The role of employer branding in improving employee performance in Vietnam enterprises

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ABSTRACT

This study delves into the impact of employer branding on employee performance, a factor of the current employee. The research method used is mixed methods with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The sampling method is carried out according to the conventional method. 937-observation sample was surveyed through questionnaires directly from employees working for 37 companies and organizations in Vietnam. Employer branding has been demonstrated to have a positive effect with a weak impact on employee performance. This result is valuable as a new research direction for employer branding for current employees. Concurrently, it contributes as an additional new solution for employee performance in enterprises. These results will help researchers as well as managers have more ideas in applying employer branding to improve employee performance.

1. Introduction

Employer branding, first developed by Ambler and Barrow (1996), is considered as the combination of marketing and human management. Accordingly, employer branding is defined as a package of economic and psychological benefits that an organization can provide to employees in order to help employers become the best place to work. Before that, Employer branding was first mentioned through employer brand with the role of building organizational culture and internal spirit (Wally, 1989). Besides, according to (Hlavsa, Urbancová, & Richter, 2015), employer branding will be useful in motivating the entire organization to connect with each individual as well as creating an organization reputation in stakeholders' weaknesses. Another foundation of employer branding is external marketing and internal marketing. In particular, external marketing helps build an employer as an attractive place and the first choice of potential candidates. This helps employers to be different and to achieve human capital discrimination. Besides, internal marketing helps employers create an attractive working environment that other companies find difficult to imitate and compete with. Accordingly, employees will be aware of employer values (workplace brand and organizational culture) through company goals. Company culture can achieve a level of differentiation and uniqueness. Another theoretical basis for forming

employer branding is the psychological contract theory which deals with the relationship between employer and employee in an organization. According to the definition of a psychological contract, an employee will promise loyalty to the company, in return for job security. However, this definition has been adjusted to suit the current time, such as the addition of downsizing, outsourcing, and flexibility concepts.

Employee performance is defined as the method by which employees perform and measure their work outcome by comparing task performance against organizational standards such as leadership skills, time management, labor productivity, and so on (Betaubun, Werang, & Rahail, 2015). Employee performance can also be viewed as a series of positive and negative behaviors that employees can contribute to organizational goals (Harwiki, 2016). Employee performance can be understood as the work output related to the overall goals of the organization including quality, effectiveness, and other relevant effects (Sok & O'Cass, 2011). In addition, Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez (1998) developed and extended the concept of employee performance into five factors: job (related to the performance of job descriptions), career (related to the skills requirements of the organization), innovator (related to employee's ability to innovate and be creative in work), team (related to the ability to coordinate work with members of the organization) and organization (related to employees' concern in the overall goals of the organization). Although employee performance has been concentrated in many exploratory studies, few studies are related to the impact of employer branding. Recently, only a few studies have mentioned the factors affecting employee performance related to employer branding such as: Employee brand equity (Huang & Lai, 2018), Employee economic support (Lumiti et al., 2018), Compensation, competence, leadership (Jailani & Nawangsari, 2020), Internal organizational policies (Makau & Muna, 2020), employer attractiveness (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022) and so on. Not many current studies explore the direct relationship between employer branding and employee performance while employer branding, an important strategy, helps improve employee satisfaction and engagement in the organization. All of these factors are the driving force to improve employee performance. Therefore, this study explores the role of employer branding in improving employee performance.

With the above theoretical basis and concepts, the current research mainly focuses on the following directions. Firstly, the impact of employer branding on potential candidates such as: intention to apply (Ha & Luan, 2018; Sivertzen et al., 2013), commitment to the organization (Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019; Thalgaspitiya, 2020), retaining talent (Ha, Luan, & Tam, 2021; Kheswa, 2015; Matongolo, Kasekende, & Mafabi, 2018), scale of employer attractiveness (Ha, Luan, & Trung, 2021) and so on. Secondly, the studies related to the application of brand management techniques in human resource management and development (Ambler & Barrow, 1996) or integration in human resource management processes are highly practical (Edwards, 2010). Few studies explore the impact of employer branding on the current employee, especially employee performance. Therefore, the study of the relationship between employer branding and employee performance is absolutely necessary for supplementing the theoretical system related to employer branding.

2. Literature review

Social exchange theory was developed by Emerson (1976) on the basis of integrating two theories sociology theory and social psychology theory. Social exchange theory comes from researchers focusing on developing the content 'The Social Psychology of Groups' with the goal of clarifying the concept of psychological elements in this theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Accordingly, this theory is extended through the study of the term 'Exchange and Power' coordinated by Blau (1964). In, Blau (1964) focuses on studying two factors, technical and

economic. Besides, the social exchange theory continues to be developed by building the content 'Social behavior as exchange' which delves into the study of tools related to psycho-behavioral factors (Homans, 1969). All three groups of authors have different approaches; however, one thing in common is their contribution to the formation of The social exchange theory. According to Homans (1969), the main idea of this theory is that any action of an individual in society depends on the reward he receives from another individual. Social value exchange between two partners consists of two main components as follows: contingent process and acquiring value process ("transactions" or "exchange"). Therefore, Homans (1969) proved that this theory, in the field of human resource management and behavioral psychology, can be applied to the social behavior of each individual.

Person-organization fit theory (Kristof, 1996) is an important theory related to the relationship between employer and employee with the main contents referring to antecedents and consequences between organization and individuals. Organizations have a high level of the person-organization fit when the organization maintains a high degree of cohesion and flexibility during difficult times and situations, which is often realized through recruitment and selection activities. According to Muchinsky and Monahan (1987), a supplementary fit is the action of a person when they have "supplements, embellishes, or possessess characteristics" or similar characteristics to other members of the organization. In contrast, a complementary fit occurs when the individual's personality is viewed as "made whole" in the environment. In another interpretation, Edwards (1991) thinks that the person-organization fit is composed of two aspects: needs-supplies and demands-abilities. If observed from the perspective of needs - supplies, the state of person-organization fit will occur when the organization meets the needs and expectations of the individual. In the opposite direction, demands - abilities, person-organization fit status will be achieved when the capabilities that individuals contribute to the organization meet the requirements of that organization.

The relationship between employer branding and employee performance

According to the social exchange theory (Emerson, 1976), if the employer desires to receive values from the employee such as work efficiency, the employee must be provided with both material and spiritual values because this theory confirms that the relationship between employer and employee is based on a fair and appropriate exchange of social values (Shore, Coyle-Shapiro, Chen, & Tetrick, 2009). Accordingly, the employee's contribution level will depend on the reward level they receive from the employer. Once employees realize they have received valuable rewards, they will devote themselves and contribute back to the company their working abilities. This shows that employers need effective and sustainable strategies to provide employees with their best values. Employer branding is one best solution to accomplish this task by creating a good image in the minds of employees (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). From there, it will help employees realize that they have received appropriate and competitive values from the company; therefore, they need to respond appropriately by improving their work efficiency. In other words, employer branding will have a positive impact on employee performance at businesses.

Moreover, person-organization fit theory (Kristof, 1996) has determined that the relationship between employer and employee only exists in a sustainable way (fit state) with harmony and fairness in terms of rights and responsibilities between two parties. In which, employees will provide their resources (time, effort, commitment, experience, and capabilities) to the employer. On the contrary, the employer will pay back employees with values (financial, physical, psychological). This exchange of resources will take place continuously in operating the business and helps the relationship between employer and employee achieve an optimal state, or

fit state. This fit state is only achieved when the above exchange becomes fair and harmonious for both parties. When an organization achieves a fit state in the relationship between organization and person, employees tend to improve their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet employer requirements. This will lead to improved employee performance. In another aspect, employer branding is the strategies and activities that provide employees with both material and spiritual values and benefits to build the image of an employer as the best place to work (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). This is similar to the resources provided by the organization (financial, physical, psychological) in the person-organization fit theory. Employer branding can also be considered as one solution to help organizations achieve the status of person-organization fit and thereby improve employee performance.

According to Aguinis (2009), employee performance management must be closely linked to the company strategy and include a multi-stage process (identification, measurement and personal development). Due to the important nature of employee performance management, companies need to be very focused and careful in this assessment (Wayne et al., 2014). In the corporate management context, employer branding can be recognized as an innovative solution that contributes to new values creation for the employee performance management program (Vaijayanthi, Roy, Shreenivasan, & Srivathsan, 2011). In other words, employer branding will positively affect employee performance through work management programs. On the other hand, employer branding activities provide employees with a good working environment and conditions for peace of mind for employees. According to Munjal (2017), when an employee is engaged to the company as well as to the job, it will help their labor productivity be better because they have high motivation to work. Effective employer branding strategies will enhance the satisfaction of employees and employees always feel enthusiastic and try to contribute their abilities to the goal of the company. This will definitely create high labor productivity for employees. Therefore, the application of employer branding in corporate management is an important solution to meet the diverse requirements of the organization (improving recruitment quality, increasing employee commitment to the company, reducing turnover rates and especially improving employee performance) (Elving, Westhoff, Meeusen, & Schoonderbeek, 2013; Vijayalakshmi, & Uthayasuriyan, 2015). In addition, according to Awan and Tahir (2015), a friendly and supportive working environment will create a comfortable and secure mentality for employees, which leads to increased work efficiency and productivity. Because all the problems and challenges that employees face in every organization are largely related to the working environment, the working environment is an important factor in improving employee performance. In addition, the working environment is an important component of employer branding. Therefore, the results of the above arguments can imply that employer branding has a positive impact on employee performance. In addition, another component of employer branding is a leadership style in the organization. Attractive leadership styles (transformational leadership style) will help improve employee performance and productivity through mediating factors (job satisfaction and commitment) (Atmojo, 2015). It may imply that employer branding has a positive impact on employee performance in organizations.

Based on the above reasons, the hypothesis is proposed as following:

Hypothesis: Employer branding has a positive impact on employee performance

3. Methodological approach

Based on the theory and previous research results, the research model is built based on the relationship between two main factors, employer branding and employee performance. In which, employer branding has a direct impact on employee performance. At the same time, based on the

concept and employer branding scale of Tanwar and Prasad (2017) and extended by Ha and Luan (2021), this study will build a measurement model in the form of the resulting model (Reflective, Mole A). Similarly, the employee performance scale of Welbourne et al. (1998) also build on the reflective model (Mole A). According to the research hypothesis, the proposed research model is presented in Figure 1 below.

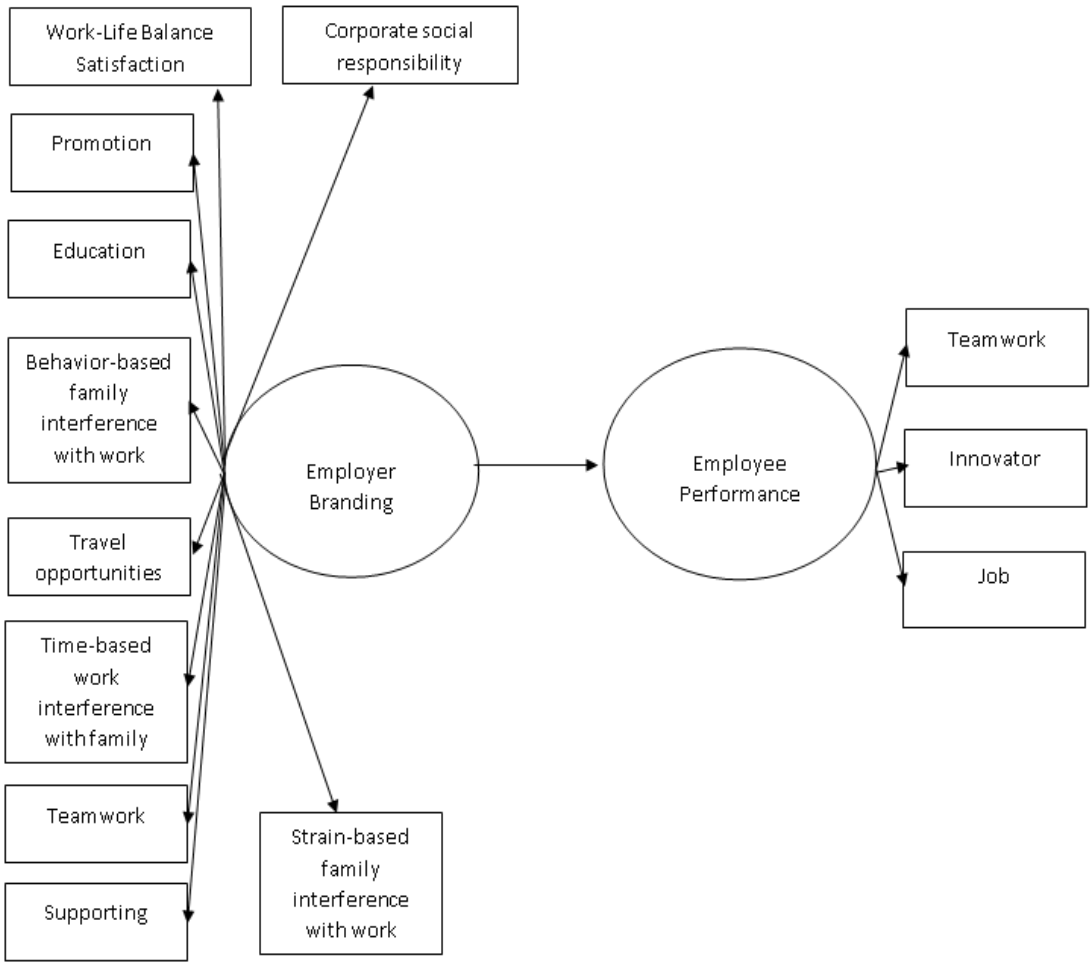

Figure 1. The research model

4. Conducting research and results

4.1. Research methodology and sampling

This study uses a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Qualitative method is used to validate and develop scales while a quantitative method is used to test hypotheses and research models. The method used in the qualitative research is an interview which consists of two steps: (i) in-depth interviews with four experts with doctoral degrees (lecturers) and (ii) group discussion with two groups including qualified employees with working experience of at least three years at enterprises (each group consists of 10 employees). For quantitative research, the tools used are Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) software.

Research data is collected through survey questionnaires sent directly to employees by convenience sampling method. The results collected 937 observations, including employees who are working at companies and organizations in Vietnam.

4.2. Measurement Scale

The scale of employer branding and employee performance in this study is used based on previous studies and has been confirmed and developed to suit the research context in Vietnam. Employer branding scale is mainly based on the concepts and scales of the authors including Tanwar and Prasad (2017), Chauhan and Mahajan (2013), Lievens (2007), Lorys (2017), Carlson, Kacmar, and Williams (2000) and validated and extended by Ha and Luan (2021). Specifically, it includes 10 factors as follows: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Work-Life Balance Satisfaction (WLSA), Promotion (PRO), Education (EDU), Behavior-based family interference with work (WLBE), Travel opportunities (TRA), Time-based work interference with family (WLTI), Teamwork (GRO), Supporting (SUP) and Strain-based family in terference with work (WLST). The employee performance scale is inherited from the original scale from the study of Welbourne et al. (1998) and includes three factors: Teamwork (TEA), innovator (INO) and job (JOB). All of these scales use a Likert scale with 5 points ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree.

4.3. Descriptive statistics analysis

The total number of variables observed in this study is 937. In which, the number of male is 471, accounting for 50.3% and the number of female is 466, accounting for 49.7%. The number of married respondents is 556, accounting for 59.3% and single is 381, accounting for 40.7%. Regarding the level of expertise, the respondents have many different levels. In which, the respondents with the largest proportion in this structure are University graduates, specifically 464 respondents, accounting for 49.5%. Next are Intermediate and College with 180 (accounting for 19.2%) and 160 (accounting for 17.1%), respectively. Particularly, respondents with Graduate degree accounted for a smaller proportion, specifically 106 accounted for 11.3%. The lowest proportion in the group is Unskilled with 27 accounting for 2.9%. Finally, for age distribution, the young age group accounted for the majority in the composition of the observed variables of this study and the age group over 50 had the lowest proportion. Specifically, the age group from 18 to 30 has the number of respondents 491, accounting for 52.4% and the age group from 50 to 60 has the number of 14, accounting for only 1.5%. Besides, the age group with the second largest proportion in this age structure is from 31 to 40 with the number of 349 accounting for 37.2%. Next, the age group from 40 to 50 has the number of 83, accounting for 8.9%. According to this structure, the young respondents will account for a higher proportion.

4.4. Scale reliability and measurement model validity assessment

Firstly, this study uses the Cronbach alpha tool to evaluate the scale reliability of employer branding and employee performance. According to the analysis results presented in Table 1 below, the Cronbach alpha index of the employer branding dimensions has a value from 0.796 to 0.921 (> 0.6) and no item, if deleted, creates the Cronbach's Alpha larger than the original value. Therefore, it can be concluded that employer branding achieves the reliability value of the scale and no items are excluded from the scale. Similarly, the analysis results of employee performance also show Cronbach alpha values from 0.847 to 0.902 (> 0.6) and no items are excluded from the scale. Therefore, the employee performance scale achieves standard reliability. According to the analysis results presented in Table 1 below, the KMO value of employer branding is 0.963, in the range [0.5 - 1.0]. This is in line with EFA standards. The significant value of Bartlett's test of employer branding is 0.000, which proves that this scale is consistent with the EFA standard (Hair, Sarstedt, Matthews, & Ringle, 2016). According to regulations, the significant value must be less than 0.05. Another indicator is the Total Variance Explained index values, employer branding has a value of 65.946% (> 50%). This value proves that this scale meets the requirements of the EFA

standard (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In addition, the eigenvalue value of employer branding is 1.097. Since this value is large 1, it can be seen that the employer branding scale is satisfactory (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Also according to the analysis of factors of EFA, employer branding is composed of 10 factors including: CSR, WLSA, PRO, EDU, WLBE, TRA, WLTI, GRO, SUP and WLST. When evaluating the standard discriminant value of PLS-SEM, the employer branding scale has the outer loading value from 0.701 to 0.859, these values are all greater than 0.5. It can be concluded that all items of the employer branding scale are satisfactory. This proves that the employer branding scale has discriminant value. Besides, Composite Reliability (CR) value of employer branding has a value from 0.881 to 0.935 (> 0.7), which proves that this scale meets the required standard. The last indicator is Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with a value between 0.568 and 0.727. Therefore, we see that these values are all greater than 0.5 so they meet the requirements of the standard. Combining the results of CR and AVE values, it can be concluded that employer branding achieves the internal consistency reliability standard. Similar to the analysis results of employer branding, the employee performance scale also has analytical values that meet the requirements of the standard. Specifically, as follows, KMO value is 0.931 (> 0.5); significant value of the Bartlett's test is 0.000 (< 0.05); Total Variance Explained index is 65.385% and the eigenvalue value is 1.233 (> 1.0). These values indicate that the employee performance scale meets the requirements of the EFA. In addition, according to EFA results, employee performance is composed of 03 factors: TEA, INO and JOB. Next, when analyzing the internal consistency reliability standard according to the PLS-SEM (measurement model), employee performance also met the required conditions, in which, the value of outer loading of employee performance items from 0.706 - 0.906 (> 0.5) proves that this scale reaches the discriminant value. Also, CR value of 0.909 to 0.921 (> 0.7) and AVE value between 0.594 and 0.768 (> 0.5) indicate that employee performance meets the internal consistency reliability standard.

Table 1

Scale reliability results

No.	Dimensions	Cronbach Alpha	Explore Factor Analysis (EFA)				Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
			KMO (> 0.5)	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (sig < 0.05)	Cumulative %: (> 50%)	Eigen values (> 1.0)		
I	**Employer branding** (Outer loading: 0.701 - 0.859)							
1	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	0.904	0.963	0.000	65.946%	1.097	0.905	0.568
2	Work-Life Balance Satisfaction (WLSA)	0.921					0.935	0.645
3	Promotion (PRO)	0.917					0.933	0.635
4	Education (EDU)	0.908					0.927	0.647
5	Behavior-based family interference with work (WLBE)	0.903					0.923	0.633
6	Travel opportunities (TRA)	0.810					0.889	0.727

No.	Dimensions	Cronbach Alpha	Explore Factor Analysis (EFA)				Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
			KMO (> 0.5)	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (sig < 0.05)	Cumulative %: (> 50%)	Eigen values (> 1.0)		
7	Time-based work interference with family (WLTI)	0.855					0.898	0.639
8	Teamwork (GRO)	0.836					0.891	0.671
9	Supporting (SUP)	0.843					0.895	0.680
10	Strain-based family in terference with work (WLST)	0.796					0.881	0.712
II	**Employee performance** (Outer loading: 0.706 - 0.906)							
1	Teamwork (TEA)	0.902	0.931	0.000	65.385%	1.233	0.921	0.594
2	Innovator (INO)	0.898					0.921	0.663
3	Job (JOB)	0.847					0.909	0.768

To test the discriminant value of the latent variables of the scales, the studies usually are evaluated based on the heterotrait - monotrait (HTMT) criterion. Accordingly, if the HTMT values are all less than 0.85, it is considered standard. In addition, it is also necessary to evaluate the HTMT Ratio of the scales. in which, two columns of 25% and 97.5% correspond to the low and high limit of 95% confidence interval must not contain the value 1. If both of these conditions are met, the scale is proven to achieve discriminative validity. According to this standard, employer branding has HTMT values all less than 0.85 (see Table 2 below) and no value 1 is contained in two columns of 25% and 97.5% (see Table 3 below). This leads to the conclusion that employer branding meets the discriminative validity.

Table 2

HTMT of Employer Branding

	CSR	WLSA	PRO	EDU	WLBE	TRA	WLTI	GRO	SUP	WLST
CSR										
WLSA	0.598									
PRO	0.582	0.613								
EDU	0.570	0.461	0.751							
WLBE	0.575	0.707	0.617	0.490						
TRA	0.432	0.513	0.694	0.643	0.462					
WLTI	0.533	0.701	0.573	0.431	0.601	0.491				
GRO	0.606	0.597	0.710	0.586	0.566	0.506	0.528			
SUP	0.489	0.482	0.608	0.438	0.458	0.389	0.508	0.677		
WLST	0.609	0.609	0.538	0.451	0.612	0.416	0.639	0.521	0.473	

Table 3

HTMT Ratio of Employer Branding

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Bias	2.5%	97.5%
EB → CSR	0.772	0.772	0.000	0.746	0.801
EB →WLSA	0.809	0.809	0.000	0.782	0.834
EB →PRO	0.842	0.842	0.000	0.813	0.862
EB →EDU	0.732	0.733	0.001	0.694	0.763
EB →WLBE	0.770	0.769	-0.001	0.725	0.803
EB →TRA	0.637	0.638	0.001	0.591	0.677
EB →WLTI	0.722	0.721	0.000	0.674	0.758
EB →GRO	0.737	0.737	0.000	0.697	0.771
EB →SUP	0.633	0.633	0.000	0.585	0.671
EB → WLST	0.658	0.658	0.000	0.613	0.696

Similar to the employer branding scale, the employee performance HTMT values are all less than 0.85 (see Table 4 below) and no 1 is contained in the 25% and 97.5% columns (see Table 5 below). Therefore, it can be concluded that employee performance also meets the discriminative validity criterion.

Table 4

HTMT of Employee Performance (EP)

	TEA	INO	JOB
TEA			
INO	0.712		
JOB	0.650	0.649	

Table 5

HTMT Ratio of Employee Performance (EP)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Bias	2.5%	97.5%
EP → TEA	0.907	0.906	-0.001	0.89	0.921
EP → INO	0.873	0.873	0.000	0.852	0.891
EP → JOB	0.757	0.756	-0.001	0.721	0.787

4.5. Structural model assessment

One important criterion to evaluate in the structural model is the multi-collinearity phenomenon, occurring when the independent variables have a high correlation coefficient compared with the other variables in the linear model. The indicator commonly used to determine whether multi-collinearity occurs is the variance inflation factor (VIF) (Akinwande, Dikko, & Samson, 2015). According to the measurement standard, if the VIF value is less than 5, multi-collinearity will not occur (Hair et al., 2016). Therefore, according to the VIF analysis results of Table 6 below, all values of endogenous variables (presented Table columns) and exogenous variables (presented in Table rows) are small more than 5. This leads to the conclusion that multicollinearity does not occur in this research model.

Table 6

VIF value in research model

	CSR	EDU	EP	EB	GRO	INO	JOB	PRO	SUP
EP	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
EB	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1

	TEA	TRA	WLBE	WLSA	WLST	WLTI
EP	1	0	0	0	0	0
EB	0	1	1	1	1	1

The next content to evaluate a research model is the R^2 value with a range of values in [0 - 1] that measures the fit of the research model; in other words, this is considered the predictive quality of the research model. The higher the R^2 value is, the better the predictive power of the model becomes. In multiple regression models, the adjusted R^2 value is often used to avoid bias resulting from model complexity. If R^2 is achieved at the levels of 0.75, 0.50 and 0.25, respectively, to represent the level of predictive power is high, medium and low. However, this level depends on the research field, for example, in studies related to customer behavior, R^2 values only need to be 0.20 is also considered to have good predictive power (Hair et al., 2016). With the adjusted R^2 value in this study of 0.077, it is considered weak. In other words, the impact of employer branding on employee performance does not have high predictive power and there may be some other independent variables in the model.

Table 7

Determination coefficient R^2 adjusted

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	0.078	0.077

The next indicator evaluated in the measurement model is the impact index f^2 measured to determine the impact of exogenous variables omitted in models with endogenous variables. These f^2 values of 0.02; 0.15 and 0.35, respectively, will represent weak, moderate and strong effects on endogenous variables in the model (Cohen, 1988). In case f^2 is less than 0.02, the exogenous variables removed have no impact on endogenous variables in the research model. According to Table 8 below, the f^2 value is 0.085, showing that employer branding has a weak impact on employee performance.

Table 8

Impact coefficient f^2

	CSR	EDU	EP	EB	GRO	INO	JOB	PRO
EP	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.216	1.342	0.000
EB	1.448	1.161	0.085	0.000	1.190	0.000	0.000	2.453

	SUP	TEA	TRA	WLBE	WLSA	WLST	WLTI
EP	0.000	4.588	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
EB	0.670	0.000	0.686	1.454	1.888	0.765	1.090

In addition to the values of VIF, R^2, f^2, the measurement model needs to evaluate one more indicator, Q^2. This index represents the out-of-sample predictive power because the PLS-SEM analysis method has the ability to predict data that is not used to estimate the research model. According to Q^2 criterion, if this value is greater than 0, it proves that the predictive power is related to the dependent variable path model (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). According to the analysis results, Q^2 of employee performance through blindfolding is 0.037 (> 0.000) (Table 9 below). It can be confirmed that there is a relationship between the prediction related to the path model and the endogenous latent variables.

Table 9

Q^2 value

	SSO	**SSE**	**Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)**
CSR	8433	5670.649	0.328
EDU	6559	4318.271	0.342
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	15929	15333.92	0.037
EMPLOYER BRANDING	54346	54346	0.000
GRO	3748	2393.229	0.361
INO	5622	2807.098	0.501
JOB	2811	1586.501	0.436
PRO	7496	4138.459	0.448
SUP	3748	2740.932	0.269
TEA	7496	3866.927	0.484
TRA	2811	1993.192	0.291
WLBE	6559	4140.383	0.369
WLSA	7496	4362.23	0.418
WLST	2811	1951.28	0.306
WLTI	4685	3141.985	0.329

Finally, the results of the analysis of the relationship between the factors in the model showed that the impact coefficient $\beta = 0.279$ with a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.01) (see Table 10 below). This shows that employer branding has a positive and weak effect on employee performance. Hypothesis H1 is considered supported.

Table 10

Hypothesis testing result

	Original Sample (O)	**Sample Mean (M)**	**Standard Deviation (STDEV)**	**T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)**	**P Values**	**Comment**
EMPLOYER BRANDING -> EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	0.279	0.279	0.036	7.832	0.000	Supported

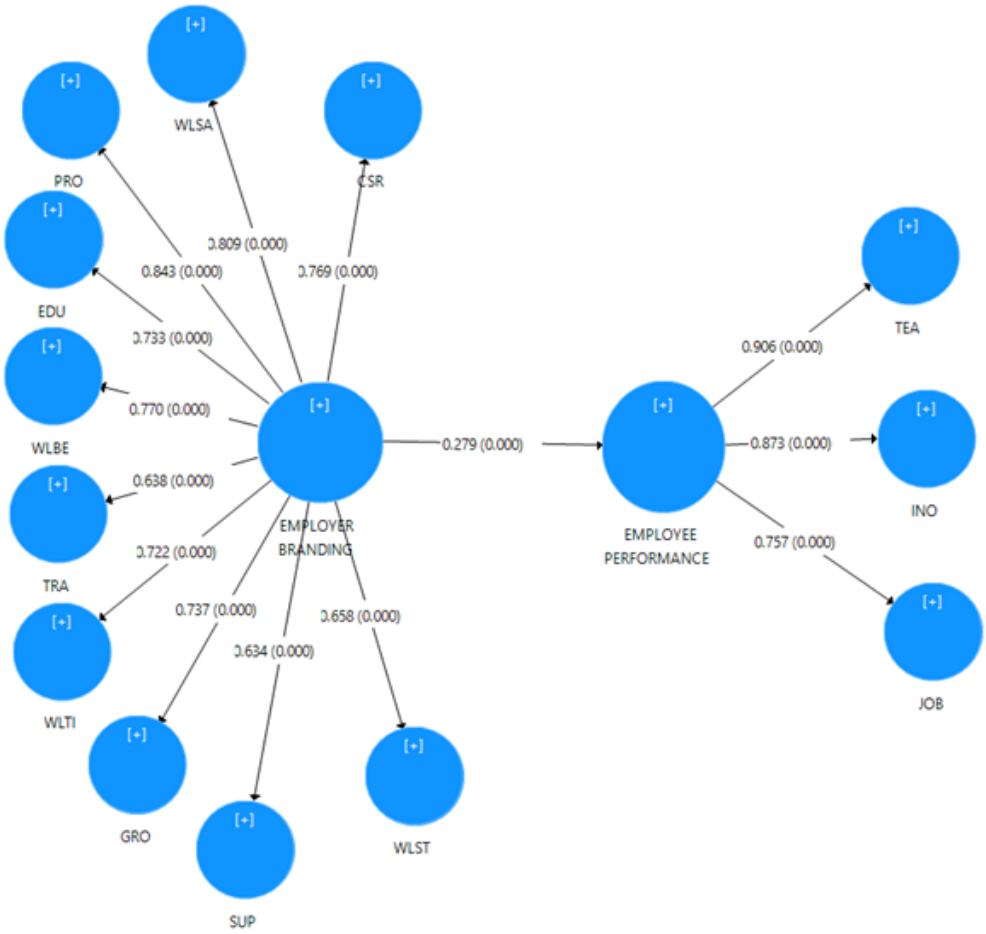

Figure 2. The research result

4.6. Discussion

From the analysis results, Employer branding has a positive impact on employee performance with the impact coefficient β = 0.279 and significance level p-value = 0.000 (< 0.05). There is a statistically significant relationship between Employer branding and Employee performance. This result is consistent with the theory and previous studies. According to social exchange theory (Emerson, 1976), in the company, there will be a social exchange between the company and the employee. Employers will provide employees with the values and benefits they desire (work-life balance, compensation policy, job promotion, training and development programs and so on). On the contrary, employees will contribute back to the employer with their values of work efficiency. Therefore, with the result that employer branding has a positive impact on employee performance, it is completely consistent with this theory. Moreover, according to Person-Organization (PO) fit theory (Kristof, 1996), an organization that wants to develop sustainably needs to achieve a fit state in the relationship between employer and employee. Person-Organization fit status exists when the relationship between employer and employees is harmonious through that employer will provide employees with values (economic, psychological, development opportunities) and employees contribute, in return to the employer, their abilities to achieve the best work performance. Therefore, the above research results show that employer branding is the aggregate value that an employer provides and helps to improve employee performance, which is consistent with the theory. On the other hand, this result is also consistent with previous studies (Dabirian, Kietzmann, & Diba, 2017). Research results suggest that managers can use employer brands to attract and retain talents to enhance the competitive advantage of human resources as well as increase employee performance. Besides, Nguyen,

Nguyen, Ngo, and Nguyen (2019) also proved that job crafting, a component of employer branding, has a positive impact on work performance.

However, the R^2 adjusted and the impact coefficient β are not high, indicating that the relationship between employer branding and employee performance may have other factors affecting as well as intermediate variables that need to be supplemented (employer attractiveness, employee engagement and so on). This can be explained by the reasons as follows. Firstly, according to Theory of planned behavior first developed by (Ajzen, 1985) and The social cognitive theory by (Bandura, 1977, 1986), the theoretical framework when analyzing employee behavior must start from perception and influence the attitude and behavior of employees. Possibly, employer branding is just the employer's activities organized to attract and retain employees. According to the two theories above, if you influence the employee's attitude and behavior, it is necessary to form awareness. In other words, how the benefits of the employer must be realized in the employee's mind to have a strong impact on their attitude and behavior (employee performance). Through the research results, employer attractiveness has a strong positive impact on employee performance because employer attractiveness is the benefits of the employer perceived by employees (Ha, Luan, & Khoa, 2021). Therefore, the weak impact of employer branding on employee performance is consistent with the theory of planned behavior and social cognition. Secondly, when comparing this result with previous studies, there exist similarities. According to Buyanjargal and Bor (2017), the impact of employer branding on employee performance tends to be more indirect than direct. Employer branding will use intermediary factors (satisfaction, identification and commitment) to influence employee performance. Moreover, Zafar and Siddiqui (2019) also confirm that factors related to employer branding (career development, compensations and promotions) have no statistically significant impact on job performance. According to the above research results, it can be concluded that employer branding has a weak impact on employee performance consistent with previous studies.

In practical terms, this result is also consistent with the management process in the business. When the company builds employer branding activities to improve the employer brand, it is only the first step of this strategy. These activities are just the views and desires of the managers, therefore, they cannot have a strong impact on the employee's attitude and behavior as well as motivation. Employee performance cannot be improved as soon as possible. Employees need time to consider whether employer branding activities are really suitable and meet their own needs or not. If the employee is impressed with these activities, it will create a good perception for the employer. When employees' positive perceptions are formed, it will affect their attitudes and behaviors. This will help improve work efficiency. In addition, employer branding is a long-term strategy, it takes time for employees to feel evaluated. Therefore, even in a short time, it is difficult to create a strong influence on the attitude as well as the motivation to improve the working efficiency of employees. It can be seen that the results of this study show that the impact of employer branding on employee performance is only at a weak level, which is consistent with business reality.

5. Conclusion

In summary, this study explores the impact of employer branding on factors related to current employees, specifically employee performance. This research direction can be a new direction because previous studies on employer branding mainly focused on factors related to potential candidates. This study also adds a strategic solution to improve employee performance, employer branding. It has been proved that there is a statistically significant relationship between employer branding and employee performance. In particular, the research results have shown that

employer branding has a weak positive impact on employee performance. This is explained because the values and benefits of employer branding still need to be formed in the employee's perception to have a strong impact on employee performance. Therefore, the managerial implications of this study show that: if managers only focus on implementing employer branding activities, it is inadequate. however, it is necessary to find solutions to make employees aware of the benefits of an employer. Therefore, managers need to survey employees regarding their needs and expectations. After surveying employees, managers should evaluate and invite consultants to select the most meaningful and valuable activities for employees, based on their own characteristics, not the same organization for all activities. Depending on the employer brand image positioning of each company, there will be different strategies and tactics. For example, if an enterprise chooses its employee brand image as a desire to learn and develop, it may focus on activities related to training and development. Conversely, if a manager chooses to position your brand as an employee with a happy and comfortable life, he can focus on activities that create a balance between work and life. In summary, through the research results, managers need to pay attention to selecting employer branding activities to suit employees' impression and awareness of the business and thereby enhance employee impact on its performance. Also note that simply stopping the employer branding organization without conducting employee awareness surveys and assessments is not effective.

Limitations and future research

This study has some limitations in the specific sampling method for the following reasons. Firstly, the sampling method selected in the study is a convenience (non-probability) method. Therefore, the level of accuracy and generalization of the research sample will not be high. At the same time, the survey respondents mainly work in the business sector, consequently, they are not representative of other organization types (socio-political, non-profit, cultural, educational and so on). Moreover, the sampling activity was only carried out at the same time, therefore, it was not possible to compare the research results between different time points as well as the survey result stability.

On the basis of these limitations, future research directions can be considered as follows. Firstly, use probabilistic sampling methods to ensure greater accuracy and generalization. Secondly, expand the organization type samples (socio-political organizations, universities, hospitals, healthcare centers, cultures, non-profit organizations and so on). Thirdly, it is possible to sample at different times so that the difference can be compared and research result stability can be assessed. Finally, in addition to the direct impact of employer branding on employee performance, intermediate variables (employer attractiveness, brand equity, employee engagement and so on) can be added to fully assess the impact to be more comprehensive in the research model as well as improve the predictive capacity of the relationships in the model.

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