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Article

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MANAGEMENT | RESEARCH ARTICLE

The role of human resource managers in the promotion of hotel sector as a brand in Jordanian hotel industry - a cross-sectional study

Naser Khdour*

Abstract: This study assesses the impact of human resource managers on the effectiveness of hotel branding with reference to Jordanian hotel industry. The study followed a cross-sectional design in which data was collected through a questionnaire-based survey. Subsequently, the collected data were analysed using descriptive and multiple regression analysis. Findings of the study revealed that job satisfaction of the employee, employee effectiveness, employee selection, and employee retention strongly and significantly impact the brand promotion and are the focus of interest of HR managers. The results concluded that effective HR policies and practices can ensure improved performance of the hotel sector.

Subjects: Business, Management and Accounting; Human Resource Management; Marketing; Brand Management;

Keywords: Human resource practices; brand performance; hospitality industry; hotels; Jordan

1. Introduction

The success of any organization depends upon the effective performance of its employees which is accomplished through effective human resource management practices (Shahzad et al., 2016). The primary goal of human resource managers is to ensure the successful representation of the brand to its consumers for successful outcomes (Buil et al., 2016). Managers prefer to employ useful strategies that are important to accomplish maximum benefits in terms of successful brand reputation through employee branding. Some of these strategies are related to the practices which lead organizations in meeting their financial goals and outcomes. With regard to the role of managers and their strategies, Manoharan and Singal (2019) in their study elaborated that the primary focus of the managers is to deal with financial performance, which is associated in reducing the overall cost, increased profits and revenues, reduced expenses with increased market

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The present study provides information regarding considerable factors of the HR managers employed in the hotel sector as a strategic means for brand promotion. Findings of the study are important for the existing hotel industry in extracting points that are considerable in the selection of hotel as a brand, while focusing on different factors which determine its quality. The findings of the study are further important in distinguishing between the brand promotion strategies adopted by HR managers pre and post-pandemic situation.

share and rate of outcomes. The performance of the competing brands in the hotel industry has increased the challenges of this sector (Foroudi, 2019; Manoharan & Singal, 2019). The growing developments have altered the role and functioning of employees working in the business sector, which is evident through the diversity of practices being adopted in the hotel industry (Obeidat et al., 2016).

Hotel managers are now becoming increasingly aware of the fact that the competitive advantage can only be gained by the application of valuable changes regarding work practices to provide quality hospitality services (Molina-Azorín et al., 2015; Pereira-Moliner et al., 2015). Magova and Kessy (2019) also highlighted the substantial role of human resource practices on the efficiency and effectiveness of the hotels. This includes strong managerial strategies which are necessary to promote hotel as a brand. Gehrels and de Looij (2011) indicated that employee branding serves as a useful approach for human resource management and it is a common practice in the hotel industry. For various human resource managers, a successful hotel branding is a valuable investment (Aissa & Goaid, 2016). The process, however, is implemented through various useful strategies that are later measured in terms of organizational performance (Paraponaris et al., 2015). For various researchers, decisions of human resource management regarding brand efficiency are often measured through increased business revenues and efficiency of hotels (AbuKhalifeh et al., 2013).

Notably, in the Jordanian hotel industry, most of the tourists demand quality of service which is a crucial variable of the performance indicator of hotels (Abukhalifeh et al., 2015). Activities that are important for improving the service quality are initiated by the management and employees of the Jordanian hotels. Other important factors that attract tourists include historical sites, beaches, local infrastructure, architecture, accommodations and facilities, food, along with the hotel services (AbuKhalifeh et al., 2013; Shaari et al., 2012).

Efficient and effective human resource management significantly impacts the performance of hotel management either by increasing business revenues or improving the performance of hotel in terms of customer satisfaction. However, human resource practices, and control variables seem to be precise with respect to a practical industry. There are different automatic controls for factors in different industries. In the previous studies, the focus has been on the impact of human resource practices on food and beverage performance in terms of increase in labour productivity, decrease in turnover rates, and increase in profit margin, despite the unique feature of labour intensity in the hotel industry (Alleyneet al., 2006; Safavi & Karatepe, 2018). These studies have only focused on the impact of only one aspect of human resource management practice on hotel performance. Therefore, it is a need of time to identify other factors of human resource management that affect the hotel efficiency with respect to hotel industry of Jordan. Therefore, the current study aims to examine the role of human resource managers in promoting hotel as a brand, with reference to the hotel industry of Jordan.

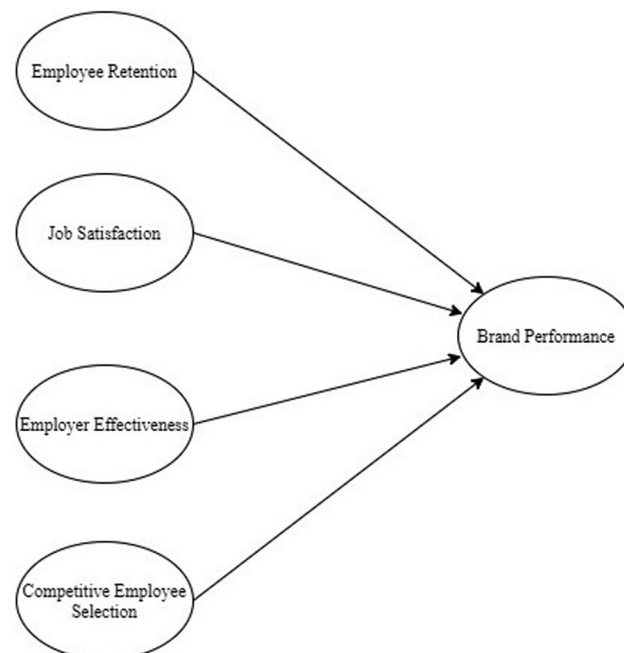
The study is significant since no substantial focus has been given on these factors in the previous studies. Another significance of the study is that it involves the quantitative presentation of data that emphasizes the role of human resource managers in the given framework. While providing value to the significant environmental and organizational changes in the Jordanian hotel industry, the study intends to explore the effectiveness of the given role to bridge the gap found in the related literature. The study contributes in the improvement of the performance of employees and human resource managers of the Jordanian hotel industry. The information provided by this study will also help employees in improving brand performance. In addition, policymakers of the hotel industry may also be benefited from the given information as it would help them to mould the existing practices to bring about useful improvements in the industry. In the ongoing spread of the global pandemic, contributions of the study are important as it would help to determine how the hotel sector was operated and promoted as a brand before pandemic. It will further help in distinguishing between the variables prioritized by the HR managers for hotel brand promotion before and after pandemic. Finally, academics studying the hotel industry may obtain valuable guidelines from the findings of this study to

devise new strategies for brand promotion with respect to the existing conditions and dynamics of the hotel brands.

2. Theoretical framework

The effectiveness of the human resource management depends on various factors. Irabor and Okolie (2019) in their study implied Herzberg's (1968) two factor theory; which deals with the factors associated with employees' motivation and satisfaction. The first factor includes employees' motivation, which is dependent upon organizational characteristics such as; pay, supervision, hygiene conditions, organizational policies, working conditions etc. These factors are considerable and may make employee unhappy. Even if these factors are well managed, employees' satisfaction may not be truly accomplished. In contrast to the former factors, more emphasis is provided to the latter ones which serve as a fundamental stimulator to employees' motivation and satisfaction with the job. Motivators can be characterized as the employee's job responsibilities, nature of work, opportunities for growth and recognition, feelings of achievements provided by the job. The study argued that when the above factors are provided employees feel more satisfied and are retained for a longer duration. Wilden et al. (2010) on the other hand, applied utility theory (Meffert et al., 2002), in the context of branding in the market, and highlighted the fundamentals which make employer brand as a sign, making it potentially strong in creating utility for potential employee and prospective employer. It further provides orientation in the employee's selection process, where a strong employer brand serves as the stimulator of quality in the job market. In addition, employees when work for a prestigious company exhibit high morale and work, resulting in increased perceived value of the brand. The theory further suggests that a reputed employer prefers and provide firm emphases to the competitive employee selection to ensure its brand reputation. Following the above discussion, Figure 1 presents the study variables for the current study. The independent variables include employee retention, job satisfaction, employer effectiveness, and competitive employee selection, whereas the dependent variable in the study is the brand performance.

Figure 1. Study variables.



3. Literature review

3.1. Employee retention

HRM practices are important as they significantly impact the work quality of an organization (Ahmad & Daud, 2016; Gehrels & de Looij, 2011; Uen et al., 2012). The study of Burns et al. (2018) on the hotel sector showed that effective employee practices promote an effective work environment, which helps in the retention of a talented workforce. The analysis of Tiwari et al. (2019) of the HRM practices in the hotel sector has shown that staff retention is a major problem. It further suggested the use of different incentives, training, and employee welfare efforts for improving their retention prospects. K. Kim and Jogaratnam (2010), highlighted that employee turnover is one of the major issues in the hotel sector. Proenca (2012), stated that this turnover rate affects service delivery in the hotel sector, and may negatively impact overall brand image of the hotel. Sanborn et al. (2011) stated that the HR manager should ensure practices that promote engagement and interaction within the employees that result in the value enhancement of the brand. Zablah et al. (2012) outlined that increased employee turnover affects the employee response to challenging customer encounters. Thus, we develop the relevant hypothesis as follows:

H1a. There exists a statistically significant impact of employee retention on brand performance.

3.2. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction of the employees means their general emotions towards workplace and job. It measures the approach towards the job and the extent to which a particular job is fulfilling the need of employees (Balouch & Hassan, 2014). One of the previous studies stated that the satisfaction level of employees is considered to measure the intentions of an employee towards their workplace (Sweeney et al., 2002). Job satisfaction is also linked with other factors like enthusiastic behavior, hygiene, workplace environment, and managerial responsibility (Ahsan et al., 2009; Kuo et al., 2014). There is significant impact of employee satisfaction on organizational citizenship behaviour (Bataineh et al., 2017). Therefore, high switching barriers are likely to be created for employees who want to leave their workplace on account of job dissatisfaction.

Various studies have highlighted that brand-building activities have a pronounced impact on the satisfaction of employees (King & So, 2015; Du Preez & Bendixen, 2015). Kim et al. (2015) showed that by employing mentoring programs, the employee satisfaction and attitude towards the brand improves. Prasetyo et al. (2019) also showed a significant relationship between work stress and job satisfaction in the hotel sector. Various other researchers have shown that improved job satisfaction helps in increasing the competitive edge of the hotel (Molina-Azorín et al., 2015; Ncube & Jerie, 2012; Wang et al., 2012). Therefore, we can develop the relevant hypothesis as follows:

H1b. There exists a statistically significant impact of employee job satisfaction on brand performance.

3.3. Employer effectiveness

Employer effectiveness plays an important role in promoting positive employer brand; on the other hand, HR managers aim at addressing the development and improvement of the brand of the employer (Cascio & Graham, 2016). Human resource managers are interested in refining their services to ultimately promote hotel brands in the concentrated market of the hotel industry (Solnet et al., 2015). Tangthong, (2002), examined the impact of human resource practices in improving the service quality of brand hotels in Thailand. Findings provided no direct association between employee service quality and their performance in the hotel sector. Besides, an indirect relationship was found between the service quality of employees and the valuable HRM practices. Variables such as organizational citizenship behaviour, employee engagement, employee motivation, job satisfaction, HR flexibility were found insignificant except employee motivation, which had positively influenced employee service quality (Kataria et al., 2019).

It has been shown that perceived HRM practices are effective and positively affect the commitment of high-potential employees, and also develop competence of leadership (Khoreva et al., 2017). The increased commitment to the development of leadership competence is crucial for organizations to accomplish their goal. Therefore, the organizations need to communicate about the availability and effectiveness of HRM practices. Another study by Johennesse and Chou (2017), showed that constant evaluations of effective management practices results in transformation of working environments and change in market landscapes confronted by industries.

Role of human resource managers is crucial as it helps organizations in accomplishing the target of the company (Chang & Ma, 2015; Madera et al., 2017). However, hotel industries make greater investments in this sector to increase diversify organizational performance. Al-Shuaibi et al. (2016) identified employees as brand developers who support the organizational strategies in promoting the hotel as a brand. The overall promotion of the brand is carried out through active collaboration between human resources and marketing departments (Mölk & Auer, 2018). Human resource managers, through sufficient strategies, employ various practices such as training and development, recruitment and selection of competitive employees to increase the organizational performance (Gilani & Jamshed, 2016; Özçelik, 2015). Thus, we formulate the relevant hypothesis:

H1c. There exists a statistically significant impact of employer effectiveness on brand performance.

3.4. Competitive employee selection

Al-Refaie (2015), pinpointed that some hotels make their brand competitive through increased customer loyalty, employee satisfaction, enhanced service quality, customer satisfaction, and employee loyalty. However, the HRM practices are initiated through the strategic planning of human resource managers by employing potential efforts to accomplish organizational goals (Al-Refaie, 2015). Nieves and Quintana (2018) highlighted that human resource management practices must be parallel to the defined objectives of the hotel industry and in accordance with the skills and abilities of employees to accomplish improved hotel branding.

As suggested by high-performance work systems (HPWS), a potential disconnection exists between organizational-level HPWS and HPWS experienced by the employees. This highlights the need of exploring additional boundary conditions and explanatory mechanisms in relation with HPWS-individual outcomes associations. Branding in the hotel industry is also linked with the recruitment of the right talent. For instance, the HR manager should ensure that the hired individual shares the value which aligns with that of the brand. This helps in promoting the performance of the brand, and enhancing customer satisfaction ratio (Buil et al., 2016). Wilska (2014), has also emphasized that internal employer branding should be encouraged, which helps develop employees' commitment towards an organization. An effective brand image is also important to attract the right pool of applicants with superb potential and effective work performance (Chauhan & Mahajan, 2013; Russell & Brannan, 2016; Tavitiyaman et al., 2011). Xiong and King (2015), highlighted that recruitment of talented and capable employees is integral for communicating and delivering the brand promises to the consumer. Therefore, the relevant hypothesis is as follows:

H1d. There exists a statistically significant impact of competitive employee selection on brand performance.

3.5. HR manager and brand performance

Accordingly, HR practices also impact the brand image of the company because the image of the brand reputation is dependent upon various stakeholders (Maden et al., 2012). The internalizing of the brand is promoted to help induce the brand value in the employees, which assists in the accomplishment of the organizational objective. Various studies have shown that internal branding helps in improving employee commitment, performance, and loyalty (Caldwell et al., 2015; Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2010; Shaari et al., 2012). Francis and Baum (2018), indicated that learning

and development programs that are integrated with human resource practices are important in promoting the hotel as a brand, and are further helpful in providing positive results in terms of maximum customer engagement. (2002), highlighted the significance of human resource management in improving the service quality of employees and evaluated that success is only possible through the impressive brand reputation, and for the same reason, employee's performance is monitored by human resources management.

The employee satisfaction depends on internal factors like promotion and compensation, and external factors like performance training, development, and appraisal. This relates to work-related psychological consequences gathered through work experience in association with their well-being and lifelong career (Kang et al., 2015; Stauffer et al., 2019). Employee satisfaction is considered as an important variable as it highlights the attitude of employees towards work environment, and their career achievements (Altarawmneh & Al-Kilani, 2010). According to Hee et al. (2016) employee satisfaction is the outcome of effective human resource management practices. Employee satisfaction is more appropriate with the objectives and variables discussed in the current study since it could explain the relationship between human resource practices and brand performance in the hotel industry.

The skills, commitment, and knowledge of the employees depend on the human resource management practices such as competitive employee selection and employee retention. According to Yousaf et al. (2018) employees prolong their careers as a result of empowerment and motivation, which increase their desire to stay longer in an organization. Previous studies have also shown that the human resource management practices including fair performance appraisals and high compensations serve as the main incentives for employees' willingness to stay longer at a workplace (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018; Rubel & Kee, 2015; Shaukat et al., 2017). Likewise, only a few of the previous studies have shown that progress and growth of employees do not depend on the development programs and promotional trainings (Busari et al., 2017; Santhanam et al., 2017). It is, therefore, presumed that improved human resource practices help in the development of employee performance as they acquire internal capability to implement organizational strategy (Albrecht et al., 2015; Aryee et al., 2016).

H1: There exists a significant impact of HR management practices on brand performance in the hospitality industry.

4. Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional design to analyse the role of human resource managers in promoting hotel as a brand in the Jordanian hotel industry. This is based on the quantitative paradigm as it helps in quantifying the study findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The study was conducted between July 2019 to January 2020, and the sample included all the HR Managers, working in the 5-star hotels of Jordan. This includes both male and female participants that were employed on the above-mentioned position. A purposive sampling was used to include 200 HR managers; the rationale behind the use of purposive sampling method is associated to the selection of the participants that were engaged in business activities for brand promotion. One of the major factors that encouraged the study sample for participation in data collection is to develop a sort realization regarding the effectiveness and cruciality of the role played by HR managers in brand promotion.

The selected participants were contacted via email to participate in this study; however, only 175 human resource managers agreed to participate in this study. Human resource managers belonging to other industries were excluded. Also, employees with the overall experience of less than five years were also excluded from the study sample because they lack the major expertise and experience of handling diverse situations.

Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire, which was distributed online to the target population. Particularly, data are susceptible to method variance, when the participant responds to items in a single questionnaire at a single point of time. Common method variance was applied as self-administered survey was used as a method of data collection.

The questionnaire was adapted from the study of King and So (2015) and modified according to the scope of the current study. The questionnaire was divided into two parts, which included items related to brand-related human resource practices that were based on the internal brand management work. The brand image was measured by four items from the same source. The first part of the questionnaire included respondents' demographic details and the second part of the questionnaire consisted of questions assessing the behavioural outcomes resulting from the adoption of IBM practices (i.e., brand-building behaviour [BBB]). The study relied on multidimensional employee brand equity scale that comprised 15 items (usefulness of employee retention (4 items), employee job satisfaction (4 items), brand reputation (4 items), competitive employee selection (3 items)). The responses were analyzed based on the 5-point Likert Scale, and data were statistically analyzed.

Out of 175 questionnaires, only 123 complete questionnaires were received. The collected data were statistically computed through SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Descriptive and multiple regression analysis was used for computing the collected data. Further, informed consent was obtained from the selected participants, and the overall purpose and aim of the study were explained to the participants.

4.1. Validity and reliability

The questionnaire was tested on fifteen HR managers who belonged to a different hotel to detect any problem related to questionnaire's understanding, content clarity, as well as the ambiguity of its items. Based on the received feedback, the items of the questionnaire were modified and amended. For ensuring the validity of the results, five social science experts were consulted for reviewing the items and variables included in the paper. The scale was assessed for its reliability and validity, and, afterwards, brand endorsement and brand allegiance constructs were removed owing to insufficient loading on the respective construct. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by computing Cronbach's alpha value. Table 1 shows the reliability analysis for the used questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach alpha and was found to be 0.96.

5. Results

Table 2 provides the demographic details of the participants. Majority of the participants (60.2%) were males, while only (39.8%) were females. Most of the participants (44.7%) belonged to the age group between 30 and 35 years, while remaining (25.2%) and (30.1%) participants belonged to the age group between 25 and 30 years and between 35 and 40 years, respectively. 46.3% of participants were PHR certified. 48.8% of participants had the experience of 10–15 years, while 30.9% of participants had the experience of 5–10 years. Only 20.3% of participants had the experience of 15–20 years.

Table 3 shows the results for descriptive statistics of the variables. The mean for all variables ranged between 3.055 and 3.532, while the standard deviation for all variables ranged between 0.955 and 1.123.

Table 1. Reliability analysis

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.96	15

Table 2. Demographic details

Variables	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	74	60.2%
Female	49	39.8%
Total	123	100.0%
Age		
Between 25–30 years	31	25.2%
Between 30–35 years	55	44.7%
Between 35–40 years	37	30.1%
Total	123	100.0%
Education Profile		
BBA	28	22.8%
MBA	38	30.9%
PHR certified	57	46.3%
Total	123	100.0%
Experience level		
Between 5–10 years	38	30.9%
Between 10–15 years	60	48.8%
Between 15–20 years	25	20.3%
Total	123	100.0%

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of variables

Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev	Variance	
HRM Practices	Employee Retention	123	3.061	1.035	1.073
	Job Satisfaction	123	3.532	1.115	1.245
	Employer Effectiveness	123	3.357	0.955	0.913
	Competitive Employee Selection	123	3.200	1.072	1.151
Brand Image	123	3.055	1.123	1.265	

5.1. Results for hypotheses testing

The study investigated the impact of human resource variables (employee retention, employee job satisfaction, employee effectiveness, and competitive employee selection) on the hotel brand performance with reference to Jordanian hotel industry. For evaluating the impact, the study employed multiple regression analysis. The significance value was determined at 0.05 (α level), where the obtained probability value (p-value) was used for determining the validity of the hypothesis. The hypothesis was termed as rejected if the p-value was lower than the α level. The beta value (β) showed the contribution of each independent variables: employee retention, job satisfaction, employer effectiveness, and competitive employee selection. This beta value presents the impact of the variable on employer brand performance, where an increased beta value denotes increased impact.

5.2. Validity of H1

Table 4 shows the results of the regression analysis. Table shows 0.470 as the value of multiple correlation coefficient (R), depicting a positive correlation between the employee retention and brand performance. This indicates that the change that occurs in the independent and dependent variables is the same. The value of R² shows that the variation between the dependent and independent variables is 2.21%.

5.3. Validity of H1a

Findings regarding the validity of H1a indicated high beta value i.e. (0.397) for employee retention, which indicates that employee retention creates an increased impact on employer brand performance. This is further reflected through the attained p-value i.e. 0.000 which reflects the significance of employee retention. Therefore, depending upon the study findings, it can be stated that for HR managers, employee retention serves as an effective factor in increasing the brand value of the hotel industry.

5.4. Validity of H1b

Findings related to the significance of job satisfaction and employer brand performance indicate a strong and significant impact of employee job satisfaction on the employer brand performance, as evident from the attained p-value i.e. 0.001. This means that for various HR managers of the hotel industry, it is important take significant interest towards the job satisfaction of employees that leads to their high-level productivity in work and excellent brand performance.

5.5. Validity of H1c

According to H1c of the study, there exists a statistically significant impact of employer brand reputation and employer brand performance. However, a significant p-value of 0.003 and beta value = 0.220 indicates the validity of H1c, as hotel brands that enjoy a good reputation in the market are effective in promoting their brand in the industry. This further pinpoint to the fact that most of the HR managers prioritize developing a strong brand reputation in the market to attract a large customer base.

5.6. Validity of H1d

Hypothesis 1d of the study proposes that competitive employee selection is critical in creating a strong impact on employer brand performance. According to the findings, competitive employee selection creates a strong ($\beta = 0.226$) and significant ($p = 0.001$) impact on employer brand performance. This indicates that HR managers working in the hotel industry of Jordan give significant importance to the selection of competitive employees as they are the representators of brand performance.

6. Discussion

The study assessed the impact of the Human resource manager on the brand performance with reference to Jordanian hotel sector. The findings of the study indicated that the practices of HR managers substantially impact employee productivity and influence brand performance. Based on these results, the developed hypothesis is accepted. These results are consistent with other researches (Cabello-Medina et al., 2011; Chang et al., 2011; Salem, 2014; Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2011). Such that Cabello-Medina et al. (2011) narrated that human and social capital is reinforced through HRM practices with learning potential and interpersonal skills. The study by Slåtten and Mehmetoglu (2011) showed that managers play an important role in developing an engaged workforce, which is also the major driver to innovative behaviour. Moreover, empowerment and involvement practices improve its uniqueness with enhancement in human capital. Another study by Chang et al. (2011) showed that there is a significant impact of HRM practices regarding hospitality on an organization. The incremental and radical innovation in hospitality firms is enhanced by hiring multi-skilled employees and providing training to core customer-contact employees. The study by Slåtten and Mehmetoglu (2011) showed that managers play an

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Sign (f)	β	T	P
Age	0.360	0.110	0.101	11.030	0.000	.286	4.081	.000
Education	0.580	0.231	0.402	13.031	0.000	.196	4.092	.000
Experience	0.465	0.122	0.332	13.045	0.000	.387	3.191	.000
Employee Retention	0.470	0.221	0.202	12.031	0.000	.397	4.192	.000
Job Satisfaction						.269	3.281	.001
Employer Effectiveness						.220	1.908	.003
Competitive Employee Selection						.226	3.369	.001

important role in developing an engaged workforce, which is also the major driver to innovative behaviour.

Similar to the findings of the current study, the research conducted by Alshuaibia and Shamsudinb (2016) showed that brand performance improved when internal branding is strong, which is accomplished through effective and positive HR practices. The findings of Nieves and Quintana (2018) also endorsed the findings of the current study and indicated that HR practices act as the mediating factor impacting hotel performance. Similarly, the research by Salem (2014) showed that maintaining adequate management practices are necessary for financial returns in the hotel sector. Kattara and El-Said (2013), reasoned that employees are the main stimulators of innovative practices, whose lack of motivation and engagement can impact their creative thinking. Tiwari et al. (2019) recommended that different monetary as well as nonmonetary means should be included for improving brand performance in the hotel sector.

According to the findings of the current study, the employee's retention is also related to employer brand performance. These results are corroborated by several empirical researches which show that effective HR practices create a positive and significant impact on employee job satisfaction and ultimately his retention (Buil et al., 2016; Ito et al., 2013; Jung & Yoon, 2016; Karatepe et al., 2014; Paek et al., 2015). For example, a recent study by Buil et al. (2016) showed a positive impact of HR practices on employee behaviour. It depicted that internal practices of the hotel can affect an employee's commitment level, his job performance as well as job retention. Similarly, Chang and Ma (2015) showed that brand-centered HR practices help in increasing employees' job commitment, which ultimately improves their work productivity. also showed that retention of the employees helps in enhancing the brand performance in the market. Based on the obtained results, the developed hypothesis that employer brand performance is positively impacted by job retention is accepted.

The findings of the current study show that job satisfaction creates a positive impact on brand performance. However, these findings contradict the study results of Choi and Choo (2016), which showed an insignificant relationship between job satisfaction and brand performance. Blayney et al. (2019) suggested that different tactics should be employed for improved branding of the employees, which eventually assists in improving the hotel performance. Thus, the developed hypothesis is accepted.

The results of the current study showed that there is a substantial impact of effective HRM practices on brand performance. These results are consistent with the study results of Khalid and Tariq (2015), which showed that employer branding is significantly related to brand reputation. Similarly, various other empirical researches supported the current findings stating that employer's brand reputation increases the employer brand performance (Kashive & Khanna, 2017; Love & Singh, 2011; Mencl & Lester, 2014; Verčič & Čorić, 2018). For example, Priyadarshi (2011), stated that the employer brand image acts as the predictor of the employee's commitment, satisfaction as well as loyalty, which helps in the value creation activities of the hotel. Likewise, Robertson and Khatibi (2013), also endorsed the study findings stating that effective work performance is enabled when a strong brand image prevails. Huang et al. (2019) suggested that employer must ensure financial satisfaction of the employee for increasing employee satisfaction. Previous researches also showed that brand image helps in retaining the best talent, which improves the innovative practice in the hotel, improving its performance. These results validate the determined hypothesis and indicate its acceptance: there exists a significant relationship between employer brand performance and employer brand reputation.

The findings of the current study show that employer brand performance impacts the selection of competitive employees. Catanzaro et al. (2010), supported the study results depicting that effective brand image assists in the selection of talented employees. This is also consistent with

the findings of other researches, which position it as an effective tool for selecting talented employees, stimulating improved competitiveness (Breugh, 2008; Khalid & Tariq, 2015; Mathew, 2015; Wilska, 2014). These results highlight the acceptance of the determined hypothesis: there exists a significant relationship between employer brand performance and competitive employee selection.

The overall findings of the study showed that internal branding is critical for shaping the brand-related behaviour in employees who ensure increased brand value. The HR manager should focus on the internalization of the brand value proposition, which helps to develop brand commitment in employees and improved brand value (Botha et al., 2011; D. Kim & Sturman, 2012). For example, when the brand value is internalized, employees can deliver better services, which enhanced the satisfaction level of the external stakeholders (Robinson et al., 2014). The results imply the strengthening of the internal branding activities for developing the required behaviour and attitude in the workforce which is integral for brand survival, sustainability as well as competitiveness in the long run (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017; Jain, 2013; Yang et al., 2015). McDermott et al. (2015) also suggested that HRM should practice flexible working, which assists in attracting competitive employees of the hotel sector.

6.1. Managerial implications

The results highlight that HR managers must implement practices that strengthen the performance of the hotel, improve service quality, enhance employees' job satisfaction, and also incorporate effective HRM practices to maintain competitive advantage in the Jordanian hotel sector. The study findings recommend improving internal communication in the hotel for internal branding by enforcing communication with the employees through internal emails, newsletters, internal broadcast, organizational storytelling, and advertising messages. This would help in enhancing the corporate image of the company in the employees. Findings of the current study are useful for the hotel operating in Jordan as these findings can help HR managers consider role of the factors such as employer brand reputation, employee job satisfaction, employee retention, and competitive employee selection in the growth and development of hotel brand in particular and hospitality industry in general.

The recruitment practices of the HR managers should be improved through better job designing, training, as well as planning, as it helps improve the employee job satisfaction level. The managers must explain their employees about uniqueness of their brand with respect to other competitors. The employees must be educated about how this brand value can be communicated to the customers. Also, an internal unit can be established to ensure high information level of employee concerning the brand practices and values. The firm should strive to execute strong internal branding initiatives for attracting the employees, who are more in-line with the spirit of the company and possess similar values to reduce the turnover risk and improve the recruitment procedure of competent employees.

More importantly, the findings of the study may help the existing HR Managers employed in the hotel sector in devising strategies that are favourable in the current pandemic conditions. The spread of the global disease has affected many business entities in each and every sector, therefore, hotel HR managers may seek existing study as a guide to extract the information regarding strategies that were majorly used for brand promotion pre-pandemic. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the huge collapse in global economies due to the pandemic conditions may create a negative impact on hotel sector as a whole.

6.2. Strengths and limitations

The study strength is determined through its contribution, which shows that HR managers help leverage brand performance in the hotel sector. The study contributes by indicating that the integration of effective human resource practices improves employee engagement and satisfaction along with the brand image. These attributes are particularly important for the sustainable

development of the hotel sector of Jordan. Also, it shows that HR managers must be accordingly trained given their powerful impact on the employees' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour, as they assist in maintaining a positive work environment that positively impacts employee retention prospects. A powerful brand image also helps foster a competitive name in the industry, which enhances firm's ability to recruit a competent and competitive workforce.

This study also has certain limitations that call for more inclusive and comprehensive future researches. For example, the findings of this study lack in generalizability since it included participants from a specific country. Moreover, a small sample of only 123 managers was considered without involving the effect of mediating variables estimated by regression analysis. In addition, the indefinite number of male and female participants is a considerable factor, since the two genders may follow different factors based on their psychological developments. Thereby, the findings of this research need to be replicated in different countries and cultures to draw more comprehensive findings. Also, the design used is cross-sectional and therefore, future researches can explore the same objective following a longitudinal study design. Also, the economic measures were not evaluated in this study, which can be explored in future researches. The attitude of the HR practitioners and their impact on the performance of the hotel with a mediating variable can be explored to obtain more inclusive results.

7. Conclusion

The study investigated the impact of human resource managers in promoting the hotel sector as a brand in the Jordanian hotel industry. Using a quantitative research approach, the study showed that the practices of HR manager substantially affect employee productivity as well as brand performance. It further reveals that employee behaviour is substantially affected by the practices of the HR management as it helps in promoting the internal communication, and in improving employee retention and brand image. The findings of this cross-sectional study suggest that hotels should aggressively invest in the development of their human resource managers for promoting the hotel sector as a brand. The findings further emphasize that the role and practices of HR managers in the hotel industry is critical in increasing their brand performance since majority of the respondents indicated that practices such as employee retention, employee job satisfaction, brand reputation and competitive employee selection are the main aspects of the hotel industry of Jordan.

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Study Significance

The study contributes by indicating that the integration of effective human resource practices improves employee engagement and satisfaction along with the brand image. HR managers must be accordingly trained given their powerful impact on the employees’ attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour, as they assist in maintaining a positive work environment that positively impacts employee retention prospects.



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