

The Brand Inside: Fulfilling the Needs of the New Employee Generation to Create Brand Advocates

Nitin Patwa*

S P Jain School of Global Management, Dubai

Christopher Abraham

S P Jain School of Global Management, Dubai

Alison D'Cruz

S P Jain School of Global Management, Dubai

Abstract

This study fills the gap in the literature by identifying the new employee generation as emerging brand advocates. We use extensive studies and employ a survey for the respective exploratory and explanatory research and then follow up with variance-based structural equation modelling to analyze the survey and test the hypotheses. Variables are later classified into six needs of the new employee generation with regard to their level of significance within the sample: corporate identity, employee upbringing, peripheral interactions, extraneous work needs, need for a challenging and innovative work environment, and the need for a game-changing attitude. The findings should appeal to employers that seek to create brand advocates amongst employees at an early stage. This research paper is also relevant for existing employers that are willing to boost the number of brand advocates in their organizations and succeed in the existing talent war. The bottom line is that catering to the needs of the new employee generation undoubtedly leads to a happier workforce that will then share its positive work experience with others.

Key words: brand advocacy; employee needs; new workforce generation

1. Introduction

The incorporation of employer branding by firms has positive implications according to numerous studies. Webster's (2002) research, which mainly focuses on employee empowerment, concludes that employees with a greater understanding of a brand will deliver a better brand promise to customers and other stakeholders of the company. Indeed, employees who believe in their heritage brand deliver better results in terms of the quality and effectiveness of their work performance. Promising improvements in employee education systems include new approaches to management that are based on the value of employees. Motivational theories complement successful internal branding practices, which go beyond solely

*Correspondence to: S P Jain School of Global Management, Block 5, Dubai International Academic City, Dubai 502345. E-mail: nitin.patwa@spjain.org. The authors would like to acknowledge and thank the grateful support offered by Vincent Samba, Aryaman Gupta, Alex Regie Sato Co, Ravi Pahalwani, and Rohan Ranjit (Participants from S P Jain School of Global Management-BBA Program).

motivational practices. Internal branding also serves to improve employee development with the main goal of building brand advocacy among employees. Employee roles have indeed evolved into new dimensions wherein the employees are trained to portray and personify an organisation's values and message to external stakeholders.

Internal branding is often singularly characterised as pertaining primarily to front-line employees. In fact, Punjaisri and Wilson (2011) confirm this theory, concluding that front-line employees who interact with customers will represent and reflect their company's values. Internal branding plays a crucial role in today's market, especially in the service sectors of different industries. However, recent findings clarify that internal branding is also finding its way into the back office, affecting employees who do not interact with customers. The main reason for this is employees who act as brand advocates have a greater impact on the attraction and retention of new talent. With the prevailing competition for which human capital is essential for innovation and sustained success, organisations have entered a talent war for which employer branding is used as the main tool to attract the best employees (Farshid et al., 2014).

After identifying the numerous potential benefits of enforcing internal branding within organisations, various studies have identified gaps in addressing how the focus on the importance of internal branding is not communicated to new entrants into the labour market (Kuchеров and Zavyalova, 2012). Previous beliefs hold that the spokesperson's role is exclusively reserved for managers. However, current research shows that the roles of employees have been unconsciously redefined. Employees are expected to be more proactive in promoting their employers' brand (Mosley, 2015). Hence, in the process of cultivating brand engagement amongst newly hired employees, research has stressed the expectations of the workforce when they join an organisation, grouping the variables under four main categories on which we base our literature review: the managerial implications of leadership styles and work culture; communication networks and training programs; the departmental responsibilities for the creation of internal brand experience; and the views of internal and external stakeholders on brand citizenship behaviour.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1 Managerial Implications and Work Values

With regard to the managerial implications of implementing internal branding, we refer to all of the management practices involved in the creation of brand esteem among employees. Sartain (2005) focuses on the importance of branding, suggesting that to ensure a company's success, a strong emotional connection is essential between the message and the product. The brand meaning should incorporate satisfaction and fulfilment in a company's employees. Sartain (2005) further highlights the importance of developing employee loyalty through fair and equal treatment.

Morhart et al. (2009) comment that an organisation's leadership style plays an implicit role in brand transformation and brand esteem, stating that a value-based regime and a transformational administration affect workers positively and irrevocably. Naidoo and Ukpere (2000) support the fact that prevailing leadership styles within an organisation have a clear impact on the behaviours of employees. Integrating corporate culture into internal branding serves as a behavioural guide for employees to later evolve as brand advocates. Shaari et al. (2015) provide further support in explaining the role of leadership styles in the context of employee behaviours, concluding that transactional and transformational brand leaderships are the more dominant styles in explaining brand citizenship behaviour. The likely importance of the leadership styles adopted by managers has been proven to raise employee brand devotion. In fact, democratic leaders who are open to suggestions tend to cultivate employee involvement, such as including them in decision-making and supporting their ability to innovate and improve both the company and themselves (n.a., 2016). Studies have further noted that managerial leadership has a significant impact on the efficiency and productivity of the workforce. According to Vallaster et al. (2004), leaders are "Mediators between corporate branding structures." They are, "energisers" to propagate and facilitate brand building. However, current attitudes towards leadership have risen to a new standard that encourages employee engagement.

Several researchers have emphasised effective corporate identity management. Such a platform implies consistency in corporate identity perception (Kiriakidou & Millward, 2000). This means that the corporate image of a company should mirror the organisation's reality. In developing this idea, Foster et al. (2010) determine the relationships between corporate, internal, and employer branding, concluding that employee behaviours should be framed by internal branding. Moreover, this relationship can also help to frame employee perception accordingly to an organisation's values so that employees will reflect the organisations' values in their activities.

The implementation of employer branding may lead to certain organisational problems, especially in a culturally diverse workforce. In fact, interactions within a diverse workplace can result in high work value (Sengupta et al., 2015). The perceived views of internal branding vary between demographic differences. Behrenbeck (2014) discusses customer involvement in improving internal branding, stressing the significance of constant work appraisal, recognition, and performance review. He also provides additional data regarding brand experience among employees by developing brand rewards within an organisation. Developing cross-functional teams and continuous interactions with employees helps managers to identify potential internal problems and tackle them accordingly. Moreover, behavioural change is easier for managers to monitor (Schaubroeck et al., 2016).

Internal branding should also be applied to an organisation's top levels. Hiring managers with special coaching skills can lead to the enhancement of brand knowledge across the organisation. Berenson and Smith (2011) propose some guidelines for managers to enable brand advocacy among employees. Giving

employees a sense of purpose, by assigning new roles such as becoming brand agents and trainers for junior employees to be future brand ambassadors, is an essential step towards successful internal branding. Continuous challenges and a strong human resource team further develop employees in honing their individual talents for use in different marketing strategies. Based on these findings, the team can clearly conclude that a proper internal branding framework will enable companies to reinforce internal branding and win on two respective grounds. If companies are successful at creating job satisfaction among employees, then there is a higher chance of retaining and attracting new talent in their workforce. Thus, managerial practices are the predominant factor in developing effective internal branding, leading to our first two hypotheses.

Hypothesis H1: "Employees are attracted by democratic leadership styles."

Hypothesis H2: "Continuous challenges create brand engagement among new employees."

2.2 Communication and Training

Integrating brand-designed principles with internal communication helps to change and frame employees' attitudes (Bethge & Harris, 2000). Internal communication leads to cultural changes in the workplace, which is a positive result in employee work behaviours and attitudes. In their research, Gast and Lansik focus on the decentralisation of communication networks and the promotion of social media interactions, which lead to greater employee engagement. Initiatives for employees are necessary to help them to evolve into professional and versatile workers. The literature has shown that new entrants into an organisation face internal challenges in gaining brand knowledge and actively engaging in the employee branding process. Thus, failures to effectively disseminate brand knowledge and culture to newly hired employees will most likely limit a company's abilities to portray its organisational values to customers. Internal corporate communication is essential to create employee commitment. As a matter of fact, employers who delay brand training fail to produce positive outcomes in communication, satisfaction, and commitment (Sharma & Kamalanbhan, 2012).

Employee training is essential for new employees who have recently joined an organisation, because managers have the opportunity to frame employee behaviours and attitudes towards the work itself and towards the employer's brand. Papasolomou and Vrontis (2006) support the idea that adequate training and education leverage the quality standards of customer service. The quality of service increases significantly parallel to customer orientation and interaction. Workforce training can act as a tool to enhance job satisfaction within a company. Customer satisfaction also has a direct relationship with employee satisfaction. Additionally, Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2012) present the idea that brand training has a positive impact on communication, satisfaction, and employee commitment. Aurand et al. (2005) express that without the involvement of human resource staff, strategies will fall short. Effective brand training must be conducted by an organisation by

providing employees with opportunities to “live” or experience the brand themselves, who can be updated about the full range of development of the brand through effective internal communication. Desmet et al. (2010) highlight the importance of the manager’s role at reinforcing and reminding employees to incorporate what they have learned in training into their daily work. Hence, employees can develop into brand advocates by applying the skills that they acquire when they interact with customers. The role of customers in the creation of an effective framework is essential and can be performed through customer feedback. Findings also suggest that managers should closely monitor and highly regard customer feedback and suggestions about customer service. Kirkland (2015) backs up this idea in their research. In addition to the need to provide adequate training and education to employees, another important factor is that managers should coordinate activities and objectives among departments to fulfill fair and equal treatment among the employees of different departments (Aufreiter et al., 2003). The development and incorporation of company culture are essential for the achievement of consistent treatment to avoid deviant workplace behaviours.

Hypotheses H3: “Transparent communication and proper training help in developing brand image”.

2.3 Departmental Challenges and Technologically Driven Work Practices

Despite the effectiveness of managerial practices and the communication of brand culture, many questions rely on each departmental responsibility for internal branding. Questions of whether human resources or marketing are accountable for the promotion of internal branding have led to a great deal of confusion in this particular area of research. On the other hand, employee perspectives have been studied and analysed using different variables. Grace and King (2008) find that internal effort with human capital can create employee brand commitment and thus add value to an organisation. Human resource management plays an important role, can serve as the pathway to incorporating internal branding into a company, offers an opportunity for cross-functional brand message synergy, and plays a significant role in exemplifying brand messages internally (Aurand et al., 2005). Atsmon et al. (2012) focus on the benefits of enabling employees to “live” a brand by giving them the opportunity to use or own the same products that the company offers its clients. For instance, Coca-Cola provides free coolers and free drinks to their employees and their dealers, leading to positive reviews and feedback on how they are perceived as a company. The brand experience is thus likely to increase in companies where employees can enjoy and live the brand. Atsmon et al. (2012) also highlight the importance of sustaining a healthy relationship with stakeholders such as retailers, because they mostly interact with the end customer and hence provide honest opinions about the company to customers. Greene et al. (1994) state that, “Firms that do not embrace and incorporate internal marketing issues into their strategic marketing plan will see their market share and profit erode.” Internal promotion can create a superior brand reputation and image among consumers and shareholders. Given the increasing trend of employees as brand advocates, there is a need for

companies to transform their marketing function by extending their brand management frameworks and include internal branding. As Picler et al. (2015) mention, using web platforms also provides a competitive edge for companies due to the global prevalence of digital marketing. Dahlstrom (2013) supports the idea of the involvement of employees on social platforms and in online forums, but the challenges that are associated with brand management through employee intervention on social media can restrain the trend. The problems in encouraging online activity on social platforms for employees include a lack of filtering and credibility in the feedback, which presents a higher risk of the company's practices being distorted and can have irreversible impacts on external brand image. In addition, newly hired employees who have not received rigorous brand training and are unfamiliar with brand values are not in a position to effectively communicate a company's values externally.

It is fundamental for management to align HR and marketing strategies to prevent the above-mentioned risks. Foster et al. (2010) thus conclude that marketing and incorporating brand messages into work activities help a company to prosper by advertising its brand. Simultaneously, involving HR in internal branding projects through an understanding of the company's values and work culture can help in the creation of a common goal for both HR and marketing departments. As mentioned above, the work culture of an organisation is essential in the alignment of objectives between different departments. Simmons (2009) identifies the advantages of internal and external branding through synergy. In his analysis of the managerial implications of entering this new marketing paradigm, he finds that aligning marketing objectives with human resource practices is essential in the development of sustainable and socially responsible organisations.

A joint effort by different organisational sectors reduces the perception of unequal workloads among employees (Jian, 2014). The alignment of corporate branding with internal branding has been one of the major managerial challenges that have been identified in research. Chernatony and Harris (2000) suggest that developing corporate brands by considering internal and external stakeholders will enable better managerial decisions in narrowing the gap between corporate identity and the reputation of an organisation. A misalignment of corporate branding with internal and external branding can lead to both internal and external struggles. Furthermore, Mohart et al. (2009) theorise that expanding corporate marketing would lead to coordinated corporate brand administration. In addressing the talent war, internal branding and employer branding help in the creation of sustainable employment. Internal branding helps to retain employees and to develop continuous learning among them. Employees are hence able to further develop their skills and capabilities (Aggerholm et al., 2011). We thus propose our next two hypotheses.

Hypothesis H4: "Diversification of employee roles and flexibility at work are essential for a new work force to facilitate employer branding".

Hypothesis H5: "Technology and data-driven work are prioritised by the new workforce generation."

2.4 External Stakeholders' Implications and Internal Brand Citizenship Behaviour

The concept of corporate branding has a profound impact on society. In addition to shareholders and customers, there is a wider public that is affected by branding decisions. The ethics behind business practices are essential, because they reflect whether a company recognises the importance of social responsibility and sustainability. Internal branding is a critical objective for internal stakeholders, because there can be confusion when the external view of a company is not practiced internally among the employees. In terms of brand image, customer views will run parallel to employee views (Vasudevan, 2008). Training quality in this regard is an important factor to predict employee perspective and satisfaction.

Brand citizenship behaviour is defined as the attitude of stakeholders towards a brand. Additionally, in their findings on the respective roles of leadership styles in framing employee behaviours, Shaari et al. (2015) note that brand knowledge and brand rewards directly correlate to brand commitment and brand citizenship. Further findings also suggest that brand commitment has a strong relationship to brand citizenship behaviour. In conducting mediation tests, they conclude that brand commitment partially facilitates the relationship between brand knowledge and brand rewards. Erkmen et al. (2015) examine the relativity of brand commitment in organisations, which is a labour-intensive endeavour. They provide evidence and data that the brand citizenship behaviours of employees do not have a positive relationship with brand commitments from a customer's point of view. Nevertheless, they find that the perceived brand performance of customers is highly influenced by brand commitment behaviours. The derivation of their findings highlight the importance of brand commitment in organisations with high labour intensity.

Because the development of brand citizenship is a long process, it is unrealistic for companies to expect high brand esteem from newly hired employees. The development of internal branding within organisations has several implications. As identified by Mahmert and Torres (2007), the successes and failures of implementing a proper internal framework rely on aligning HR practices with marketing objectives, developing a fast and proper communication network to promote brand knowledge, developing brand citizenship, enhancing brand equity, and fostering social responsibility within an organisation. Moreover, they conclude that internal branding is an effective tool to enhance brand image among external observers, and it is an efficient tool with which to compete in a "talent war." We now present our next two hypotheses.

Hypothesis H6: "Employees would prefer to work for ethically and socially responsible organisations."

Hypothesis H7: "Opportunities to bring about change and make a difference are important to the new generation of employees."

3. Methodology

3.1 Scale and Dimensions

The objective of this research paper is to identify the needs and expectations of new entrants into the labour market. A Likert scale format survey was conducted among 134 undergraduate and post-graduates students of a business school who are culturally and globally exposed to different cultures and various geographical areas. Of the 134 questionnaires distributed, 113 responses were collected, of which 100 fully filled the data points, which is a response rate of 75%. The 100 completed surveys were used and analysed to identify the needs of the new generation. Nineteen measurement items based on the previous empirical research were selected and presented in the survey, after being verified by thorough extensive qualitative interviews. The variables were combined into seven main categories where the relative significance of each construct and the link between them were assessed.

3.2 Scale and Dimensions

The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale: 1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neither agree nor disagree, 4- Agree, and 5- Strongly Agree, as it is one of most common ways to attribute measurement (Malhotra and Birks, 2000).

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Data Analysis Method

To analyse the data we use variance-based structural equation modelling with the software ADANCO. The software employs partial least square path modelling to test hypotheses and analyse research models (Henseler et al., 2015). Among variance-based SEM methods, partial least square (PLS) path modelling is considered to be the most developed and general model and has been referred to as a “silver bullet” (Hair et al., 2011). The main argument for the choice of PLS-SEM in many disciplines such as marketing (Hair et al., 2012) is the use of small sample sizes. It implements several limited-information estimators, such as partial least squares path modelling or ordinary least squares regression based on sum scores, which is also called PLS modelling, PLS-SEM, or simply PLS. PLS-SEM is a causal modelling approach that aims to maximise the variance of dependent variables (brand advocacy) (Ringle et al., 2011), and it is particularly valuable for the purposes of exploratory research.

4.1 Measurement Validation and Reliability

The reliability of the independent variables is examined by Cronbach’s alpha and Jöreskog’s rho (as a measure of composite reliability). We employ AVE for convergent validity and the Fornell–Larcker criterion (Fornell & Bookstein, 1982; Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) as a new approach to assess discriminant validity in variance-based SEM.

Reliability

The constructs or the independent variables are considered to be reliable when the Cronbach’s alpha values are 0.6 and above and the Joreskog’s rho scores are 0.7

and above (Ringle et al., 2011; Bagozzi & Yi, 2011) As shown in Table I below, the Cronbach's alpha values are all above 0.7 except for two with values of 0.65 and 0.66. Cronbach's alpha values between 0.6 and 0.8 are considered to be sufficient for research purposes (Nunnally, 1967). The Joreskog's rho scores are well above 0.8, which support the reliability of the model.

Table 1. Measure of Reliability

Construct	Jöreskog's rho (ρ_c)	Cronbach's alpha(α)
Corporate Image Identity	0.8410	0.7176
Peripheral Interaction	0.8506	0.6584
Game-changing Attitude	0.8717	0.7058
Extraneous Work Needs	0.8760	0.7175
Challenging & Innovative Work Environment	0.8768	0.7193
Upbringing Employees	0.8133	0.6683
Brand	0.8578	0.7528

Construct Validity

Campbell and Fiske (1959) propose two aspects to assess the construct validity of a test as follows.

1. Convergent validity: the degree of confidence that a trait is well measured by its indicators.
2. Discriminant validity: the degree to which measures of different traits are unrelated.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity of the measurement model can be assessed by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which measures the level of variance that is captured by a construct versus the level that is due to measurement error, for which values above 0.7 are considered to be very good and a level of 0.5 is acceptable. (Ringle et al., 2012) All of the values for AVE are well above 0.6 except for one (0.59), thus further fulfilling the criteria to identify valid constructs. This test confirms that the model's convergent validity is trustworthy and satisfactory.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Construct	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Corporate Image Identity	0.6382
Peripheral Interaction	0.7407
Game-changing Attitude	0.7726
Extraneous Work Needs	0.7794
Challenging & Innovative Work Environment	0.7807
Upbringing Employees	0.5965
Brand	0.6681

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assessment has become a generally accepted prerequisite to analyse the relationships between latent variables. For variance-based structural equation modelling, such as partial least squares, the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the examination of cross-loadings are the dominant approaches for such evaluations. They ensure that a construct measure is empirically unique, and they gauge the strength of a model in terms of the extent to which measures in the model differ from others, representing the phenomena of interest that are not captured by other measures in a structural equation model (Hair et al., 2010). In this paper we focus on examining discriminant validity as one of the key building blocks of the model evaluation (Bagozzi and Phillips, 1982; Hair et al., 2010). In the table below, the diagonal value shows that the value of the square root of the AVE for each construct is more than its correlation with other constructs, which meets Fornell-Larcker's (1981) test of discriminant validity.

The criterion of Fornell-Larcker (1981) helps assess the degree of shared variance between the latent variables of a model, confirming that the PLS results meet the relevant criteria (Chin, 1998, 2010; Götz et al., 2010; Hair et al., 2012a). Ringle et al. (2010) present this example in detail. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the cross-loadings, the constructs' discriminant validity establishes that the diagonal value in Table 3 means that the square root of each construct's AVE is higher than its correlation with another construct, and each item loads highest on its associated construct.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Measure of Discriminant Validity

Construct	Corporate Image Identity	Peripheral Interaction	Game-changing Attitude	Extraneous Work Needs	Challenging & Innovative Work Environment	Upbringing Employees	Brand
Corporate Image Identity	0.6382						
Peripheral Interaction	0.0646	0.7407					
Game-changing Attitude	0.0226	0.0108	0.7726				
Extraneous Work Needs	0.0896	0.1240	0.1191	0.7794			
Challenging & Innovative WE	0.1366	0.0825	0.1371	0.0890	0.7807		
Upbringing Employees	0.0708	0.1284	0.0742	0.0498	0.0522	0.5965	
Brand	0.2483	0.1506	0.2971	0.2784	0.3841	0.3299	0.6681

Squared correlations; AVE in the diagonal.

In this paper we focus on examining discriminant validity as one of the key building blocks of model evaluation (Bagozzi and Phillips, 1982; Hair et al., 2010). Henseler et al. (2015) propose that the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of the correlations (HTMT) approach can be used to assess discriminant validity. HTMT is the average of the Heterotrait-Heteromethod correlations, which are relative to the average of the monotrait-hetero method correlations. If the value of HTMT is higher than this threshold, then there lacks discriminant validity. Some authors suggest a threshold of 0.85 (Kline, 2011), whereas others propose a value of 0.90 (Teo et al., 2008) as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. HTMT Measure of Discriminant Validity

Construct	Corporate Image Identity	Peripheral Interaction	Game-changing Attitude	Extraneous Work Needs	Challenging & Innovative Work Environment	Upbringing Employees
Corporate Image Identity						
Peripheral Interaction	0.3817					
Game-changing Attitude	0.1998	0.1290				
Extraneous Work Needs	0.4236	0.5203	0.4808			
Challenging & Innovative WE	0.5170	0.4173	0.5180	0.4188		
Upbringing Employees	0.3607	0.5062	0.3383	0.3519	0.3001	
Brand	0.6681	0.5447	0.7366	0.7149	0.8322	0.7675

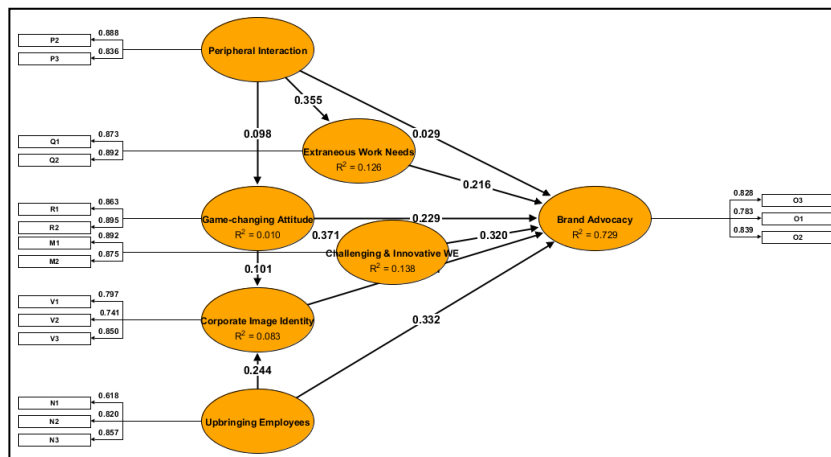
Table 5. Result of Multiple Regressions

Relationships	Co-efficient	t-value	p-value (2-sided)	p-value (1-sided)
Corporate Image Identity -> Brand Advocacy	0.1813	2.6003	0.0095	0.0047
Peripheral Interaction -> Game-changing Attitude	0.0981	0.8285	0.4076	0.2038
Peripheral Interaction -> Extraneous Work Needs	0.3553	3.6996	0.0002	0.0001
Peripheral Interaction -> Brand Advocacy	0.0290	0.4107	0.6814	0.3407
Game-changing Attitude -> Corporate Image Identity	0.1012	0.9313	0.3519	0.1760
Game-changing Attitude -> Challenging & Innovative WE	0.3713	4.1753	0.0000	0.0000
Game-changing Attitude -> Brand Advocacy	0.2288	3.7278	0.0002	0.0001
Extraneous Work Needs -> Brand Advocacy	0.2156	2.8624	0.0043	0.0021
Challenging & Innovative WE -> Brand Advocacy	0.3198	4.4643	0.0000	0.0000
Upbringing Employees -> Corporate Image Identity	0.2441	2.2073	0.0275	0.0138
Upbringing Employees -> Brand Advocacy	0.3321	5.1142	0.0000	0.0000

5. Research Findings

Figure 1 below illustrates the six constructs that have been identified by the sample as the most pertinent components. We describe the relative significance of these components as follows.

Figure 1. Structural Model



5.1 Corporate Image Identity

The corporate image of an organisation refers to its internal and external images. The co-relationship of work activities in terms of the corporate image of the organisation plays a determinant role as a need for a new workforce. The co-relationship of the organisation’s practices with the external image enables a better

settlement of new employees who can then incorporate the organisation's values into their work. The hypothesis is that decentralised communication networks lead to brand knowledge development amongst new employees. Indeed, brand knowledge and brand understanding are easily grasped among employees who are continuously exposed to the information that flows within an organisation. Such exposure to information is essential for employees who are entering an organisation to establish themselves in a new environment. The likely benefits of such frameworks work in alignment with the potential gains of the employer in terms of spurring brand contentment and advocacy. The new employee generation favours transparency, free communication, and technology and data-driven work. Thus, hypothesis *H1* ($t\text{-value} = 2.9257$ and $\beta=0.187$, $p < 0.01$) is supported i.e., "The decentralisation and transparency of a communication network enable a better flow of corporate image." To understand this relationship, face-to-face interactions with the sample from the researchers demonstrate a co-related relationship between technology and an organisation's image. Technology has now been fully incorporated into organisations and often serves as a measure of a firm's performance and reputation. Ethicality in the behaviours of organisations is not an important factor in terms of impact on employee needs. The hypothesis that the incoming employee generation would rather work for ethical and socially responsible organisations is rejected. The new workforce generation does not consider moral dilemmas as factors that affect their choice of organisation. Despite being not considered as a prior need, while focusing on employer branding, the ethicality of organisations' practices does act as an important determinant.

5.2 Employee Upbringing

The role of brand training in increasing brand knowledge is essential to ensure authenticity and consistency in the projected image. The existing gap in brand training amongst newly hired employees can be bridged after the significant needs and expectations in terms of training and personal development have been identified. Data analysis reveals very strong needs for adequate training, personal development, and flexibility at work. Thus, hypothesis *H2* ($t\text{-value} = 5.2686$ and $\beta=0.3298$, $p < 0.01$) is supported i.e., "Adequate training helps employees' affective brand association and helps them to evolve as strong brand advocates." Employers should hence focus on satisfying this need and incorporating brand coaching into training programmes. The results also suggest that new employees are highly attracted by work flexibility. Again, in terms of branding prospects, employers could encourage their employees to toggle between tasks and be more engaged in publicising the organisation. The results also reveal an optimistic view on the alignment of HR and marketing strategies, because employees tend to multi-task. A general analysis of these variables suggests that the sample is driven towards personal growth and development. In considering the potential outcomes of an employer's satisfaction of this need, it appears that the employer can benefit in terms of increased brand

engagement. its employees, despite the likely increase in training costs. Hence, with both employers and employees sharing an interest in training programs, employers should allocate more resources towards training programmes for new employees.

5.3 Peripheral Interactions

The need for peripheral interactions refers to employees' desire to work in a multi-cultural environment and interact with external stakeholders. In our analysis we produce a questionnaire that focuses on the two variables of the need for peripheral interaction. First, we note that the new generation favours cultural diversity within organisations. In gathering feedback from the sample, the researchers observe that the cultural variation within organisations has begun to be observed as a need by employees. The sample indicates that global and cultural exposures lead to better decisions within an organisation. A multiplicity of cultures amongst employees also mitigates monotony at work. Interactions amongst various cultural groups have become a common practice in a global world that is more connected than ever. Over the last 20 years, cultural diversity has become commonplace within organisations all around the globe.

This frame of mind has become part of the current daily business environment, and hence there is a need for such diversity. The second variable, which we assess during the analysis, is engaged participation in charities by the employer. We raise the question of whether new employees expect more involvement of their employers' in social causes and find that the new generation is very concerned about employers' contributions to society. Indeed, this need is considered as the least significant factor according to our sample; thus, *hypothesis H3* ($t\text{-value} = 0.7733$ and $\beta=0.0328$, $p > 0.01$) is not supported.

5.4 Extraneous Work Needs

It is undeniable that employees have needs other than those that are work-related. Such needs include developing new personal networks, and socialising and leisure time are indeed important points of concern for the new employee generation. Thus, *hypothesis H4* ($t\text{-value} = 3.3028$ and $\beta=0.2116$, $p < 0.01$) is supported, i.e., "*Diversification of employee roles and flexibility at work are essential for the new work force to facilitate employer branding.*" Additionally, "*Technology and data-driven work are prioritised by the new workforce generation.*" It is thus essential for employers to satisfy these needs to meet employee satisfaction and thereby encourage brand advocacy. Major dedication to work is in fact a growing concern amongst the new employee generation. There is a growing fear that employers tend to exploit employees at the junior level with overwhelming workloads. However, this study finds that interns are considered a cheap labour force. Interns in organisations where they are given tremendous workloads have a negative image of their organisation, on average, which makes them unlikely to act as brand advocates. It can thus be argued that interns are not good illustrations of the sample.

With the increasing mobility of the new generation, most new employees enter organisations with an intern status. In practice, workload does not vary with job title,

because interns perform equal and even more work than permanent staff members. Cultivating an intern hiring policy may hence restrict organisations from creating a positive attitude among their new employees. Thus, employers should design appropriate intern programmes to overcome this growing fear amongst the new generation. Providing the security that extraneous work needs will be met is essential to create a positive brand sentiment among new employees.

5.5 Challenging and Innovative Work Environment

This research proposes hypotheses that the diversification of employee roles and flexibility is essential among new employees. The objective of these assumptions prior to the survey was to prove that the new employee generation is more likely to endorse the brand advocate role in the context of start-ups than in well-established organisations. Thus, *hypothesis H5* ($t\text{-value} = 4.8005$ and $\beta=0.3163$, $p < 0.01$) is supported i.e., “continuous challenges create brand engagement among new employees.” Despite being proven correct, these hypotheses are interpreted differently by the sample. Surprisingly, the assumption favouring employee preferences for start-ups is rejected. We conclude that although new employees favour challenging and innovative work environments, they prefer to undertake challenges in well-established organisations. The main explanation for these results is that well-established organisations are in a better position to fulfil employees’ needs and expectations. Furthermore, the respondents note that long-established organisations offer certainties in terms of job and financial security due to their stability and experience. Organisations that have proven themselves are thus more likely to be promoted by their employees. On the other hand, start-up employers should address this issue by recruiting employees who are highly motivated and engaged in a brand’s vision. Other employee needs will hence overcome this existing need, thus promoting brand advocacy amongst employees.

5.6 Game-changing Attitude

The results demonstrate that the new generation of employees seeks opportunities to bring about change and have an impact on their organisation. Being the third most significant need as per the factor analysis, this opens a tremendous perspective for employers in terms of boosting branding from their employees. Thus, *hypothesis H6* ($t\text{-value}=3.6581$ and $\beta=0.2336$, $p < 0.01$) is supported, i.e., “Opportunities to bring about change and make a difference are important for the new employee generation.” However, we should keep in mind that the survey was conducted with business school students and that the desire to make a difference already exists amongst business students. Moreover, co-linearity is also identified with the need for career advancement. Career advancement planning has become a major concern for the new employee generation, given the prevailing unstable global labour market. The emerging workforce seeks guarantees in terms of job security and career plans. The need for career advancement plans is rated as the second most important need by the sample. Indeed, concerns about promotion, recognition, and

appraisals have been growing in recent years. The duty of the employer hence relies on providing these certainties to their workforce.

5.7 Indirect Relationships

Apart from many direct relationships, we observe a few indirect relationships in the employees' brand supporting behaviours. The new generation works for many different reasons, although financial rewards are frequently a key factor in influencing why individuals undertake certain jobs. However, money is not everything; they want to enjoy their work, to be challenged by it, and to achieve personal fulfilment. In businesses today, a challenging and innovative work environment is essential to remain competitive and to survive in the long run. For employees in the emerging work force, their careers are on-going learning experiences that serve as intrinsic motivation. When individuals are intrinsically motivated, they are interested in their work. Put simply, employment creates enjoyment, while enabling employees to achieve and contribute to their desired goals. The extent to which any organisation can continuously innovate is linked to innovation by individual employees, and innovative work behaviours refer to those that encompass both the new generation's desire to be introduced to new ideas and the realisation or implementation of new ideas at work. The relationship between a game-changing attitude and a challenging and innovative work environment is strongly supported with ($t\text{-value} = 3.6996$ and $\beta=0.3553$, $p < 0.01$); hence, "An innovative working environment intrinsically motivates employees to learn new ideas."

Multicultural experiences serve to increase individual sensitivity to knowledge and ideas that originate in other cultures. This attitude in turn increases individual propensity to recruit ideas, concepts, and perspectives from other cultures while working on creative tasks. Developing new networks and socialising go hand-in-hand with an employee's peripheral interactions. A diverse multi-cultural environment can provide a work environment that is conducive to opportunities to create new networks of different wavelengths. By providing evidence of positive relationship among networks, the nexus of social network, culture, and creativity is expanded. The relationship between peripheral interaction and extraneous work needs shows a strong association with ($t\text{-value} = 4.1753$ and $\beta=0.3713$, $p < 0.01$); hence, "A multicultural workplace can provide a work environment that is conducive to creating new networks to socialise and networks of foreign acquaintances."

There is overwhelming consistency among the respondents that organisational training should not only be provided, but that it is deemed essential for bringing consistency and to positively impact corporate image identity, with ($t\text{-value} = 2.2073$ and $\beta=0.2441$, $p < 0.05$) and to help new employees to successfully deliver their organisation's brand promise and spur brand commitment and advocacy; hence, "Organisational training helps new recruits carry out their work activities in accordance with their organisational brand promise."

6. Conclusion

This research has proven that the new employee generation is still attracted by well-established companies. When ranking the needs of employees, we also observe that personal needs overcome societal and community needs. However, the survey sample consists of business students with work experience, and most probably employees' needs may differ among various fields of expertise and industries. This research paper is relevant for existing employers that are willing to boost the number of brand advocates in their organisations and succeed in the existing talent war. The bottom line is that catering to the needs of the new generation will undoubtedly lead to a happier workforce that will then share its positive work experience with others.

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