

Doctoral thesis summary

Agata Matuszewska

Corporate brand and employer brand – relationships and dependencies

Keywords: *corporate brand, employer brand, brand image, branding, employer branding*

The research area concerns the issue of brand portfolio management, including parent (corporate) and subordinate brands, including employer brand. The subjects of research are corporate brand and employer brand, and the main research problem concerns the relations between these brands in selected organizations. The conducted research is used to compare and examine the strength of dependence between the corporate brand values and the employer brand values, both communicated by companies and perceived by the respondents. The main purpose of the thesis is to answer the question of whether and to what extent there is a correlation between the corporate brand and the employer brand by comparing the communicated and perceived values of both brands. This interdependence is understood as the potential coherence in communicating and perceiving common values for both brands within one organization. The detailed objectives relate to the comparison of the values of the corporate brand and employer brand communicated by the companies and perceived by the respondents, divided into groups of respondents who are and who are not customers of the given company. The application purpose of the thesis is to create a model of corporate brand and employer brand cohesion and to indicate recommendations for organizations regarding corporate and employer branding.

The following main hypothesis was established in the thesis:

H0: There is a cohesion between the communicated and perceived values of the corporate brand and the employer brand in examined organizations.

For the main hypothesis, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a cohesion between the communicated values of the corporate brand and the employer brand in examined organizations.

H2: There is a cohesion between the perceived values of the corporate brand and the employer brand in examined organizations.

H3: There is a cohesion between the communicated and perceived values of the corporate brand in examined organizations.

H4: There is a cohesion between the communicated and perceived values of the employer brand in examined organizations.

The research methodology included two main stages. In the first of these, the case study method was applied. The data was collected using standardized interview with representatives of four organizations from business-to-customer sector, which have their headquarters in Łódź - mBank, Redan, Atlas and Rossmann. The interviews were mainly aimed at getting to know the communicated values of the corporate brand and the employer brand. In the second stage of the research, the quantitative method was applied. An auditorium survey was conducted on a sample of respondents who were full-time and part-time students of business studies at universities in Lodz.

The research covered a group of 2,236 respondents (for mBank - 629 respondents, 599 for Redan, 500 for Atlas, and 508 for Rossmann). This stage of the research concerned associations, opinions and perceived values of the corporate brand and the employer brand of the examined organizations. The research was conducted in the Lodz region, from March 2017 to March 2018.

The theoretical basis contained in the first two chapters allowed to conclude that both the corporate brand and the employer brand are based on the same assumptions as the general brand concept, regardless of its subject. However, the specificity of the corporate brand and employer brand is their special position in the structure of the organization and brand portfolio, as well as the mutual relations and roles they play in relation to each other and to product brands. These dependencies were adopted on the basis of Mosley's employer brand management model discussed above, which

assumes the supreme and supporting role of the corporate brand in relation to the employer brand.

The theoretical background of the thesis was the basis for the presentation of the methodology and results of the research. The main goal was to answer the question of whether and to what extent there is a certain correlation between the corporate brand and the employer brand by comparing the communicated and perceived values of both brands. The research results indicate that the answer to this question is not unambiguous and depends, among other things, on the company being researched and the method of testing. Overall, the results allowed to claim that there is no cohesion between the communicated and perceived values of the corporate brand and the employer brand in examined organizations. In terms of communicated values, companies declared only one or two values cohesive for the corporate and the employer brand. Moreover, in terms of the values perceived by the respondents, in most cases cohesion between the values of the corporate and the employer brand was not shown, and thus the respondents usually pointed to other values of both brands. In the case of a corporate brand (supported answers), in the area of perceived values, one or two key values have usually been distinguished, which may indicate a distinctive image of the employer brand. What is more, in the case of the employer brand (supported answers), in the area of perceived values, more than two key values were usually distinguished.

On the basis of the conducted research, the cohesion model of the corporate brand and the employer brand was constructed. The model assumes that the key values for the company that form the basis of its functioning should be cohesive both for the corporate brand and the employer brand. In other words, they should form the basis of its functioning independently of the group of stakeholders and recipients of the brand's value. On the other hand, at the operational level, actions undertaken, the organization should distinguish communicated values depending on the recipient groups: clients or potential employees. Based on the results of the research and the proposed cohesion model, a number of recommendations regarding the implementation of the model in organizations were also indicated.

Nevertheless, the presented research results should be approached with caution and considering their ambiguity. This creates a field for the continuation or implementation

of similar research in the area of the role of the corporate brand, as well as the employer brand function in modern organizations.