Effect of Brand Personality on the Intention to Send a Job Application

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Summary
Actually, brand personality is more and more important in marketing field. Considering the employee as consumer this paper will study the effect of employee brand personality on the intention to send a job application. In this research we tried to make the difference by following the qualitative methodology. we did ten interviews with IT engineering student in terminal classes and after thematique analysis tow thems emerged in relation with the brand personality factors which are sincerity and excitement. people are attracted by firms inspiring confidence and sincerity an exciting environment this is an important finding for firms who want to attract talented people. however, it important for enterprises in the IT filed to focus all their communication actions on the sincerity and excitement

Keywords: Brand personality, Effect of brand, intention, intention to send a job

1. Introduction

When People are looking for a job they develop beliefs about employers. (Cable et Turban, 2001). The employer brand is a concept that emerged from the application of marketing principles in human resources management (Backhaus et Tikoo, 2004; Lievens et al., 2007). As in product branding, the assumption in employer branding is that potential applicants are attracted to thefirm based on their perceptions of the attributes of the firm, the perceived benefits, and their assessment of the brand image (Ambler & Barrow, 1996).when job seeker are searching a new job they attribute some impression to the organisation from this point they start to give a personality to the employer brands (Backhaus, 2004 ; Backhaus et Tikoo, 2004 ; Knox et Freeman, 2006 ; Lievens, 2007 ; Lievens, Van Hoye et Anseel, 2007).

In our days its important for organisations to, build a brand that attract both consumer and highly talented worker .The employer brand, which has become an essential component of the strategic plan of companies to conquer markets, therefore it plays a central double role of attractiveness and capture; it is therefore an important factor for maintaining a high level of human competence and organizational performance. Indeed,

intentions to apply for a job and decisions to integrate a company are made by considering general attitudes towards the company reputation and the attributes of the job. (Collins et Stevens, 2002; Backhaus et Tikoo, 2004 ; Knox et Freeman, 2006 ; Berthon, P., Ewing, M. et Hah, L. L., 2005).

In the first part of this article, we will present the theory and the different conceptualizations of employer branding. The second part presents an exploratory study toinvestigate the relationship between employer brand personality and Intention to send a job application . we choosed to do our study in Saudi Arabia because of the important number of stat up working in the IT field . KSA is one   the most important country in meddle east with his economic growth and natural and human resources . In a third part, we present the research contributions, its limits and other avenues of research.

What is the employer brand?
the term "employer branding" was 1st in public introduced to a management audience in 1990 and outlined by Simon Barrow, chairman of individuals in Business, and Tim walker, Senior Fellow of London business school. (Goswami. Agarwal,2015)

The employer brand is a concept born from the desire of companies to express their difference as providers of jobs in the labor market (Backhaus, 2004) employer branding begin when managers start to use marketing concepts to their employee's. The 'employer brand' term was conceptualizedfor the first time by Ambler and Barrow (1996) in their paper, "The Employer Brand". Ambler and Barrow (1996) define the employer brand in terms of benefits, calling it "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company. Here Ambler and Borrow have applied the concept of brand to HRM by viewing the employer as the brand and employees as customers. Employer branding is relatively new approach towards recruiting and retaining the best possible human talent within an employment environment that is becoming

increasingly competitive (Mendis&Wanigasekera 2013).

Employer branding is therefore a term used to describe how organizations presents their offer to potential and existing employees to acquire and maintain their loyalty and also develop the image of the organisation as a company that is a different and desirable employer (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Jiang and Iles, 2011).

If employees don't have knowledge of the brand and do not express a connection with an externally promoted brand identity, then they are unable to behave in the way desired by the organisation. (Santiago 2018) The results obtained in this study indicate that almost all the dimensions of EB attractiveness have an effect on the intention of millennials to apply for a job, with the only exception being economic value (Santiago 2018).

According to some researcher employer brand is assimilated to the concept of internal branding Mahnert& Torres,(2007) defined it as a set of strategic activities of a corporation to provide and ensure intellectual and emotional comfort to employee . By using the internal image organisations can push their employees to develop an authentiqueconviction that can contribute to build a positive image of their enterprise ((Khan, 2009; Punjaisri& Wilson, 2007; Henkel et al., 2007). With the internal branding employees are treated as internal consumer. Witch give them the possibility to develop a positive attitude toward the brand value. (Raj & Jyothi,2011)

What is the difference between brand identity, brand image and brand personality?

kapferer(2007) define the brand identity as the meaning of the brand as established by the organisation it's the way used by the firm to introduce its brand to his target.brand image is the result of the perception and interpretation the brand identity by the targeted consumer (Pelsmacker, Geuens, & Van den Bergh, 2007) . Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) organized of the brand identity around 4 axes which are : (1) the brand as a product, (2) the brand as an organization, (3) the brand as a person, and (4) the brand as a symbol. Aaker (1997, pp. 347) defined brand personality as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand"
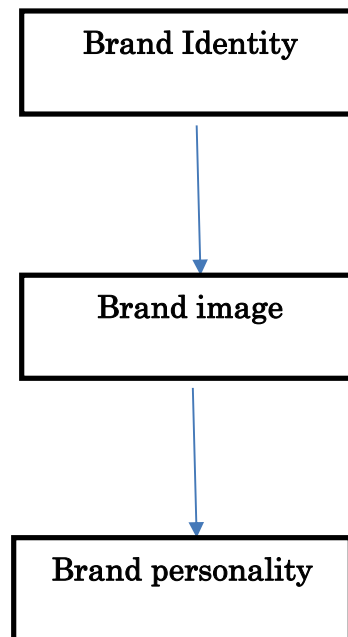
What is employerbrand personality?
Marketing specialist was the first researchers to use human personality traits to describe intangible aspects of brand image (Keller and Lehmann, 2006).Aker 1996 identified a model of five factors containing 3 factors from the big five : Sincerity come from the trait of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. Excitement contains items like sociability, energy and activity, just as Extraversion does. Competence is in relation with the traits found in Conscientiousness and Extraversion. . The other two dimensions, Sophistication and Ruggedness, have no relations with any of the Big Five dimensions.Aaker's work tried to clarify the concept and build measure for it. For this, she largely followed the methodology of psychologists in their studies of the human personality. Brand personality is formally defined here as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand". brand personality describes the symbolic side of the brand and its potential of self-expression (Keller 1993).Geuens et al. (2009) showed that other factors of brand personality such as responsibility, activity, aggressiveness, simplicity, and emotionality. We can say that the use of these brand personality dimensions are different according to the context. Davies et al. (2018) identified the brand personality dimensions in 21 studies published between 1997 and 2016 in various contexts.recentlywe observe that human resource manager are applicating human behavioural concept to employer branding . theoretically with this perspective, the employer may

function as a central factor in the setting of an employee's social-identity or self-concept. Highhouse et al. (2007).Lievens and Highhouse (2003) were the firstresarchers to apply the brand personality concept to an employer branding context. They investigate both the potential applicants for a banking position and the bank employees as well, they were able to establish a modified version of the brand personality traits proposed by Aaker (1997)

Table I: The dimensions of entity brand personality Davies et al. (2018)

Sincerity (honest, genuine and cheerful)
Competence (reliable, dependable and efficient)
Excitement (daring, imaginative and up-to-date)
Sophistication (glamorous, charming and romantic)
Ruggedness (tough, strong and rugged)
Ruthlessness (controlling and aggressive)
Thrift (poor, sloppy and low class)
Peacefulness (gentle, mild and peaceful)
Unpleasant (annoying, irritating and outmoded)
Simplicity (ordinary and simple)
Sensitivity (delicate, sensitive and romantic)
Conformity (religious, spiritual and traditionalist)
Prestige (reputable and successful)
Cosmopolitan (international and cosmopolitan)
Materialism (selfish, materialistic and pretentious)
Conspicuousness (special and extravagant striking

According to the work of Davies et al. 2018 brand personality defers from context to context and can't be totally attached to the dimension human personality. We can say that the factors of human personality helped researcher to start their understanding of this concept but it remain incomplete if they don't focus on specific attributes of branding .Davies et al.(2018) stated that the structure of human personality offers developed by the Big 5 framework of human personality was itself empirically derived, with little or no theoretical support to guide its development.

Conceptual model:

This study proposes a conceptual model focused on the effect of EBP (employer brand personality) on the intention to send a job application to the organization. the goal of this study is to develop a conceptual framework liking the dimensions of the EBP and the dimensions of the intention to send a job application .
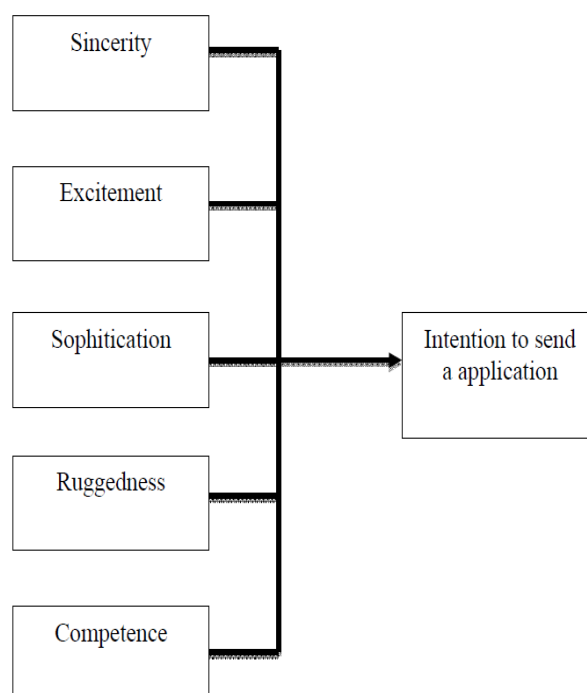

These first research results imply the applicability of the brand personality conception an employment context. However, little is known about the relationship of brand personality (L.vRampl 2014) According to Agrawal and Swaroop (2009) brand image affect the intention to apply for a job. they suggest that the firm reputation throw the brand image matter for job seeker. in this case employer can make a competitive difference to attract talented workforce. P.Banerjee et al (2018)In the same vein showed whether corporate brand and product brand can have an impact on the employer brand and subsequently on the job intention decision of a job seeker. It important to make the difference between the corporate brand and product brand. L.vRampl (2014) showed in his study that employer brand is important for the firms to be the first choice for the job seeker.employer brand perceptions have positive impact on the brand attractiveness. Excitement and sincerity has a positive effect on the employer brand trust which show the significant effect of the EBP on the attractiveness of the EB. significant link between several brand personality traits and employer brand affect, as well as employer brand trust (L.vRampl 2014) .

Method

A qualitative research design was used in this study to explore the effect of employer brand personality on intention to send a job application . Hodges (2011)

suggested that a qualitative method gives to researchers the possibility to understand all details of a problem which helps them to develop a good understanding of the contexts. Additionally, the strength of qualitative research comes from participants providing their thoughts and opinions in the form of open discussion allowing researchers to discover more in-depth information about a subject (Morgan & Spanish, 1984). For this resons we choosed to do an in-depth interview process for this study.The criteria for choosing participants were that: they must be IT engineering Student in terminal classes. This research excluded student in other classes, such as because they may have differentthoughts and opinions andbecause of the lack of experience and motivation to get a job. We did all our interview inside the university.

Eachparticipant was asked to express his/her opinions for 5 questions. . the interview lasted about 30 minutes. According to De Gagne and Walters (2010), a sample size ofqualitative research is fixed by researchers based on theirassessment of the data collection. For this study, we stopped collecting data when information starts to be repeated and data saturation was attained. All the participant were interviewed in Arab language. after completing the interview,the researchers organized the information collectedinto a transcript. After collecting the transcript, we did a word-to-word translation from arab to English and to conserve the quality of data we a second translation from English to arab with the help on a professional translator.
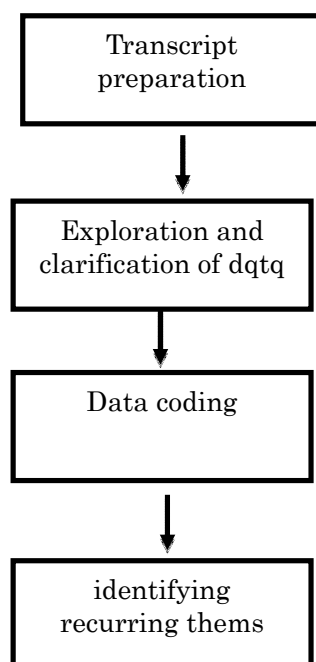
Data analysis

We asked interviewer to choose a firm where they intend to send a job application. after they will write his namein paper without showing it to the researcher. After choosing their firm all the participant will respond to 5 questions treating the following subjects as chowed in the table below. This five questions was extracted from the theorical framework.

N	Subject of the question	Goal
1	Describe the brand of the company you want to apply for in one word	Measure firm brand personality
2	Why do you want to send your application to this company	Measure reasons for sending job application
3	Why do you think that this company is attractive	Measure company attractiveness
4	Do you think this company has good employment potential	Measureemploymentpotential
5	what do you think about the atmosphere within this company	Measure company atmosphere

Interpretation
Brand personality

We asked people in the first question to describe the brand of the firm in which they want to work using one word. the main goal of this questions is to identify the factor of brand personality in relation with the intention de send a job application for a firm. To identify this relation we did classification of the different word according to their similarity with the factors of personality of Lievens andHighhouse (2003) and Lievens et al. (2005) . this classification will be presented in the table below. according to this classification we found than there are two main factors that immerge from the table of classification:sincerity an excitement. The results of this classifications showed that sincerity and excitement that appear the most.this study shows that more the brand of the firm inspire confidence and has an excitement aspect more it attracts new candidates these results are in line with study of Rampl& Kenning (2014)

Table : Answers of the question 1

Student 1	Innovation	limpid	serious	big	exciting
Student 2	recruitement	security	Employment conditions	Leader	sensation
Student 3	sincerity	Innovation	motivation	Independency	stimulating
Student 4	High turnover	honest	Successful	fashion	Athenthique
Student 5	joyful	Young	rousing	true	Purposeful
Student 6	Professional	New product	Inspirational	unaffected	change
Student 7	truthful	Famous	Reputation	Variety	discipline
Student 8	Autonomy	whole-hearted	stirring	clear	Simple
Student 9	Good salary	Positive	Challenge	fast	lucid
Student 10	attack	Competence	real	sensation	Professional

Table : Classification   of the words

Brand personality factor	Number of time sited
Sincerity	**12**
Excitement	**7**
sophistication	**2**
ruggedness	2
Competence	**2**

Reasons for sending a job application to the firm

The goal of this question is to understand the reasons behind the interest to this enterprise. by this question we want to understand why student will send their application to the company. according to the table below. except for students 3 and 4 all the other student will send their application because they think that the firm is innovator, they can develop their selves and thy feel jobsecurity. these results are in relation with the brand personality of the company. when people talk about innovation and job security of the firm which are in relation with the tow main important factors of the BP which are the sincerity and excitement of the brand

Extrait from respondents' interviews

Student 1	...I submitted my application because I found the ad on LinkedIn because I like this firm
Soudent 2	My dream is always to work in this trustworthy company
Student 3	It is the best IT company in the market
Student 4	A friend advised me to apply
Student 5	I think this company has great potential of development
Student 6	The salary offered by this company is good
Student 7	A friend works there and advised me to apply
Student 8	I find that this company and in my development aspirations
Student 9	For me this is the domain of the future
Student 10	I like this company because it is innovative

Firm attractiveness

With this question we want to know factors influencing firm attractiveness.in this question we always the concept of confidence in most of the responses of the interviewer all the interviewers explained that they found their company attractive because it gives the a good opportunity to grow up their experience a get a long term position .this can lead to the factor of sincerity in employer brand personality .this study suggest that the most attractive company is the company that inspire confidence to candidate

Extrait from respondents' interviews

Individual	Response
Student 1	*I think this is a company I can trust for my future*
Soudent 2	*It is an innovative firm in which I can develop my experience*
Student 3	*In this kind of business we encourage young people and there is a pleasant atmosphere*
Student 4	*For a start, this is a good opportunity to work in this company to learn*
Student 5	*It's a big company so it's stable*
Student 6	*In my opinion if we want to move forward we should look for this kind of company*
Student 7	*Many people who work in this company are proud to belong to it*
Student 8	*Just seeing the company's products everywhere makes me want to be a part of it*
Student 9	*It is a very prestigious company with good reputation*
Student 10	*I have a friend who works in this company and who smells great*

Employment potential of the firm

The goal of this question is to understand the employment potential of the choosed company. All the respondents stated that they consider their company as good destination to send a job application because they have good chance to get a position in this company because it is a recruitment destination. We can conclude that the employer brand personality has a positive effect on the perception of employability of a firm. this will attract people to send their job application.

Individual	Response
Student 1	*It's a big company so it has great employment potential*
Soudent 2	*In my opinion, this is a company that is very difficult to enter because it is in high demand*
Soudent 3	*Companies like this have a very high turnover so they always need staff*
Soudent 4	*No response*
Soudent 5	*I have a lot of friends who got a job at this company*
Soudent 6	*I don't know but I think this is the right address to send a job application*
Soudent 7	*I give this company confidence in terms of employability*
Soudent 8	*I don't know but I will send my request*
Soudent 9	*A good company that recruits a lot*
Soudent 10	*This company works in the field of technology and given the evolution they will recruit young people*

Extrait from respondents' interviews
Employer work atmosphere

According to respondent's atmosphere is good without stress where employee develop thems elves. team work is very important a gives employee a n exciting place to work. this result shows that brand personality has an effect on the perception of the employer atmosphere. there no studies working on EBP on the working place atmosphere. this finding will help human resource managers to link the work atmosphere with EBP.

Extrait from respondents' interviews

Individual	Response
Student 1	*I think the atmosphere is nice because of the serious of the firm*
Student 2	*An atmosphere full of sensations and challenges*
Student 3	*It an atmosphere where we grow, it's a place of innovation*
Student 4	*A company that helps its employees overcome their problems*
Student 5	*The work is done by team*
Student 6	*A relaxed atmosphere where there is no tension*
Student 7	*It is a company that attaches great importance to the well-being of its employees*
Student 8	*The atmosphere is friendly and there is a lot of joy*
Student 9	*People are very patient and encourage innovation*
Student 10	*Encouraging atmosphere for professional development*

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to expand employer brand theory by drawing on previous results of employer brand and consumer brand research.this study investigated the effect of brand personality trait on the intention to send a job application.The results of this study provide meaningful understanding regarding the effect of brand personality on the attractivity of the firm.The result of our study indicates that the most important factors that emerge from the qualitative study are the excitement and sincerity. people find always firms with this tow factors as attractive, having a good employment potential and nice atmosphere. these factors are sufficient to motivate candidate to send their application to this kind of firms. This results are similar to the results found byL.V.Rampl and P.Kenning (2012) this tow researcher found that sincerity and excitement has a positive effect on the brand attractiveness .this can be explained by the that when searching a job people try always to find a firm who can help them to secure there life. For the excitement all the interviewed student are coming from the IT which is characterised by a lot of challenges and competition it relative to the specificity of the field and people working in it .

These study findings present several implications for the theory it puts the light on the effect of the employer brand personality on the intention to send a job application . In our study we applied the construct of EBP developed by Lievens and Highhouse (2003)and Lievens et al. (2005) in a qualitative context. Therefore, we propose the following two theoretical conclusions from this study.

-Applying the concept of brand personality on employer context.

-Using the qualitative methodology to understand the effect of brand personality on the intention to send a job application.

Likewise practical implications for employer brand managers could be numerous such as focusing on building trustful brand with a sincere communication. And expressing whether the atmosphere inside the company is full of challenges and sensations. this research will help HR practitioner to adopt the best practices to attract talented engineer in the place. before integration and being a part of the team. candidates will be attached affectively to the firm and inside they will do their best to preserve their place and participate to the development of the company.

As is the case for all research, this study has some limitations Based on these limitations and on research questions derived from our work, we propose a potential research agenda for future employer branding research This study focused only on potential applicant it could be interesting to study the effect of brand personality on the current employee.Further, a useful research agenda would include studies that explore the roles of marketing Mix on the development of brand personality in this stage there is a very important question that researcher must ask to their selves is there a difference between consumer brand personality and employer brand personality because if they are different marketing tools will be different Finally, we would like to highlight .that our research is basically qualitive it will be very interesting if we confirm our results by a quantitative research.

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