having acceptable internal consistency, so it was adopted in various studies in American and other Western contexts. In addition, the OCQ is progressively gaining momentum in non-Western cultural and business contexts.

On the contrary, different forms of commitment have been recognized and measured in several studies, such as those by Angel and Perry (1981), and Jaros et al. (1993). For example, Jaros and colleagues referred to the three dimensions of commitment as moral, affective, and continuance commitment. As already discussed, the use of different constructs and measurements caused confusion in examining the notion of organizational commitment. In summary, this study adopted the most prominent and valid measurement of organizational commitment. Allen and Meyer's multi-dimensional constructs consist of three dimensions: affective commitment, reflecting employees' psychological bond and identification towards their organizations; normative commitment, reflecting employees' loyalty and moral obligation to sustain employment in their organizations; and continuance commitment, recognizing the costs associated with employees leaving their workplace.

Employer Branding

The American Marketing Association defines a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (Al-Kwifi and Ahmed, 2015). Brands are highly valued assets that are often considered as the central output of brand management. Firms focus their branding activities on product development, but branding can equally be utilized in human resource management. "Employer branding" consists of the application of branding principles to human resource management. Employer branding is used to attract employees and to assure that current employees are actively engaged in the culture and strategy of the organization (Schein, 1985). Hence, employer branding seeks to differentiate the firm's characteristics as an employer from those of its competitors; it also seeks to promote the organization both internally and externally (Schneider, 1987). For many years major Japanese companies had a corporate culture and a corporate identity that created employer branding, and their employees definitely exhibited very strong organizational commitment. The Japanese people generally are very hard-working and efficient. During the post-World War II period, "Japan Incorporated" thrived and flourished, and workers had total job security and remained in the same company for their entire working lives.

Employer branding has been defined 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" (Sullivan, 2004). Furthermore, the employer brand promotes an image of the organization as a good place to work (Sullivan, 2004). We can observe the increasing usage of the term "employer branding" in books and internet searches as well as in academic research.

Employer branding entails a two-step process. The first step is the creation of the "value proposition" that is to be embodied in the brand. Managers develop a concept of the unique value their company offers its employees by utilizing information about the organization's culture, management style, qualities of current employees, current employment image, and impressions of product or service quality (Sullivan, 2002). Presented as a true representation of what the firm offers to its employees, the value proposition provides the central message that is conveyed by the brand (Eisenberg et al., 2001).

In the second step of the process, the firm markets the value proposition to its targeted potential employees, recruiting agencies, and placement counselor. External marketing of the employer brand is designed primarily to attract the target population, but is also intended to support and enhance the product or corporate brands. In order for employer branding to be effective, it is essential that the employer brand be consistent with all other branding efforts of the firm (Sullivan, 1999). The employer brand differs from the corporate brand in two significant ways: first, the employer brand is employment specific, characterizing the firm's identity as an employer; and second, it is directed both internally and externally, whereas product and corporate branding efforts are intended primarily for an external audience.

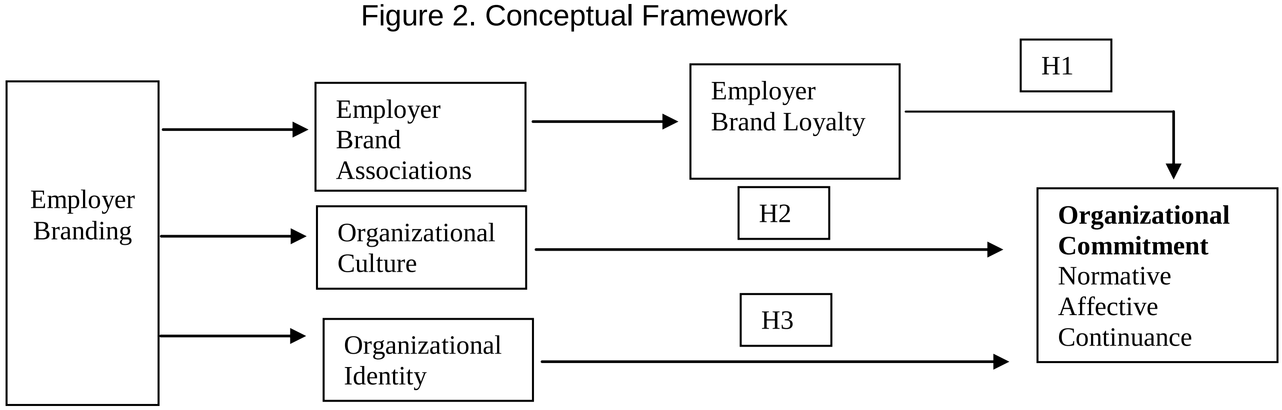
External marketing of the employer brand is designed to attract the best possible workers by establishing the image of the firm as an outstanding employer. The distinctiveness of the brand is presumed to permit the firm to acquire distinctive human capital. Recruits, having been attracted by the brand, acquire assumptions about the firm's employment that they then carry into the firm, thus supporting the firm's values as well as strengthening their own commitment to the firm. The Japanese companies provided many benefits for their employees, including company trips abroad to Europe and the U.S for them and their spouses; free transportation, hotels and meals; and tickets for cultural and entertainment attractions. These company benefits and activities encouraged bonding among employees as well as total devotion to the company, and achieved the ultimate in employer branding loyalty.

Internal marketing cultivates a workforce that other firms are unable to duplicate. The workplace culture is molded around the corporate goals through constant reinforcement of the firm's value proposition. The firm can then maintain a unique culture focused on doing business the firm's way. Southwest Airlines is an example of a firm that emphasizes the concept of outstanding workplace culture that competitors have failed to imitate (Anderson et al., 1994). Southwest Airlines focuses on creating a stable distinctive workforce so that it can be a source of competitive advantage. In addition to fostering a workforce that is difficult to replicate, internal marketing also contributes to employee retention (Ambler and Barrow, 1996) by using the brand to reinforce the concept of quality employment, which encourages employees to remain with the organization. Southwest Airlines emphasized the values of fun and teamwork and communicated these values in advertisements to attract potential employees to the organization. In addition, the company's training and development process through the company's University offers the needed skills in a unique way and enables employees to bond with the organization's culture and values.

Conceptual Framework of Employer Branding

Figure 2 presents a conceptual framework for understanding employer branding and organizational commitment. Employer branding creates three principal assets – Brand Associations and Organizational Culture and Organizational Identity.

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework



Employer Brand Associations

Brand associations are the thoughts and ideas that a brand name evokes in the minds of consumers (Aaker, 1991). Brand associations often are verbalized opinions, but they may equally well be feelings about a brand, an emotional response, a smell, a taste or other sensation a consumer associates with the brand (Supphellen, 2000). Product-related associations are objective and tangible and relate to functional benefits derived from using a product or service. Other associations may be non-product-related attributes that represent consumers' mental imagery and inferences about a product rather than what consumers think the product does or has; these associations correspond to the fulfillment of needs for social approval and personal expression. As examples, customers affiliate the Volvo brand with safety, and Toyota automobile recalled a specific car design because of safety problems that reflects accountability and transparency with the customers.

Employer brand association can be similarly defined. Functional benefits of the employer brand are elements of employment that are desirable in objective terms, like salary, pensions, medical insurance, and holiday allowances. Symbolic benefits concern perceptions about the prestige of the firm and about the social-approval applicants expect to enjoy if they work for the firm. For example, McDonalds is seen as having difficulties with the employer brand association, where McDonalds as a work place is observed as having a low-paying and menial-job image. Therefore, we can understand that trust is a two-way street even though there is major investment by firms in employee brand association; still, only 50% of the American workers believe that their employers are open and transparent with them, and only 25% of employees trust their employers at all (Brandemix, 2014). In conclusion, we can understand that potential applicants are attracted to a firm based on the extent to which they believe that the firm embodies the desired employee-related attributes and the relative importance they attach to those attributes. According to Figure 1, employer brand loyalty stems from the brand associations that are an outcome of a firm's employer branding.

Employer Brand Loyalty and Organizational Commitment

Brand loyalty is the attachment that a consumer has to a brand (Aaker, 1991). A customer who is loyal to a brand is unlikely to switch to another brand, especially when his or her brand makes a change or is weakened by competition from other brands. Loyal customers will come back to pay the premium price despite an increase in price; examples are Apple and Samsung, where the customers are considered their advocates in the social network and marketing activities. Brand loyalty is founded on the positive exchange relationship that develops from the trust established between the product and the consumer (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Brand loyalty has two dimensions – a behavioral dimension that represents the consumers’ willingness to repurchase the brand, and an attitudinal dimension that represents the consumers’ level of commitment to the brand (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

Similar to product brand loyalty, employer brand loyalty is the commitment that employees make to their employer. Also similar to product brand loyalty, employer brand loyalty has two dimensions – a behavioral dimension related to organizational culture and an attitudinal dimension related to organizational identity. Employer branding is often used to foster organizational culture and organizational identity and, in turn, to promote employer brand loyalty. Employer brand loyalty, as conceptualized in the model, leads to organizational commitment. In employer branding terms, organizational commitment means that the worker feels an attachment to the organization as it is presented in its employer brand. While brand-loyal customers continue to purchase a product, even under less favorable circumstances, brand-loyal employees remain with the firm, even when conditions might prompt them to seek other employment. To summarize, brand loyalty in this paper is proposed as leading to organizational commitment. We therefore put forth the following hypothesis.

H1: Employer Brand loyalty enhances the development of organizational commitment

Organizational Culture and Organizational Identity/Organizational Commitment

Organizational culture is linked to normative commitment. The culture embraces the basic assumptions and values learned by the members of the organization, passed on to newcomers, and becomes evident by the ways people behave in the workplace (Schein, 1985; O’Reilly, 1989). Culture serves as a guide for employees to conform to the behavior patterns of other workers. In their work on corporate cultures, Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Peters and Waterman (1982) suggested that culture and commitment are inextricably bound, while specific types of culture contribute to increased levels of organizational commitment (Goodman et al., 2001). A vital task for managers is to develop and maintain a productive and supportive organizational culture. Within the organization, internal marketing efforts are designed to create a culture that reinforces desirable work behaviors and supports individual quality of work life. To accomplish these goals, firms promote the existing “value” of the corporation’ culture and sometimes utilize the internal marketing to influence culture changes. We can therefore observe that there is a nexus between normative commitment and the organizational culture that is one part of the employer branding.

Organizational identity is linked to affective commitment. Organizational commitment is the attitudinal factor in employer brand loyalty. Defined by Albert and Whetten (1985) as that which is central, enduring and distinctive about an organization, organizational identity is the mental image of the organization held by its members, and can be viewed as the affection towards the company as a group. People desire to identify with their organization, and they will do so if they consider the organizational identity to be attractive or unique (Dutton et al., 1994), and therefore, organizational identity can be seen as linked to affective commitment. The more positive the identity and the more it contributes to self-esteem, the more workers will identify with the firm (Dutton et al., 1994). Affective commitment is directly proportional to the sense of identification with the organization (Crewson, 1997). Organizational identity is constructed within the organization, but it is the result of its interactions with both internal and external constituencies (Gioia, 1998). Management can mold insiders' perceptions of organizational identity using organizational goals, policies, and practices (Gioia et al., 2000). Managers can shape the organizational images held by employees, and therefore they can fundamentally shift the way insiders view the firm (Scott and Lane, 2000), but those images must ultimately be consistent with employees' own experiences within the firm. The organizational culture and organizational identity that are derived from employer branding are believed to influence organizational commitment.

H2: Organizational Culture effect the development of organizational commitment

H3: Organizational Identity effect the development of organizational commitment

FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this paper we discussed a research agenda for proposing brand loyalty, organizational culture, and organizational identity as an influence on organizational commitment. The research needs to focus on how corporations develop the concept of employer branding and address the following questions: What mechanism is involved? What human resource policies and procedures should be implemented in order to enhance the employer branding that, in return, will lead to the three hypothesized factors?

Given that branding is usually linked to marketing function, what key role should the marketing activities play in the development of employer branding? If the marketing activities tend to be involved in the development of employer branding, then how should the marketing and the human resource interdependent actions be managed? The focal question is whether employer branding leads to better performance by the firm. Finding the relation between human resource management and the firm's performance is more straightforward, such as linking human capital training and development to a better performance by the firm (Wright et al., 1994). On the other hand, do firms emphasize employer branding experience more than they do the firm's performance, or improved recruitment outcomes, or lower turnover?

Linking employer branding and what stems from it, such as brand loyalty, organizational culture, and organizational identity, is a new approach to recruiting and retaining employees, and improving the performance of the human assets within an employment environment. Managers and leaders can use employer branding to align employee recruitment, retention, and talent management into a coordinated human resource strategy. Employer branding can be the mediator that links all of the major human resource activities in one human resource strategy rather than have each process act alone. As for management researchers, employer branding can be used to interrelate the aforementioned human resource activities into a valuable framework for strategic human resource management.

The implication of this relation between employer branding and organizational commitment from a theoretical perspective drives a new field of study, where researchers can observe the interaction of employer branding with human resource functions such as recruitment, training, retention, and succession planning. Within the multinational firms operating in the global arena, where branding became the key player term in marketing as well as in management function, management scholars and practitioners can research and utilize this relation in order to emphasize the brand employer and invest it in attracting talented employees. For example, as product brands carry slogans positioned in the mind of customers, the same strategy can be used with the firm’s mission statement where employees believe in and are attracted to the firm’s mission statement (Seiders et al., 2005)

The technological innovations were imitated mostly between competitors, such as the smart phone and the tablet industry; on the other hand it is becoming obvious within the talent management practitioners that employees are the only asset that cannot be imitated. The employer branding can play the key role in attracting and retaining the best employees (Keller, 1993). Investing in talent management can be the common work between the functions of human resource management and employer branding, where both can invest in enlarging both the image of the firm through the firm’s brand image and the employees’ quality and image in the labor market.

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