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Employer Branding: A useful Strategy on Recruitment and Retention of

Employees in Irish Retail Organisations

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the significance of an organisation's Employer Brand, as well as its impact on candidate recruitment and worker retention utilising the Irish retail industry as a case study.

Earlier studies into the subject had mainly concentrated on the population of students and had taken place outside of Ireland. The goal of this study was to see if Irish retail companies were appropriate in investing more money in creating and improving their Employer Brand in order to recruit and retain employees.

A quantitative method in the form of a survey was used to collect the data for this study. There were 75 participants which generated a significant amount of data. Upon analysis there were two specific findings. Firstly, the elements of Employer Brand influenced participants' turnover intent, and hence would also be useful in retaining staff. This research suggests that Employer Branding has a link to Turnover Intent and, as a result, might be an effective instrument in retaining staff in Irish retail businesses. The researcher discovered the second set of results to be mostly in line with the research and literature she had read, as well as her personal opinions. The researcher recognizes, moreover, that what is valuable to her might not have been valuable to everyone else. In terms of evidence demonstrating a link between Employer Brand and retention, it indicates that the elements of Employer Brand identified by O'Sullivan (2017) affect participants' intention to stay or quit their company.

Nonetheless, this study has demonstrated that Employer Brand is a significant way of attracting and hiring applicants to Irish retail companies and that it is an issue worth investing in. Companies' recruitment costs can be highly costly, therefore establishing a solid Employer Brand that is both identifiable and significant in the market will be extremely valuable.

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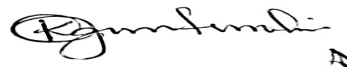
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ABBREVIATIONS

HR Human Resources

HRM Human Resources Management

CRS Corporate Social Responsibility

SPSS

NGOs

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

To keep pace with the rapid growth of the market in today's fast-changing business world, a firm must have highly trained and skilled staff. The demand for qualified individuals is continually increasing, especially for crucial roles that necessitate in-depth skills and knowledge. In some parts of the world, however, continuing demographic transition has made the job market position much more challenging (Kaiser and Regjepaj, 2019). Despite the fact that the timeframe and intensity of adjustment may differ between European nations, current research by Alshathry, Clarke & Goodman (2017) predicted that the number of people aged 20 to 29 will decline by 20%, whereas the number of individuals aged 50 to 64 will surge by 25% (Alshathry, Clarke & Goodman, 2017). In other words, notwithstanding the fact that the population is ageing, fertility rates seem to be at archaeologically low stages (Alshathry, Clarke & Goodman, 2017). When considering the actual effect on business operations, it is clear that many businesses will have difficulty getting highly qualified heirs to substitute the 40 to 70% of top executives who are close to retirement over the next 5 years. Aside from the shortage of competent labour, firms must contend with increasing job mobility within their talented staff as a result of continuous demographic transformation and increased need for a competent employee (Kaiser and Regjepaj, 2019).

Although 10 years ago it was normal to switch jobs only once or twice throughout one's profession, there is now an increasing trend of changing jobs more frequently (Kaiser and Regjepaj, 2019). As a result, businesses are always engaged in a "struggle" for the best staff, resulting in serious rivalry for qualified workers in the employment market. Organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to attract and hire so-called "great ability" as the need for talented employees increases (O'Sullivan, 2017). As a result, when it comes to the 'war for abilities,' corporations have shown an interest in distinguishing themselves at the employment market to a higher degree (O'Sullivan, 2017).

According to Saqib et al. (2015), employer branding, which has been increasingly popular over the years, is a notion for recruiting and retaining workers. The employer brand is a broad term in marketing that encompasses all aspects of strategic corporate branding. It assists firms in establishing themselves on the labour market as an employer of choice for

potential workers and also guaranteeing organisational culture within the present staff (Saqib et al. 2015).

One of the central elements of this research project is the idea of Employer Branding. The second, on the other hand, is just another measure toward further institutionalizing the institutional hiring procedures (O'Sullivan, 2017). Organisations are receiving a rising number of applicants daily as a result of a transition from traditional recruitment methodology to an online recruiting approach. Despite the fact that there are likely to be a big volume of talented prospects amongst those candidates, only one lucky person will be hired at the end of the process (O'Sullivan, 2017).

When one considers the number of highly skilled and enthusiastic candidates who have to be denied, it is evident that businesses are missing out on a huge and significant prospect (Kaiser & Regjepaj, 2019). Whenever it comes to future job openings, the business will have to restart the entire recruitment procedure from the start, which will incur expensive rates and time commitment. Alternatively, businesses might form long-term relationships with high-potential candidates who were not selected for the role (Kaiser & Regjepaj, 2019).

1.2. Statement of Problem

The economic environment has evolved significantly in recent years. Product lifecycles have shrunk, product and service alternatives have increased, and the invention is speeding up. Changes in the nature of work, globalization, and increased complexity are all driving forces in today's corporate world. As a result, to be successful in today's business world, companies must have a highly talented and motivated team. The Employer Branding concepts mentioned above are a current method that helps firms strategize, acquire, and retain the right employees. On the other hand, the Employer Branding concept strengthens the company brand and establishes the company as a reliable and appealing employer in the marketplace (Shivaji et al. 2013; Sellar, Prashansa, and Jayawardana, 2020).

Several international and retail organisations have chosen to establish operations in Ireland, making it one of the most popular places for foreign direct investment. The Irish businesses does not have an efficient recruitment process to cope with the modern world. So, there is need for Irish businesses to develop a competent recruitment process. Given

this, as well as the time and money that Irish businesses invest in building their employer brand to get staff members and lower turnover, and the absence of current relevant empirical support for this, it is now necessary to research more about employer branding from an Irish point of view.

1.3. Aim and Objectives

Utilizing the Irish retail industry as a case study, the aim of this study is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the significance of an organisation's Employer Brand, as well as its impact on candidate recruitment and worker retention.

The objectives of this research are:

1. To determine whether employer branding is a viable approach for attracting and hiring applicants to Irish retail firms.

2. To evaluate if employer branding is a viable strategy for retaining employees in Irish retail businesses.

1.4. Research Questions

These research questions were established to determine the dissertation's objectives:

1. What does effective Employer Branding strategies and tactics entail, and how would Irish retail firms go about implementing them to attract, hire, and retain highly competent employees?

2. Which aspects of employer branding are most significant in enticing possible employees to enrol in a company?

1.5. Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: The employer branding is a viable approach for attracting and hiring applicants to Irish retail firms.

Null Hypothesis 1: The employer branding is not a viable approach for attracting and hiring applicants to Irish retail firms.

Hypothesis 2: The employer branding are significant in retaining employees in Irish retail businesses.

Null Hypothesis 2: The employer branding are not significant in retaining employees in Irish retail businesses.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This research was conducted in response to a desire for more information on the function of employer branding in retaining and attracting workers. This research was likewise conducted because Irish businesses does not have an efficient recruitment process to cope with the modern world. So, there is a need to develop a competent recruitment process in Ireland to cope with the modern world. According to Gilani and Cunningham (2017), employees at all stages in an establishment are enticed and stay in the organisation for "tangible" and "intangible" purposes. Earnings, incentives, and leadership style are examples of tangible purposes, whereas growth prospects are examples of intangible purposes. Basically, the goal of this study is to add to the current literature on this vital topic.

1.7. Dissertation structure

This dissertation comprises five (5) chapters:

Chapter One: This section presented the study's context, the problem statement and research gap, the dissertation aims and objectives, the research questions, and the study's importance.

Chapter Two: is the review of the literature, and this section will go through prior literature on employer branding in relation to the dissertation's objectives.

Chapter Three: This chapter addresses the research methodology as well as providing a full explanation of the study's research philosophy, research approach, strategy, population, data-gathering methodologies, and data analysis.

Chapter Four outlines the analysis and findings of the research. This chapter introduces Ireland's retail industry as a case study, subsequently discusses the research results, and finally, the results are explained in relation to the reviewed literature.

Chapter Five: This is the final chapter, and it compresses the research into conclusions that are in line with the research questions posed in the first chapter. Following that, the outcomes of both the theory and the subsequent analysis are presented, as well as recommendations for further topic expansion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Employer Branding

2.1.1. Branding Definition

Branding is the process of infusing services and products with the significance of a trademark (Sammut-Bonnici, 2015). Branding, according to Sammut-Bonnici (2015), is the procedure of attributing purpose to a particular company, firm, goods, or services by building and moulding a brand in the eyes of customers. It is a technique devised by corporations to assist consumers in easily identifying and understanding their brand, as well as offering them a reason to pick their products well over competition's, by explaining whatever this specific brand is and is not (Bastos and Levy, 2012).

The goal of branding is to retain and attract committed consumers by consistently delivering a product that is consistent with everything the brand offers (Sammut-Bonnici, 2015). Branding is vital since it not only creates a distinctive impact on customers, but it also informs your clients and customers as to what to anticipate from your business. It is a method of separating oneself from rivals and explaining what company provide that makes the business the superior choice (Bastos and Levy, 2012).

2.1.2. Employer Branding Definition

In recent years, employer branding has received a lot of attention. Scholars and practitioners have cited instances of companies devoting significant resources to the establishment of an employer brand initiative, demonstrating its importance (Backhaus, 2016). Kaiser & Regjepaj, (2019) stressed that relationship marketing principles describe the necessity to establish retention and acquisition techniques across a variety of crucial stakeholder markets through stronger ties, and employer branding is an augmentation of

those principles. One of the most basic knowledge of a brand is the American Marketing Association's definition, which defined it as "a name, term sign, design, symbol or combination of goods and services designed to identify and distinguish between products and services of one vendor group and a group of vendors" (Backhaus, 2016). Employer branding refers to how branding ideas are used in human resource management. The notion is increasingly being utilised to recruit new employees while also keeping current employees engaged in the organisation. Employer branding does not have a single definition. Several people have attempted to define workplace branding in various ways. According to O'Sullivan (2017), an employer brand distinguishes and differentiates a company in the industry. It offers everyone in the company a clear understanding of who we are, as well as anybody interested in joining us, a clear image of what to anticipate. It pervades the firm's recruitment process as well as interactions among employees (O'Sullivan, 2017). One of a company's most precious assets is its brand. Although most businesses concentrate their branding efforts on building corporate and product brands, branding could also be used in the management of human resources. Employer branding is the application of branding ideas to human resource management. Employer branding is increasingly being used to entice recruits and ensuring that current workers are involved in the company's culture and goals (O'Sullivan, 2017). According to Ambler & Barrow (1996, p. 187), the author viewed the employer as the brand and employees as customers.

According to Goswami, and Agarwal, (2015), the employer brand is defined as "the combination of functional, psychological and economic benefits supplied by employment, and associated with the employing organisation". Employees gain both financially and psychologically from their employer's brand (Goswami, and Agarwal, 2015).

Employer branding, according to Gilani & Cunningham (2017), is a combination of characteristics and features often intangible that distinguishes an organisation, offers a certain type of work experience, and attracts employees who will flourish and develop professionally in its culture. Employer branding, according to O' Sullivan (2017), is a planned, long-term strategy for managing employees, potential employees, and associated stakeholder knowledge and impressions of a company. Employer branding, according to Sellar et al. (2020), is the construction of a brand image of the organisation for prospective

workers. The organisation's reputation as a business or service provider, as well as its reputation as an employer, will have an impact.

In terms of benefits, Ambler & Barrow (1996) defined employer brand as "the combination of psychological, economic and functional advantages supplied by employment and associated with the employing organisation." Furthermore, employer branding or employer brand management entails establishing a clear image of what makes a company unique and valuable as an employer both internally and publicly. Employer branding, according to Backhaus (2016), is a three-step approach. First, a company creates a vision of the unique value it can provide to potential and present workers. The employer brand's fundamental message is presented through this value proposition. This value proposition must be based on a comprehensive examination of the qualities that make the company a wonderful place to work. The second phase in the employer branding process is to advertise this value proposition externally to entice the targeted job seekers. The third phase is bringing the brand's "promise" made to employees inside the company and infusing it into the company's culture.

2.1.3. Brand Loyalty

According to Ilesanmi (2014), HR professionals also recommend five measures for building a great corporate brand: (1) know your company, (2) build a 'compelling brand promise' for workers that replicates the brand promise for consumers, (3) design criteria to evaluate brand promise fulfilment, (4) ruthlessly align all people processes to promote and strengthen brand promise, and (5) implement the measure (Ilesanmi, 2014). Organisations with strong employer brands, according to Uebbing (2015), can minimise personnel acquisition costs, enhance employee relations, boost employee retention, and even provide cheaper compensation for similar employees than companies with poorer employer brands. The impression of an organisation's image, according to Backhaus (2016), is a strong predictor of decisions to seek employment with that firm. Employer brand loyalty was regarded to be a beneficial idea to apply when using the brand in the context of employment by many. A consumer's devotion to a brand is known as brand loyalty (Backhaus, 2016).

Employer brand loyalty is formed by attitudinal elements related to organisational identity and behavioural elements related to organisational culture in the workplace (Backhaus, 2016). However, unlike a commodity, transitioning from one brand to another in the workplace is more difficult and expensive (Ilesanmi, 2014). Certainly, employer brand loyalty fosters a higher degree of commitment, leading to better talent retention. A good employer brand draws better applicants and sets their expectations about their job (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017). One of the functions of a brand is to develop and improve satisfaction and contentment directly predicts the future brand's behaviour. Customer satisfaction is heavily influenced by job satisfaction, and knowing the many elements of an employer's brand image may aid customer contentment (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017).

Employees have a vital role in the formation of brand image in the financial and service industries, as well as in any other sector. As a result, finding the correct kind of people, as well as the employer brand's image in the recruitment market, becomes crucial. What matters more is whether the image they projected as an application is maintained d uring their time in the company. Employer branding efforts appear to be costing businesses a lot of money, indicating that they see value in the approach (Uebbing, 2015).

2.1.4. Impact of Branding (Positive/Negative aspects)

Organisations have discovered that good employer branding contributes to competitive advantage, assists workers in internalise business values, and aids in retaining employees (Uebbing, 2015). Uebbing (2015) investigates the impact of an employer's brand on employee perceptions of distinction, loyalty, satisfaction, and affinity. The research emphasised the necessity of an employer brand, with the results emphasising the difficulty in managing it, as no one factor had a strong effect on employer-relevant outcomes. The question of which function inside an organisation should be in charge of managing the employer brand came up. In actuality, marketers are delegating the job's duties to CEOs and Human Resource Manager. 39 percent of marketers say CEOs are in charge of employer branding, while 40% perceive HR is in charge (Uebbing, 2015).

Ambler and Barrow (1996) argue that employer branding is beneficial. They conclude that branding is important in the workplace. However, in an increasingly knowledge-based industry where talented personnel is typically in limited supply, Sellar, Prashansa, and

Jayawardana, (2020) underline the importance of company branding. While organisations are increasingly aware that the strength of the employer-employee relationship, future profitability, and "licence to operate" are all dependent on their willingness and ability to recognise employees and job applicants as major stakeholders and influencers to the corporate brand, study shows that they are not yet approaching the issue strategically. This appears to be true in the sphere of employer branding as well (Sellar, Prashansa, and Jayawardana, 2020).

Several studies have looked into the benefits of using employer branding as a business strategy. A thorough review of the literature revealed that some of the perceived benefits include: increasing employee engagement and retention (Backhaus, 2016; Sellar, Prashansa, and Jayawardana, 2020; Gilani & Cunningham, 2017), lowering recruitment costs (Ilesanmi, 2014), lowering attrition rates (Mamun and Hasan, 2017; Wilden, Gudergan, & Lings, 2010), and, most importantly, increasing both company's profit and scalability.

The internal employer brand and the external employer brand are two places where an organisation's employer brand may be leveraged to create value. The employer brand may be promoted both within and publicly to boost employee happiness, retention, and motivation. Competitors may find it difficult to recreate a strong internal employer brand, which may be a valuable source of competitive advantage (Mamun and Hasan, 2017).

2.2. Internal Employer Brand

2.2.1. Definition

Internal employer branding is the process through which a company leverages its culture and brand identity to engage, inspire, and keep its employees. The goal of these activities is to provide a long-term competitive edge through their human capital, rather than through traditional business operations and methods (Neill, 2016). An employer brand needs to be effective that its values be matched with those of its employees (Neill, 2016).

According to O'Sullivan, (2017), the current economic slump caused a change in attention from outward branding to internal branding. Companies realised that leveraging their workers as brand ambassadors was a more cost-effective method of disseminating their

message, so they concentrated their efforts on creating their employer brand internally (O'Sullivan, 2017). What better advocates for a firm could an organisation have than its employees, and it is with this goal in mind that companies have begun to hire individuals who suit the firm's culture and values, allowing them to act as brand ambassadors right away. Employees will be able to offer the brand promise and experience externally once they have internalised the employer brand principles (O'Sullivan, 2017).

2.2.2. Internal Brand management

According to Neill (2016), the management of an organisation's internal brand is built on the exchange of tangible products for dedication and hard work between the organisation and its employees. Its performance is determined by the working environment and if it is beneficial to its workers to create the brand loyalty and dedication that is necessary for a successful internal employer brand. An internal brand that has been well-developed will result in stronger organisational identification from its workers, which has been shown to minimise attrition and improve employee performance (O'Sullivan, 2017).

2.2.3. Impact of Internal Branding

The internal brand of a company may be expressed through official sources such as policies, processes, development, and training programmes, which represent the company's commitment to and value for its people. Informal sources, such as the dissemination of values and messages from co-workers and management, also help to promote the brand. When it comes to communicating the internal brand, effective communication between workers and management is crucial. However, if this communication breaks down, the internal brand message may not be conveyed across internal stakeholders, which may be disastrous (Goswami, and Agarwal, 2015).

2.3. External Employer Brand
2.3.1. Definition

The external employer brand of a company is usually the initial point of contact for potential workers. It is frequently identical to, or at least comparable to, the organisation's corporate brand, and it is what drew the individual to the company in the first place.

According to Backhaus (2016), there are two fundamental distinctions between external employer branding and corporate branding: first, employer brands contain both internal and external components, whereas corporate brands exclusively focus on the exterior. Second, they point out that the employer brand's main purpose is to recruit new workers, thus it will never attempt to interact with the company's customers. The reason why the employer brand and corporate brand complement each other is that they are both built on the organisation's basic mission and values (Goswami, and Agarwal, 2015). Staff can interact with the employer brand and the business trademark of the company (O'Sullivan, 2017). The external brand of an organisation aims to recruit the best people available in the labour market by positioning it as an employer of choice, whereas the corporate brand focuses on acquiring clients or new business for financial benefit (Goswami, and Agarwal, 2015).

According to Goswami, and Agarwal, (2015), an organisation's external brand, like its corporate brand, will be communicated to its audience through formal methods such as media, advertisements, and participation in "employer of choice" awards and surveys, as well as informally through its employees' emotions and descriptions of their employer to their mates and contemporaries.

2.4. Employer Branding As Employer of Choice

2.4.1. The goal of Employer Branding

The goal of employer branding, according to Kaiser and Regjepaj (2019), is to become an "employer of choice," a place where people desire to work. This entails creating a "value proposition," as defined by Kaiser and Regjepaj (2019), which conveys what the company can give its employees in terms of a "wonderful place to work." The provision of a reasonable level of security; enhanced future employability as a result of the company's reputation for employing and developing high-quality individuals, as well as the learning opportunities it offers; employment terms that accommodate work-life balance needs; and a reward system that recognises and values co-workers are all elements that lead to being an employer of choice (Kaiser & Regjepaj, 2019).

Simply ensuring that individuals feel appreciated is a great strategy of retention. As a result, all of the above factors add up to an employee value proposition that recognises that high potential employees will be looking for strong attributes and anticipating to be well managed, have autonomy and freedom, and have a high level of job challenge and career opportunities as a means of recruiting and keeping them. Many companies have implemented official employer branding programmes or are considering doing so (Maheshwari et al. 2017). "The combination of functional, economic, and psychological advantages supplied by employment, and identifiable with the employing company," Ambler and Barrow (1996) describe the employer brand in terms of benefits. As a result, employer branding advertises businesses as desirable places to work. The phrase "employer branding" refers to how a company's features as an employer differ from those of its rivals. The employment brand emphasises the firm's distinctive employment services or atmosphere. According to Saqib et al. (2015), "the employer brand establishes the firm's identification as an employer." It includes the company's value system, rules, and behaviours geared on recruiting, motivating, and keeping existing and future employees."

Employer branding, according to these criteria, entails presenting a clear perspective of what makes a company unique and desirable as an employer both within and beyond the company. Employer branding, according to Backhaus (2016), is the process of creating a recognisable and distinct employer identity, and the employer brand is a notion of the business that distinguishes it from its rivals. Employer brands are created to match the company's product and corporate branding. Although there are some parallels between the employer brand and the product and corporate brands, there are two major variances. One is that the employer brand is job-specific, defining the company's identity as an employer. Two, it targets both internal and external customers, whereas product and company branding efforts are largely aimed at external customers. In some circumstances, the process of employer branding can be combined with the product and corporate branding campaigns.

According to Saqib et al. (2015), employer branding is based on the belief that human capital adds value to a company and that by investing wisely in human capital, a company's performance may be improved. The resource-based view (RBV) backs this approach, claiming that resource features can contribute to long-term competitive

advantage. Debatably, having uncommon, precious, non-substitutable, and difficult-to-imitate resources allows a company to go ahead of its competition (Saqib et al. 2015). Human capital, according to Sellar, Prashansa, and Jayawardana (2020), has been proved to be an essential resource in generating competitive advantage, alongside the plant, equipment, and capital. External employer brand marketing portrays the company as an employer of choice, allowing it to attract the finest employees. The notion is that the brand's uniqueness permits the company to attract unique human resources.

Furthermore, once recruits are drawn to the brand, they form a set of assumptions about working for the company that they will take forward, therefore supporting the company's values and increasing their loyalty to the company. Internal marketing contributes to the development of a workforce that is difficult for competitors to replicate. The workplace culture is sculpted around the corporate goals by methodically exposing workers to the value proposition of the employer brand, allowing the company to establish a distinct culture centred while doing business in the company's way. Internal marketing adds to the retention of employees (Ambler & Barrow, 1996) by using the product to strengthen the role of quality employment and thus making a contribution to employee willingness to stay with the organisation (Ambler & Barrow, 1996).

2.4.2. Employee Attraction

Employer attractiveness is defined as the perceived advantage that potential workers believe they would receive from working for a certain company (Uebbing, 2015). According to Backhaus (2016), individuals want to be seen favourably, thus applicants who can identify with the company's brand or character are considerably more inclined to apply for jobs there. Highhouse et al., (2007) agreed with Backhaus (2016) findings and expanded on them by explaining this phenomenon with two types of attraction: first, "social adjustment need," where applicants will wish to recognise themselves with the positive image of a company because working for a company that is held in high esteem improves the individual's public identity.

Second, Highhouse et al., (2007) discussed the concept of "value expression." Similarly, an individual with a high level of value expression is interested in working for a respectable company; they need to be proud of their employer.

According to Maurya & Agarwal (2018), an organisation is appealing if applicants desire to apply for jobs there, are engaged in their jobs, and desire to stay. Previously, companies depended mainly on their physical perks, such as wage packages, to recruit the greatest people available; however, it is now recognised that there are additional aspects that influence candidates to appeal to companies. Intangible rewards like recognition, appreciation, and flexible working agreements have also been demonstrated to boost motivation and organisational commitment, and applicants are drawn to companies that offer an excellent work-life balance (Saqib et al., 2015).

Along with performance management, planning, retention, reward, talent management, and change management, talent recruitment has always been a crucial component of human resource management (HRM). While each of these activities is crucial to an organisation's success, the function of talent attraction, selection and recruitment has the potential to be the most effective and crucial for the organisation's long-term success (Maheshwari et al. 2017).

In today's tight labour market, Saqib et al. (2015) now-legendary comment that organisations "live and die on their ability to entice the proper man for the job" is more relevant than ever.

Saqib et al. (2015) concur with Backhaus (2016) and Highhouse et al., (2007) that candidates are drawn to companies whose image matches their self-perception. They go on to say that an organisation's image is made up of two parts: "instrumental qualities" and "symbolic meanings," with the latter pertaining to employee sentiments and perceived fit with the company, and the former referring to a location, salary, and so on. Maheshwari et al. (2017) reaffirm this notion, stating that an organisation's brand and image are shaped by its advertising methods, goods, and services, as well as by its workers, customers, and physical locations. Both elements will assist a potential employee in determining if an organisation shares the values that they consider to be significant and reflective of

themselves since this will eventually affect their attractiveness to a certain organisation (Saqib et al. 2015; Backhaus 2016; Maheshwari et al. 2017).

Wong (2014), who utilised three measures: corporate demand, intent, and reputation pioneered an immensely popular technique of gauging organisational attractiveness. In the years afterwards, several studies have employed these three metrics (Highhouse et al., 2007). The attractiveness of a company indicates an individual's sentiments toward that company, but it does not always suggest that the person will act on those sentiments. Intent, on the other hand, goes a step further by revealing whether or not the person plans to act on their sentiments. Prestige investigates whether an organisation's reputation is favourable or unfavourable in the eyes of individuals and the general public (Highhouse et al., 2007).

According to Stuss (2018), the stronger the employer brand is, the more appealing an organisation is regarded to be. There are a variety of strategies that may be used to develop a strong employer brand and so boost recruitment, retention, and overall happiness. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives have been one of the most common tactics used by businesses in recent years. Such an approach has a two-fold effect: it not only provides a competitive advantage by strengthening their employer brand, but it also checks a box in terms of philanthropy for them. Stuss (2018), found that CSR, in addition to organisational commitment, is a deciding factor in employment selection. Organisations have effectively blended their CSR strategy with their employer brand, and it is increasingly impossible to tell which came first. Without a doubt, a company that obviously cares about its corporate social responsibility will get a favourable reputation as a consequence. According to Stuss (2018), the global financial crisis prompted this movement toward using CSR as a brand strategy. Organisations created sophisticated tactics to repair their image to repair the trust that had been destroyed in them.

2.5. Branding and Psychological Contract

The notion of the psychological contract and its influence on the employee organisational relationship, according to Backhaus (2016), offers an additional foundation for employer

branding in their research on conceptualising and investigating employer branding. Workers guaranteed devotion to the corporation in exchange for job stability under the conventional psychological contract between employees and employers (Uebbing, 2015). However, the current trend toward business downsizing, outsourcing, and flexibility has enforced a new type of psychological contract, in which companies supply marketable skills through professional development and training in return for work and flexibility (Saqib et al. 2015). Firms utilise employer branding to market the benefits they provide, such as training, career prospects, and personal growth and development, in the face of unfavourable impressions of this new work reality. Employer branding efforts can be created to modify views of the business because businesses have been regarded to fail to supply some of these products in general (Uebbing, 2015). Therefore, the employer branding will serve as a useful system for recruiting and attracting candidates to Irish retail corporations

2.6. Retention and Turnover intent

2.6.1. The intention of Retention and impact of Turnover rates

The labour market has grown increasingly candidate-driven in recent years. High turnover rates are a persistent concern for businesses, with people leaving jobs more frequently than ever before. While part of this is unavoidable owing to retirement and natural attrition, losing important workers to rivals can have a negative impact on an organisation's performance owing to the loss of essential information and skills (Mamun and Hasan, 2017).

High staff turnover can also have a negative impact on the company's culture and the morale of its current employees. As a result, it is critical that businesses take the required efforts to improve employee retention and decrease turnover. To accomplish so, they'll need a thorough understanding of the factors that motivate employees to stay loyal to their company (Kyndt et al., 2009).

Employer branding as a retention strategy is a relatively recent notion. According to Mamun and Hasan (2017), companies should make a distinction and outdo their rivals'

employment offers so that their staff is never tempted to quit. An employee will be transferred from a contract of work to a psychological contract if a company properly builds and uses its employer brand. Employer branding techniques are inextricably tied to the psychological contract notion (Sadiq et al. 2015).

To build a psychological contract with their workers, branding gurus have used the psychological contract theory as the foundation of their branding initiatives. The psychological contract, according to Sadiq et al. (2015), refers to the nuances of the working connection between employees and employers, and it is what influences an employee's behaviour and sentiments during work. Employees are no longer only motivated by monetary incentives, and to keep top talent, companies are attempting to form a psychological contract with them by cultivating strong employer brand loyalty (Sadiq et al. 2015). A company can start building the psychological contract during the recruitment process and continue to do so throughout the employee life cycle. Developmental opportunities, job stability, trust in management, justice, and equal rights, and faith in the employer to uphold its promises are all elements of the psychological contract. The psychological contract, on the other hand, might be violated if a company forgets about the promises it made to its workers and instead concentrates only on its own aims and objectives. As a result, there may be an increase in turnover. Employer branding, according to Kyndt et al. (2009), has a favourable relationship with the psychological contract since it influences workers' attitudes and behaviours.

A strong employer brand has been shown to promote "organisational identification" among workers, which has been demonstrated to be a potent determinant of turnover intention according to "social identity theory" (Highhouse et al. 2007). Employees that have a high degree of organisational identification might be used by the company as brand ambassadors, spreading the word to other employees. This concept of "organisational identification" goes in line with the fact that employer branding is an effective method for keeping workers in Irish retail companies (Highhouse et al. 2007).

The possibility that an individual will change jobs within a particular timeframe is characterized as turnover intention (Mamun and Hasan, 2017). According to Mamun and Hasan (2017), it is "the degree to which a worker intends to depart a company." Turnover

intent, on the other hand, is not categorical, and there is a distinction between turnover intent and actual turnover that has been examined in numerous research. High turnover rates are closely linked to a desire to leave (Mamun and Hasan, 2017). This is important in light of this research as it will focus on employer branding as an efficient technique for keeping workforces in Irish retail corporations (Mamun and Hasan, 2017).

2.6.2. The Impact of Employer Branding on Employee Retention and Attraction

The goal of branding is to create a positive image for a product. This image will affect the product's perceived value and raise the brand's value to customers, resulting in brand loyalty. Through efficient recruiting, interaction, and retention activities, an employer brand may help organisations effectively compete in the labour market and build employee loyalty. Whether or not they have intentionally worked to establish one, every company has an employer brand. Their brand will be defined by how they are seen as a "place to work" by potential workers, current workers, and those retiring or leaving the company (O'Sullivan, 2017).

According to Goswami and Agarwal (2015), to be effective, the brand should not only be visible to applicants throughout the recruiting process but also shape the organisation's approach to people management. The brand, for example, can influence how the company approaches induction, reward, and performance management. Creating an employer brand is not a simple task. An organised methodology, as well as top management backing, are essential. What are your plans for the future? Create a Brand Team Creating and sustaining an employer brand is a long-term process that benefits from a collaborative approach. The workers in charge of strategic direction approval and human resources creativity should be included on the team.

What are your advantages and disadvantages? What distinguishes your business? Identify the unique aspects that entice, inspire, and keep high-quality personnel, such as the work environment, corporate history, and values. Discover what matters to potential applicants when choosing an employer, how they perceive themselves as individuals, and how they want to be viewed through focus groups, surveys, or in-depth interviews. This will reveal which audience segment best matches your business and whom your brand should target.

Customer-based brand equity refers to the impact of brand awareness on customer response to product promotion (Goswami and Agarwal, 2015).

In the context of employer branding, brand equity refers to the impact of brand awareness on potential and current workers. Potential applicants are encouraged to apply because of the employer's brand equity. Furthermore, employer brand equity encourages current workers to contribute to the firm and support it. The desired objective of workplace branding efforts is employer brand equity. In other words, because of the underlying employer brand equity connected with various organisations, potential or existing workers will react differently to comparable recruiting, selection, and retention efforts from various organisations (Sellar, Prashansa, and Jayawardana, 2020).

According to Alshathry, Clarke, & Goodman (2017), job searchers' perceptions of the organisation as a possible employer is influenced by knowledge of the employer (including image, reputation, and familiarity) and highly predicted both interest in applying for a job and actual application behaviour." Similarly, Goswami and Agarwal, (2015) claim that there is a substantial link between views of an organisation's attractiveness and candidate decisions such as acceptance, job search, and selection intentions.

2.7. Previous Researches

Based on a thorough study of several kinds of literature, it is obvious that employer branding and its usage as a tool for attracting and retaining top workers is a worthwhile issue (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017). While comparable studies have been conducted in the past (Wong, 2014; Neill, 2016; Gilani & Cunningham, 2017; Ilesanmi 2014; Shivaji et al. 2013), their findings were based on their home nations. Furthermore, the majority of employer branding research has been conducted from an external viewpoint so far, with a very little study on its effect in maintaining and attracting current personnel. This has led to a breach of the gap by conducting this research to fill this gap (Wong, 2014; Neill, 2016; Gilani & Cunningham, 2017; Ilesanmi 2014; Shivaji et al. 2013).

As a result, because there is a significant vacuum in the research that has been done so far, I suggest that my study fill that gap by offering a full study of the benefits of utilising

employer branding as a strategy to recruit and retain talent in Irish organisations (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017; Ilesanmi 2014).

Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The term "research methodology" refers to a set of rules and processes that researchers use to conduct a study. It also refers to the ongoing exchange of information and ideas among researchers (Saunders et al. 2019). Furthermore, a methodology is a "systematic and ordered approach" to gathering and analysing data in order to gain knowledge; it also assures that a previously researched phenomenon may be re-investigated by future researchers using the same techniques (Walliman, 2017).

This section gives a broad explanation of the Saunder's research onion adopted for this dissertation, this includes: research philosophy, research approach, research type, Data collection methodology, research population and sample size (Saunders et al. 2019).
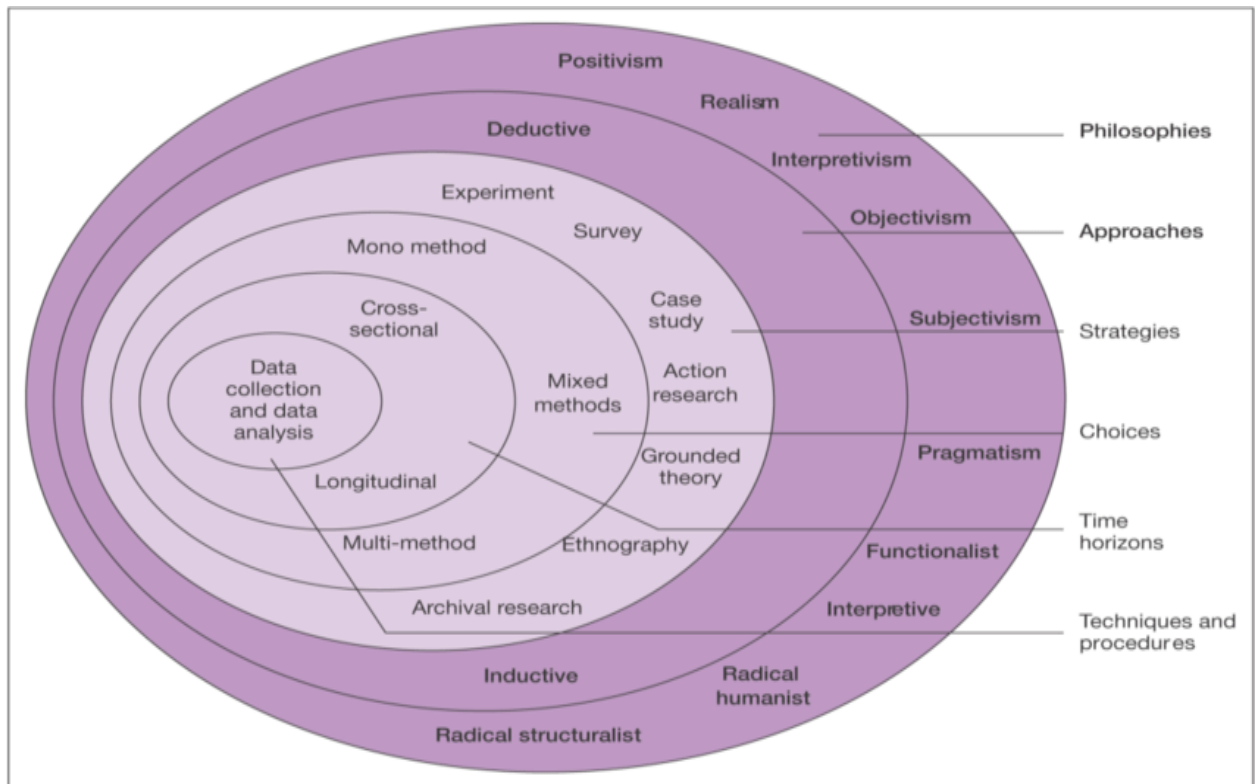
Fig 3.1: Saunder's research onion (Saunders et al. 2019)

3.2. RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The research philosophy used is typically based on assumptions and our perceptions of life, which influences the research technique used, and there is no single optimal philosophy to follow (Saunders et al. 2019). The following are the components of the research philosophy: The three major approaches of conceptualising research philosophy in this regard are epistemology, axiology, and ontology.

According to Saunders et al. (2016), epistemology is focused on "what entails acceptable knowledge in the specified subject of study". Under this assumption, there are three primary types of epistemology. The three types of epistemology are positivism, realism and interpretivism.

3.2.1. Interpretivism Philosophy

Many people consider this ideology to be an alternative to positivism, and it claims that business research should not be regarded the same way as research in the sciences (Saunders et al., 2019). In other words, researching a social phenomenon necessitates a methodology that acknowledges the uniqueness of human people before attempting to comprehend rather than explain their behaviour. Furthermore, a researcher who uses an interpretive technique is more likely to come upon fresh discoveries that is not what he/she is expecting (Saunders et al., 2016).

3.2.2. Realism

According to Saunders et al. (2019), this philosophy holds that there is an actuality that is distinct from what is known, and it entails data gathering as well as comprehension, making it valuable in business research. Furthermore, realism claims that what our senses experience as real is truly the truth, and it is related to positivism in that they both share some characteristics (Saunders et al. 2019).

3.2.3. Positivism Philosophy

Grover (2015) define positivism as the use of scientific research methodologies in the study of social events or issues in order to arrive at an objective and impartial explanation. In other words, he believed that study techniques should be free of undue influence, fair, and honest.

Hypothesis testing, the construction of theoretical models, and the explanation of cause and effect linkages are all possible with positivism research (Saunders et al., 2019). Saunders et al., (2019) believe that positivist philosophy is founded on reliable data obtained via direct observation or personal experience. This method is appropriate for quantitative approaches since it employs surveys and statistical analysis, making it ideal for this study (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.3. RESEARCH APPROACHES

One can research using either a deductive or an inductive approach (Grover, 2015). A deductive approach, according to Grover (2015), is concerned with assessing theory, whereas an inductive approach is concerned with generating new hypotheses. As a result, deductive approaches rely on quantitative research techniques, whereas inductive methods

rely on qualitative research techniques. Regardless, that isn't a well-established policy (Grover, 2015).

A deductive method was used because it is more suited to solve the thesis's research topic, which was taken from known theories and literature because this research attempts to characterise the link across numerous factors. This technique would allow for a considerably larger sample size to be investigated, which would give a much better overview of the study issue in this situation (Grover, 2015).

3.4. RESEARCH STRATEGY

Depending on the objectives as well as the time available to conduct the study, a researcher might use a variety of research strategies (Saunders et al. 2019). The following research strategies were listed by Saunders et al. (2019): Experiment, ethnography, grounded theory, action research, case study, survey and archival research are all terms used to describe different types of research. For this study, a survey research strategy was used.

3.4.1. Survey

The survey approach is most commonly employed in exploratory and descriptive research, and it allows the researcher to have more control over the study process. In addition, the survey approach enables the researcher to collect data for quantitative statistical analysis (Saunders et al. 2019). The survey approach was utilised to perform this study. This strategy is generally associated with deductive approach and exploratory research, according to Saunders et al. (2019). The approach is very simple to comprehend and explain, and it allows for the cost-effective utilisation of data from a large sample that reflects the whole population.

According to Saunders et al. (2016), a questionnaire is a data-gathering tool used in a survey strategy where each respondent is asked to answer the same questions. One of the benefits is that it allows for the collection of replies from a large number of people, which can then be analysed using quantitative methods.

The questionnaire will be self-administered to the workers of the chosen company. To guarantee that a large number of surveys are returned, a self-administered questionnaire will be acceptable. Though the data gathered using this approach may not have a broad

reach when compared to other research strategies, but it is extremely valuable for this study. Despite the benefits, some researchers are hesitant to employ this method because they believe it wastes time because it relies on respondents for information (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Attempting to poll all of Ireland's businesses would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. As a result, for the sake of this study, the researcher chose Ireland's retail industry as her case study.

This research is exploratory and descriptive in nature, and it will help the researcher understand the importance of employer branding in recruiting and keeping personnel in the Irish retail industry. The researcher selected descriptive study to gain a better knowledge of the function of employer branding in recruiting and keeping personnel in the retail industry in Ireland.

3.5. RESEARCH TYPE

Quantitative and qualitative approaches are the two types of data analysis methodologies typically employed in business research (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The researcher used quantitative methods for data analysis for the purposes of this project because they align with the deductive approach, which aims to explain relationships between variables; this research work focuses on the importance of employer branding in attracting and retaining employees in Ireland's Retail Industry (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Because it uses numerical data, the quantitative method is commonly used for data collection techniques such as questionnaires as well as data analysis procedures such as graphical representations and statistical methods, whereas the qualitative method is commonly used for data collection techniques such as interviews as well as data analysis procedures such as data categorization (Saunders et al, 2019).

3.6. DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

Both secondary and primary research methods were used in this study. In the beginning, secondary research was employed. Secondary data is information that has previously been acquired or generated by another person. It will come from journal articles, blogs, and

publications that are relevant to the thesis topic. The majority of secondary research will be focused on prior studies that are directly linked to the study topic. As a consequence, the researcher was able to immediately identify a research gap and avoid duplicating previously completed work (Walliman, 2017).

The phrase "primary data" refers to information acquired by the researcher directly (Walliman, 2017). The primary research design might be quantitative research, qualitative research, or a combination of the two. In quantitative analysis tests, surveys, and questionnaires are used to generate numerical data in statistical form. By using a sample, quantitative research may focus on a large number of respondents and conclude the entire population (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Quantitative research is usually associated with a positivist research philosophy and a deductive research technique, both of which are critical to this research. The adoption of a deductive quantitative analysis approach was determined to be the most appropriate for this investigation. The researcher performed quantitative study to reach a broader audience due to time constraints, COVID-19 procedures, and convenience (Walliman, 2017).

3.7. RESEARCH POPULATION

Taherdoost (2016) states that all possible items, individuals or observations' are formed of a population related to a specific event that is of the researchers' concern. Taherdoost (2016) argue that a population is made up of a galaxy of 'units' that allow the researcher to pick a sample. A sample, on the other hand, is a portion of the population that is chosen for research, and sampling is the act of collecting samples from a population, whereas a sample frame is just the working population (Hair Jr et al. 2019). To put it another way, it's the portion of the population that's employed for sampling. The information was obtained using Question Pro, an online survey tool, in the form of self-completed survey questions that was distributed via social media and email. Self-completed survey questions allow participants to remain completely anonymous, which may encourage a larger number of people to take part. Self-completed survey questions frequently urge the author to reach out to a larger audience. Participants were found to reply to questions more honestly because of the anonymity provided by a self-completed survey, and so the

conclusions may be more accurate than other techniques. The survey questions are largely two well-tested variables, with some open-ended and demographic questions thrown in for good measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

3.8. SAMPLING TYPE

According to Taherdoost (2016), there are several sampling strategies that could have been employed, and they are divided into two categories: probability sampling and non-probability sampling approaches. Probability sampling is a technique in which each element of the population has an equal chance of being chosen by the researcher, and the samples chosen are most likely to be representative of the population, whereas non-probability sampling is a technique in which some elements have a higher chance of being chosen than others. In other words, randomization cannot be guaranteed (Taherdoost, 2016). Furthermore, Saunders et al (2019) agree that the probability sampling method gives all elements in the population an equal chance of being chosen, and claims that sampling techniques give a variety of techniques that assists the researcher reduces the volume of data being collected by considering only data from a sub-group rather than all possible elements'.

Cluster sampling, stratified sampling, systematic sampling and Simple random sampling are examples of probability sampling techniques, whereas judgement sampling, quota sampling and convenience sampling are examples of non-probability sampling techniques (Taherdoost, 2016).

The data for this study was gathered using a non-probability sampling method. Convenience sampling is the sort of non-probability used (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The information was gathered through the researcher's Google Hangout, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn connections who work in the retail industry. The most appropriate and convenient approach utilize to obtain a sample from Irish retail businesses was through these corporate social networking platforms (Taherdoost, 2016). This method of sampling offered access to a one-of-a-kind, high-value sample. Only persons resident in Ireland and working in the retail industry were invited to participate in the survey, which was circulated on various social networking sites using the researcher's list of contacts. This method yielded 75 survey questions.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

4.1. Introduction

This chapter analysed the data collected from staff working in the Irish Organisations to identify if employer brand plays a significant role in recruitment and retention of employees.

SPSS was used to analyse the data which was collected. To use SPSS to analyse the data, the data was coded and imported into the software. To comprehend the distribution of variables, descriptive statistical analysis of the variables is performed as the very first stage in data analysis. Descriptive statistics calculate measures of central tendency and dispersion to mathematically comprehend a factor, and they employ graphs to depict the relationship between the variables. The hypothesis was tested using the inferential statistical approach of Pearson Correlation Analysis.

4.2. Characteristics of Respondents

Descriptive statistics were employed in SPSS to acquire a better understanding of the individuals' characteristics. 75 people took part in the survey. The table below shows that 69.3% of the respondents were males while 30.7 % were Female.

Table 4.1: Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	52	69.3	69.3	69.3
	Female	23	30.7	30.7	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

The table below shows the age range of participants. With 36.0 % of respondents being between the ages of 18- 29, this was the most mode age, group. The 60-69 age group was the smallest in the survey, with only 1.3 % of individuals falling into this category.

Table 4.2: Age range					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-29	27	36.0	36.0	36.0
	30-39	24	32.0	32.0	68.0
	40-49	16	21.3	21.3	89.3
	50-59	7	9.3	9.3	98.7
	60-69	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

As shown in the table below, 34.7 % of respondents worked in the private sector, with the remainder working in the public, semi-public, and self-employed sectors.

Table 4.3: Sector employed					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Public sector	10	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Private sector	26	34.7	34.7	48.0
	Semi- state	16	21.3	21.3	69.3
	Self employed	23	30.7	30.7	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.4 shows that respondents were evenly distributed across all stages of the Role level. While the majority of employees were in the junior stages of their employment who accounted for 52.0%, senior management accounted for 21.3% of respondents.

Table 4.4: Role level		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Junior	39	52.0	52.0	52.0
	Mid -level	20	26.7	26.7	78.7
	Senior management	16	21.3	21.3	100.0
	Total	75	100.0	100.0	

4.3. Scale Reliability

It is important to measure the reliability scales and to do so coefficient alpha (Bonett & Wright, 2014), also known as Cronbach's alpha, is utilized. The acceptable range is between 0.6-0.7 reliability score, and a score of 0.8 or higher indicates a very high level of reliability. Values greater than 0.95, on the other hand, aren't always beneficial because they could indicate redundancy (Bonett & Wright, 2014, Tavakol and Dennick, 2011)

The results for this sample are listed below, although in general, all are considered reliable, except for the Turnover value, which received a score of 0.567. This was surprising because O'Sullivan (2017) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7, which has been supported by other studies. However, disparities in scale reliability have always been an issue due to differences in population and environment. Despite this, the researcher has concluded that, while this scale may be unreliable, it is required for this study.

4.3.1. Interest Value reliability results

The reliability analysis on Interest Value is shown in Tables 4.5.1 and 4.5.2. The overall Interest Value composite score is based on 75 responses spread across four (4) items.

A Cronbach Alpha score of 0.700 is found for Interest Value. This means that the questions used to measure our intent are consistent and reliable.

Table 4.5.1: Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	75	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	75	100.0

Table 4.5.2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items: 4
.700	

4.3.2 Social Value Reliability results

The results of the reliability analysis on Social Value are summarized in Tables 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. The overall Social Value composite score is based on 75 responses spread across five items.

A Cronbach Alpha score of 0.720 is recorded for Social Value. This means that the questions used to measure our intent for Social value are consistent and reliable.

Table 4.6.1. Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	75	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	75	100.0

Table 4.6.2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items: 5
.720	

4.3.3. Economic Value Reliability results

The results of the Economic Value reliability analysis are summarized in Tables 4.7.1 and 4.7.2. The Total Economic Value composite score is based on 75 responses spread over five items. A Cronbach Alpha score of 0.711 is given for Economic Value. This value of

Cronbach Alpha means that the questions used to measure our intent are consistent and reliable.

Table 4.7.1: Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	75	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	0
	Total	75	100.0

Table 4.7.2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items: 5
.711	

4.3.4 Developmental Value Reliability results

The results of the reliability analysis on Developmental Value are summarized in Tables 4.8.1 and 4.8.2. The total Developmental Value composite score is based on 75 responses spread across five items. A Cronbach Alpha score of 0.620 is given for Developmental Value.

This means that the questions used to measure our intent are consistent and reliable.

Table 4.8.1: Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	75	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	75	100.0

Table 4.8.2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items: 5
.620	

4.3.5 Application Value Reliability results

The results of the Reliability analysis on Application Value are summarized in Tables 4.9.1 and 4.9.2. The total Application Value composite score is based on 75 responses spread across five (5) items. A Cronbach Alpha score of 0.779 is observed for Application Value. This means that the questions used to measure our intent are consistent and reliable.

Table 4.9.1: Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	75	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	75	100.0

Table 4.9.2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items: 5
.779	

4.3.6 Turnover Intent Reliability results

The reliability analysis on Turnover Intent is shown in Tables 4.10.1 and 4.10.2. The overall Turnover Intent composite score is based on 75 responses spread over five (5) items. A Cronbach Alpha score of 0.567 is found for Turnover Intent. This means that the questions used to measure our intent are fairly consistent and reliable. This Value is more than 0.5 but much literature has recommended 0.6-0.7 and a good score.

Table 4.10.1: Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	75	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	75	100.0

Table 4.10.2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items: 6
.567	

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The findings from this study are presented in this chapter. We begin by providing a summary of the features of each variable under discussion. We show both graphical and numerical representations of centre and dispersion.

5.2. Explanation of Variable Distributions

The distribution of each variable is depicted in Figures 5.1.1 – 5.1.6 With the exception of turnover, which is symmetric, each distribution is positively skewed. This positive skew indicates that the vast majority of respondents believe the measure is important in terms of branding (high values indicate acceptance). Employer branding and Attraction are depicted in Figures 5.1.1 – 5.1.6. A positive skew indicates that there is a positive relationship between the five components identified as being contained in an organization's employer brand by Berethon et al (2005) and how attracted an individual is to that organization as a result of them. As stated previously and as shown in Figures 5.1.1 – 5.1.6, our findings revealed a highly positive skew, confirming a strong relationship between employer branding and candidate attraction.

Figure 5.1.1 shows that respondents considered innovation, creativity, and excitement to be particularly significant when choosing a company to work for. It implies that a company with these characteristics is particularly appealing. This is unsurprising, given that companies that exhibit these traits, such as Google and Facebook, consistently win employer of choice awards.
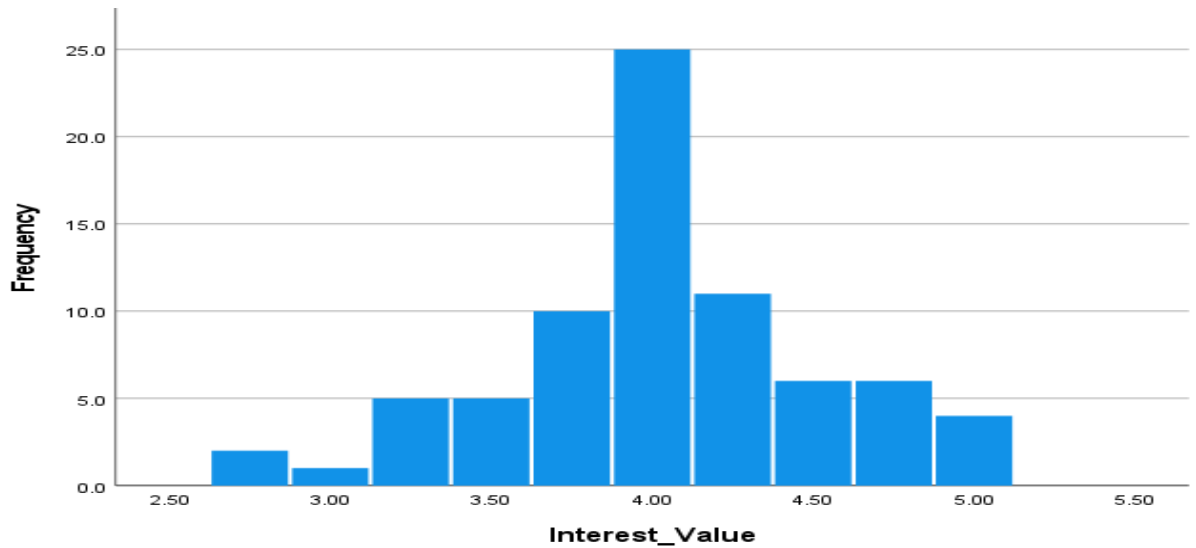
Figure 5.1.1: Interest value histogram Frequency Distribution

As seen in Figure 5.1.2, respondents questioned valued a joyful, safe working environment as well as positive relationships with co-workers and superiors. It is undeniable that organizations that exhibit these characteristics are appealing. The assumption that social value is an indicator of a good Employer Brand is supported by the literature, particularly when it comes to the psychological contract. As previously stated, Armstrong (2001) discovered that job stability and management trust are crucial components of the psychological contract, and thus of an employer's brand.
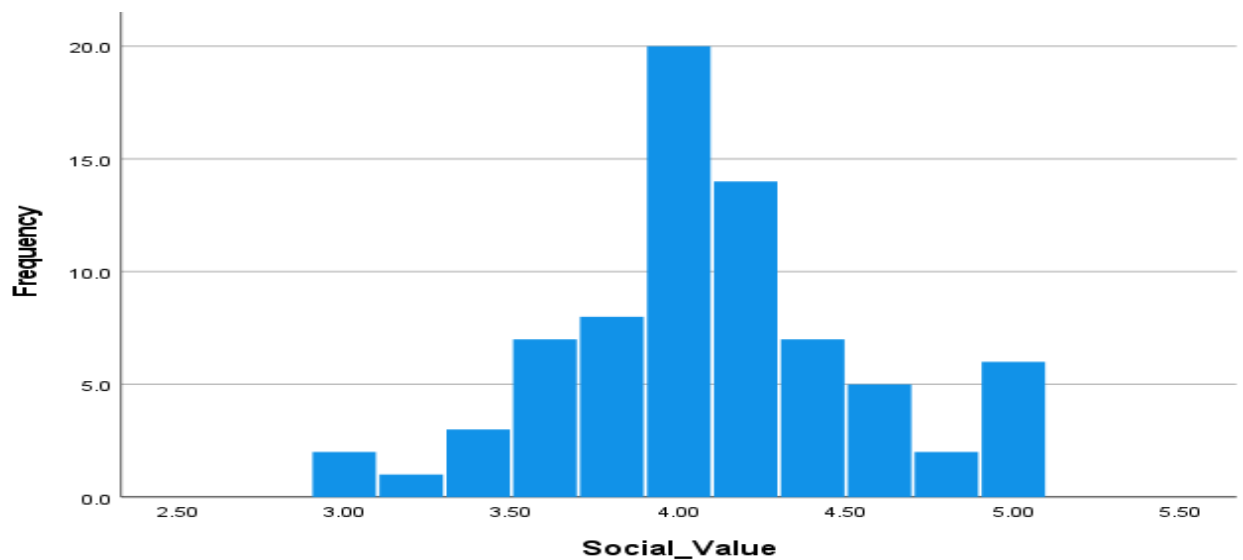

Figure 5.1.2: Social value histogram Frequency Distribution

Figure 5.1.3 depicts the association between employer brand and economic value, which is again positively skewed, indicating that respondents appreciated possibilities for advancement, employment security, and significant remuneration packages. It implies that if an organization exhibited these characteristics, it would be drawn to it. Economic Value as a component of Employer Brand is directly linked to Mamun and Hasan (2017)'s idea that an Employer Brand has two key components, one of which is "instrumental attributes," which is similar to the economic value in terms of remuneration and other tangible benefits received as a result of working for the company.
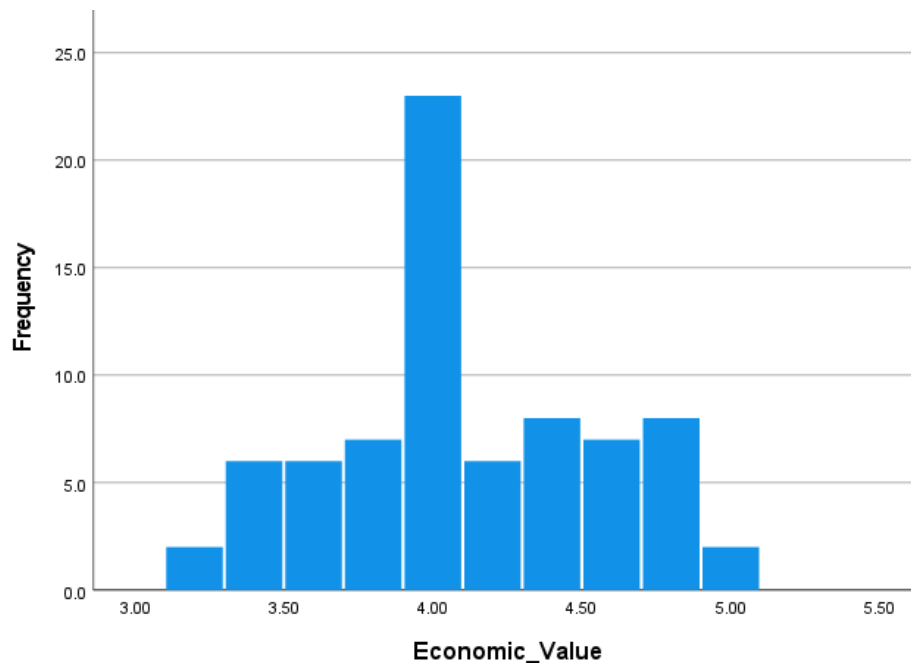

Fig 5.1.3: Economic value histogram Frequency Distribution

Developmental Value is a significant component of an organization's brand, as seen in Figure 5.1.4, and one that respondents thought to be highly important. It demonstrates that there is a positive association between how a person feels about working for a particular organization and whether or not they would be interested in working there. Respondents who believe this value is extremely important must feel pride in their company and a sense of belonging. Individuals will be attracted to an organization that either fits their own perceived persona or improves it, according to Backhaus (2016), who found this in the

literature. This is in line with Highhouse et al. (2007) notion of "social adjustment demand," which found that people seek to identify with an organization's good image, as well as Eger et al. (2018) concept of "symbolic meanings," which deals with feelings or perceived fit with the organization.
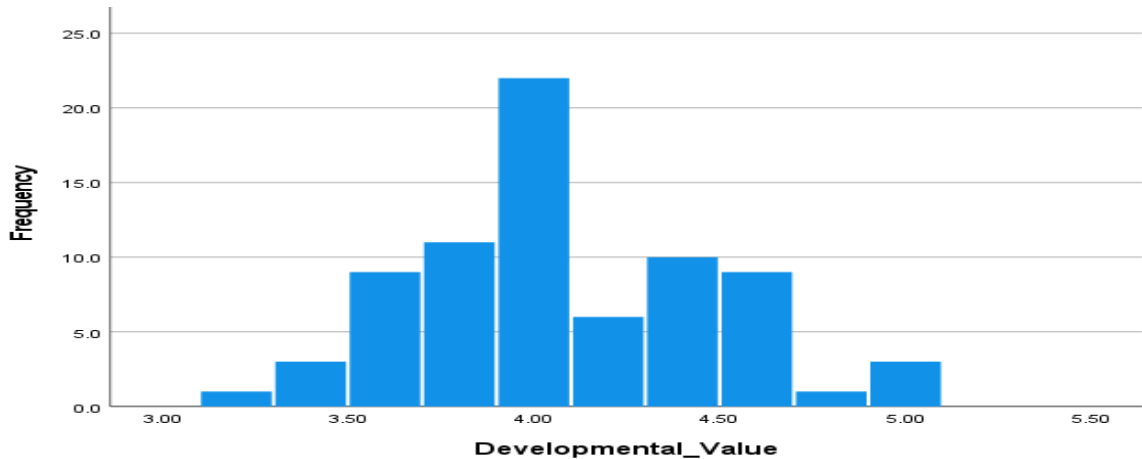

Figure 5.1.4: Developmental value histogram Frequency Distribution

The positive skew between Application Value and organizational attractiveness is depicted in Figure 5.1.5. Organizations that are focused on CSR, such as NGOs or humanitarian relief organizations, would be very appealing to respondents who place a high value on this attribute. Application Value is related to Highhouse et al., (2007) notion of "value expression," in which people with high-value expression are concerned with working for a respected company.
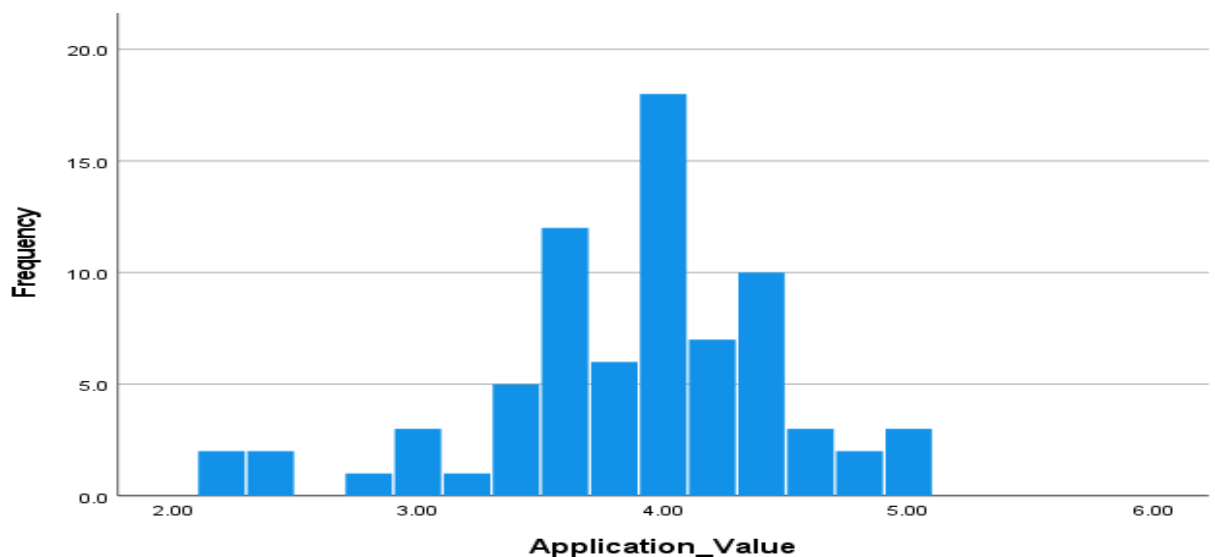
Figure 5.1.5: Application value histogram Frequency Distribution

Finally, Figure 5.1.6 shows the symmetry score between Employer Branding and Intent to Leave. It demonstrates that these two elements have little or no relationship. In contrast to some of the reviewed literature, Sokro (2012) found that 82.8 percent of respondents who thought their organization's brand image had positive values intended to stay for at least another five years, and Ilesanmi (2014) found that individuals who thought their employer brand was strong did not intend to leave. Their studies were conducted on a different sample, with Sokro's focusing on Ghana and Ilesanmi's on Nigeria. Chiang et al. (2013)'s study found a favorable association between Employer Brand and the psychological contract that led to employees' organizational commitment and ultimately their intention to stay. The findings, on the other hand, are consistent with and supportive of Mamun and Hasan (2017)'s Egyptian study on the impact of employer branding on employee retention and motivation. They discovered that there was no substantial link between employer branding and employee retention.
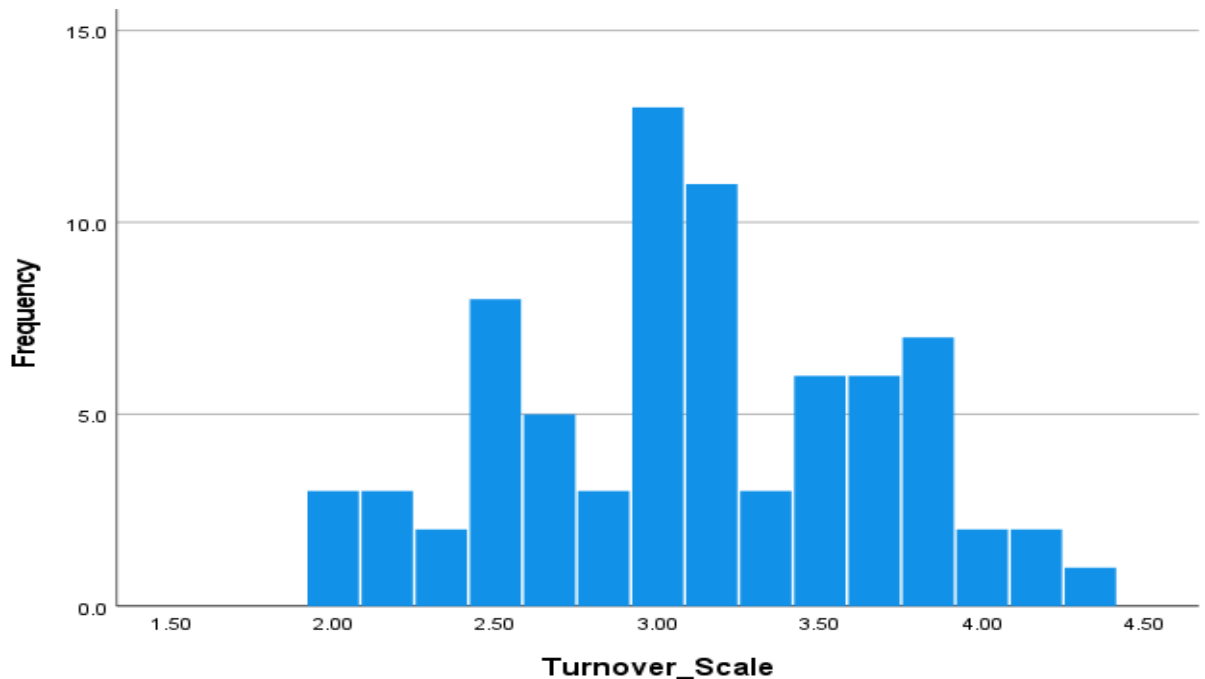

Figure 5.1.6: Turnover Scale histogram Frequency Distribution

Table 5.1.1 summarizes a variety of numerical measurements of the centre (mean and median) as well as a variety of measures of dispersion (std. Deviation, Skewness). Remember that a score of 3 shows neither agreement nor disagreement on each scale. With the exception of Turnover, all other scales have average values of less than 3, indicating that they strongly agree; this backs up the graphical interpretation offered earlier.

Table 5.1.1 : Statistics						
	Interest Value	Social Value	Economic Value	Developmental Value	Application Value	Turnover Scale
Mean	4.0267	4.0960	4.1067	4.0800	3.8800	3.1111
Median	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.1667
Std. Deviation	.49758	.45365	.45003	.40000	.60180	.56773
Skewness	-.204	.080	.079	.312	-.755	-.022
Std. Error of Skewness	.277	.277	.277	.277	.277	.277
Minimum	2.75	3.00	3.20	3.20	2.20	2.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.33

5.3. Relationship between Employee Branding Subscales and Turnover Intent

The association between the Employer Branding subscales and Turnover Intent is depicted in Figures 5.2.1- 5.2.5. The relationship between Interest Value and Turnover Intent is negative, as seen in Figure 1. Interest decreases as turnover rises. Figure 5.2.2 - 5.2.5 shows that Social Value, Economic Value, Developmental Value, Application Value, and Turnover Intent have a slight positive relationship. These findings go in line with Mamun and Hasan (2017) but differ from Chiang et al., (2013), Ilesanmi (2014), and Sellar (2020).
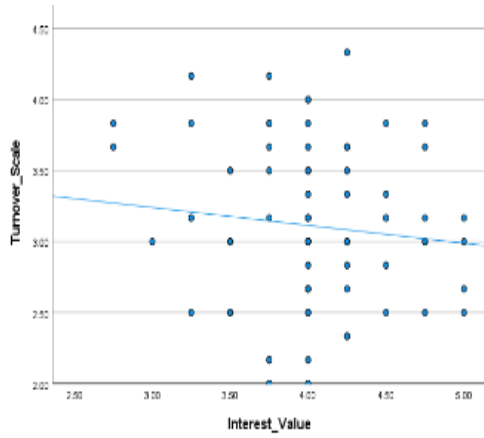
Figure 5.2.1: Turnover scale by Interest value   Figure 5.2.2: Turnover scale by Social value
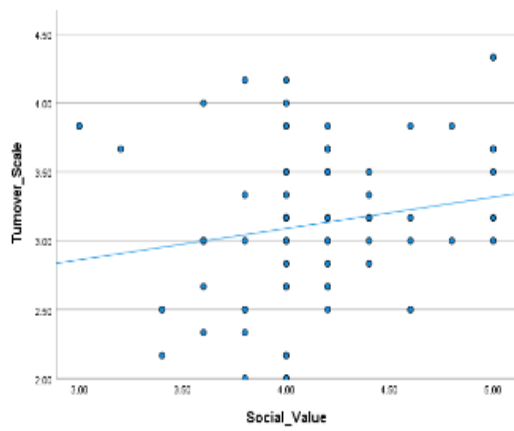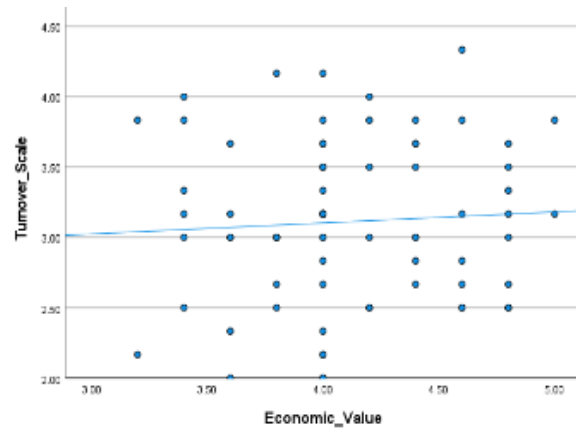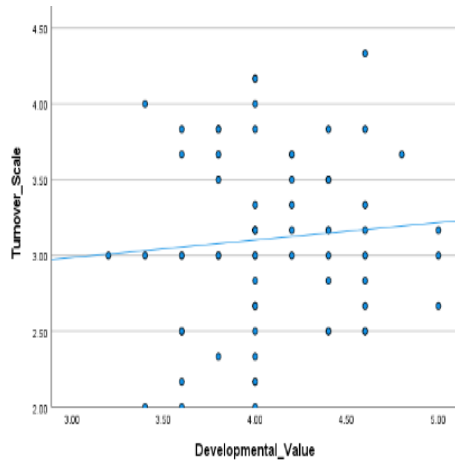
Figure 5.2.3: Turnover scale by Developmental value   Figure 5.2.4: Turnover scale by Economic value
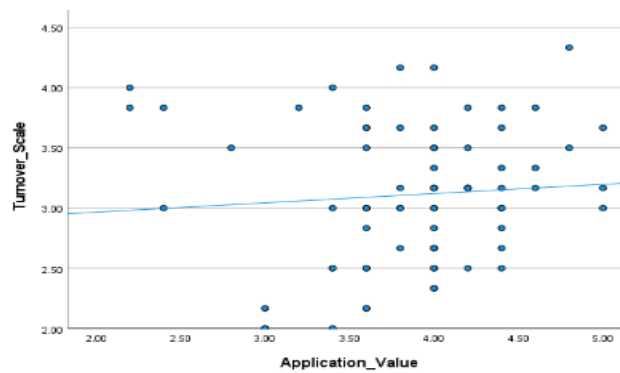

Figure 5.2.5: Turnover scale by Application Scale

5.4. Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis between the components of Employer Branding and Turnover Intent was conducted, as shown in Table 5.3.1 below. Employer branding and Turnover

Intent have a positive association, while interest value has a negative correlation, according to the correlation analysis. As a result, there is a correlation between Employer Brand and Turnover Intent for this dissertation and based on the sample of respondents polled.

This shows that an organization's employer brand would be a factor in attracting and maintaining this particular sample of responders. The sample tested could be one of the explanations for this.

Table 5.3.1: Correlations

	Interest Value	Economic Value	Social Value	Development	Application Value
Turnover Intent	-.110	.062	.182	.081	.082
	.346	.595	.118	.488	.486
	75	75	75	75	75

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation

6.1. Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to provide a comprehensive assessment of the significance of organization's Employer Brand, as well as its impact on candidate recruitment and worker retention utilizing the Irish retail industry as a case study.

A detailed examination of related literature was conducted, and a research gap was discovered, which served as the foundation for this thesis. When this gap was discovered, all study approaches were investigated, and the quantitative research approach was chosen since it was the most appropriate and allowed the researcher to reach a wider population.

For the aim of this thesis, a distinctive population was examined. The information was gathered through the researcher's Google Hangout, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn connections who work in the Ireland retail industry. The most appropriate and convenient approach utilize to obtain a sample from Irish retail businesses was through these corporate social networking platforms since they comprise respected and valuable applicants.

Employer branding is a critical element in attracting and hiring applicants for Irish retail businesses, according to the analysis of the data gathered. This was in line with Backhaus (2016) and Goswami and Agarwal (2015) are preliminary results, as well as Sellar et al. (2020) current research.

Nevertheless, according to the study findings, the elements of Employer Brand influenced participants' turnover intent, and hence would also be useful in retaining staff.

This research suggests that Employer Branding has a link to Turnover Intent and, as a result, might be an effective instrument in retaining staff in Irish retail businesses. The researcher discovered the second set of results to be mostly in line with the research and literature she had read, as well as her personal opinions. The researcher recognizes, moreover, that what is valuable to her might not have been valuable to everyone else. In terms of evidence demonstrating a link between Employer Brand and retention, it indicates that the elements of Employer Brand identified by O'Sullivan (2017) affect participants' intention to stay or quit their company.

This is consistent with the psychological contract concept (Chaubey et al. 2015). Developmental prospects, job stability, credibility in leadership, equality and fairness, and loyalty to the company to maintain the obligations it made to employees are all elements of the psychological contract, according to Armstrong (2006). The psychological contract could be breached, according to Chaubey et al. (2015), whenever a company keeps forgetting about the obligations it has established to its workers but rather concentrates only on its objectives and outcomes. As a result, there may be an upsurge in turnover. Employer branding, according to Chiang et al., (2013), has a favourable relationship with the psychological contract since it influences employees' attitudes and character.

In light of the research pointing to a link amongst Employer Brand and retention, it indicates that for the applicants surveyed, the elements of Employer Brand identified by Gilani & Cunningham (2017) influence employees' intention to stay or quit their company. This conformed with the results of Ilesanmi (2014) and Sellar et al. (2020), that discovered close ties between Employer Branding and retention, as well as Chiang et al., (2013), that discovered that Employer Branding will indeed create psychological ownership among the staff member and the company trademark, closely related to Chaubey et al. (2015) psychological contract, and thus boost retention.

Nonetheless, this study has demonstrated that Employer Brand is a significant way of attracting and hiring applicants to Irish retail companies and that it is an issue worth investing in. Companies' recruitment costs can be highly costly, therefore establishing a solid Employer Brand that is both identifiable and significant in the market will be extremely valuable. The suggestions below will provide cost-effective strategies that will not only boost employee happiness but also enhance the employer brand from the outside.

6.2. Recommendations

Even though this study discovered a link between employer branding and employee retention, it also recognizes the importance of employer branding in attracting and hiring workers. Several businesses require the assistance of recruitment companies to get talented employees at a high cost when they could instead concentrate on creating and enhancing their employer brand as a way of attracting personnel.

For the researcher's recommendations, the researcher was inspired by Berethon et al., (2005)'s EmpAt scale, and she concentrated on low-cost possibilities which will not only develop and reinforce the employer brand but also boost employee satisfaction.

6.2.1. Interest Value

According to Berethon et al., (2005), an establishment equally valued and utilized one's originality". An enterprise can enable its employees to use some of their time allotted to

concentrate on concepts or ventures which are not specifically linked to their employment as a technique of motivating and promoting innovation. A half-day per month would be enough. Employees would gain much from such an endeavour, and the psychological contract would be strengthened as a result.

6.2.1.1. Costings

Except for the loss of revenue linked with every worker, granting some flexible time to employees would have negligible costs. Nevertheless, the categories of employees who might value and utilize this period are more likely to make up for it throughout the remainder of the month, thus the corporation would be difficult to suffer as a result of such an endeavour.

6.2.2. Social Value

"To have positive relationships with your coworkers and employers, as well as pleasurable workplaces". Employee-run social groups must be supported and promoted by employers (Berethon et al., 1995). Applicants are often more fascinated by what companies have to give beyond the salary packages, and they consider all aspects when deciding on a suitable company to work. Workers of various stages mixing in a social environment outside of the workplace order could be advantageous not just to the Employer Brand but rather to employee satisfaction.

6.2.2.1. Costings

Though social groups are supported by employers, they can be supported by workers, therefore prices should be made minimal. For instance, the clubhouse may offer on-site Yoga, Gymnastics, or Zumba courses to workers and pay per lesson; the cost would be cheap due to the size of the organization. For a group of 30 individuals, the average cost is roughly 5 euros per participant that includes insurance.

6.2.3. Economic Value

"Possibilities for career development in the organisation". Employees are frequently deceptive when it comes to promotion prospects inside their company.

They could be oblivious to the stage at which their activity is rated, as well as the actions required to explore new ways. Employee career opportunities must be well-defined and accessible in companies. All positions should be posted internally firstly, with potential hires contacted only after the internal group has been saturated. Workers are frequently dissatisfied in companies where they are unaware that a position has been open unless an external applicant is hired. At the very least, companies must expect their clients to apply for a position. Providing CV workshops, interview techniques, and practice interviews with their skilled HR staff will, at the very minimum, enhance promotional possibilities.

6.2.3.1. Costings

Ensuring the internal recruitment procedure is fair and clear and would not come at a price. Saturating the internal pool of talent would not only demonstrate confidence in current employees, but it may also save cost on the external recruitment process. Using current HR personnel to provide workshops will also save money.

6.2.4. Developmental Value

"Being pleased with yourself as a consequence of working in an international company" (Berethon et al., 2005). A Recruitment strategy will boost an organization's public image while also instilling confidence inside its staff. It also doesn't have to be expensive; efforts like giving days for workers to volunteer for charities of their preference are a low-cost option for all concerned parties.

6.2.4.1. Costing

Furthermore, because the expenses for this should be small, giving days and employees to charities would not cost the business a lot of money; all it will cost is the lack of profits linked with that worker each day or day in question. The damage to the business brand will surpass any financial losses.

6.2.5 Application Value

"A chance to pass on what you've learned to others" (Berethon et al 2005). Workers can use their potential applications and sharing their skills and knowledge with several other workers through a well-run and structured Mentoring Scheme. Not only will a mentorship scheme benefit the protégé, but it will also benefit the coach.

6.2.5.1 Costing

Furthermore, because the senior staff is operating as Coaches to younger staff, there must be no expense for a Mentoring Scheme.

6.3 Timelines for Recommendations

The suggestions I've made are all efforts that would require only a few weeks to implement. In less than six months, all five suggestions may be implemented and functional by Irish retail organizations.

6.4. Future Study Suggestions

The future study's suggestion depending on the present study would be to expand the study's group of population to truly comprehend the viewpoints of workers from various companies in the Irish retail industry. If the study sample of respondents is expanded, better precise results could be achieved. The findings of the study on the Irish retail industry cannot be applied to all other Irish industries. The primary focus of this research was on the usage of employer branding as a recruiting and retention strategy in Irish retail firms. Workers' conditions and expectations, as well as the drivers of employee turnover, can be better understood with a well-designed questionnaire.

6.5. Limitations of study and recommendations for future research

The primary limitations of this research were the sampling technique used and the fact that the study was not conducted within a major company. Although convenience sampling was the most suitable technique, it was far from the most reliable. This is so due

to the extreme possible bias of the sampling method owing to the under-representation of subsets in the population in contrast to the target population, the findings of convenience sampling cannot be extrapolated to the sample group. The sample's biases cannot be determined. After conducting the project, the researcher realizes that more research with a staff of a specific company is needed to fully determine if the Employer Brand of that organization has an impact on attraction and retention. Moreover, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods will offer a more comprehensive picture of the situation.

6.6. Personal Learning Declaration

I discovered the thesis writing to be quite demanding because I strive to keep motivated on occasion. It was perhaps one of the most difficult and demanding part of this Master's Program. Nevertheless, getting the ability to research in a field that I was passionate about was extremely fulfilling and will help me advance in my profession. Conducting thorough research into the fields of employer branding, recruitment, and retaining has provided me with a wealth of knowledge and skills which I believe I will be capable of building on in the future.

The field of quantitative research seemed extremely unique to me. Have to take on everything so far outside my comfort zone and excelling would undoubtedly provide me the opportunity to try something new in the future.

This is one of the biggest research or scholastic endeavour I've ever worked on, and it's might probably be the largest I would work on. It was a constant fight to keep up with the motivation and take my time effectively, but I am quite proud that I finished this thesis on time and meet up with the deadline. Everything was satisfying to be willing to view a masterpiece come to life and this in some manner identifies discoveries that I would be capable of utilizing with my writing.

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APPENDIX- Questionnaire

Questionnaire introduction

Hello

You are cordially invited to take part in this survey, which aims to assess the effectiveness of Employer Branding in attracting and retaining employees in Ireland retail organizations. You will be asked to conduct a survey in order to gain insight into the topic of employer branding and how it affects attraction and turnover intention. The questionnaire will take about 5 minutes to complete.

Your involvement in this research is purely optional. Nevertheless, if you are uncomfortable answering any of the questions, you can exit the survey at any time. It is essential for us to hear your views.

Your survey results will be kept absolutely confidential, and data from this study will only be presented in aggregate. Your details will be encoded and kept private. If you have any queries concerning the survey or the processes, please contact Kemi Ogunsola at +353892103349 or oguntimehinkemi@gmail.com.

Thank you so much for your time and assistance. Please begin the survey by hitting the "next" button beneath.

Demographic Questions

A. What is your gender?

1. Male

2. Female

B. What is your age?

1. 18-29

2. 30-39

3. 40-49

4. 50-59

5. 60-69

C. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

1.   Leaving certificate or equivalent

2.   Trade/technical/vocational training

3.   Undergraduate

4.   Postgraduate

5.   PHD

D. Which sector are you employed in?

1.   Public sector

2.   Private sector

3.   Semi- state

4.   Self employed

E. What level is your current role graded at?

1.   Junior

2.   Mid -level

3.   Senior

4.   Senior management

F. Do you have anyone reporting to you?

1.   Yes

2.   No

Scales

How important are the following to you when considering potential employers?

1 = Not Important; 2 = Little Importance; 3 = Averagely Important. 4 = Very Important. 5 = Absolutely Essential.

Interest Value

• An innovative employer-novel work practices/foresight

• The organization produces high-quality products and services

• Your creativity is valued and utilized by the organization.

• The organization creates innovative products and services.

Social Value

• Having a good working relationship with your co-workers

• Having a good working relationship with your superiors

• Supportive and encouraging coworkers

• A fun working environment

• Happy work environment.

Economic Value

• Good opportunities for advancement within the organization

• Job security within the establishment

• Hands-on Inter-departmental experience

• An above-average basic salary

• An appealing overall compensation package

Developmental Value

• Management recognition/appreciation

• A stepping stone to future employment

• Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a specific company

• Feeling more self-confident as a direct consequence of working for a specific company.

• Gaining experience that will help you advance in your career

Application Value

• Humanitarian organization that gives back to society

• Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution

• Opportunity to teach others what you have learned

• Acceptance and belonging

• The establishment is customer-orientated

Turnover Scale

Scale: 1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Often; 5 = Always.

• How frequently do you fantasize about getting a new job that will better fit your personal needs?

• How frequently are you upset at work because you are not given the opportunity to attain your personal job-related objectives?

• How frequently have you pondered quitting your job?

• How likely are you to accept another job at the same salary level if one is offered to you?

• To what extent does your present job meet your personal needs?

• How often do you look forward to going to work?