EMPLOYER BRANDING DETERMINANTS
IN AN AGILE ORGANIZATION – ANALYSIS OF OWN RESEARCH

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Purpose: The aim of the article is to analyze the determinants of employer branding in agile organizations and to understand their impact on building the image of an attractive employer. The study focuses on identifying key elements, such as flexible forms of work, the use of modern technologies, a culture of openness and quick response to employee needs.

Design/methodology/approach: The research was based on a survey conducted in April-May 2023 among 303 respondents. The collected data was analyzed using multivariate correspondence analysis (MCA), which enabled the identification of relationships between individual employer branding determinants and their perception by respondents.

Findings: The results of the study indicate that the flexibility of the organization, the use of modern technologies and the culture of openness are key factors influencing the attractiveness of the employer. Employees particularly value flexible forms of work and an innovative approach to management, which has a significant impact on their commitment and satisfaction.

Research limitations/implications: The study is limited by the use of only one research tool, which was a survey, and the focus on a sample limited to 303 respondents. Further research could take into account a broader international context and more diverse research methods, such as in-depth interviews or qualitative analysis.

Practical implications: The study results provide practical advice for organizations that want to increase their attractiveness as employers. It is recommended to implement flexible solutions, support a culture of openness and use modern technologies in team management.

Social implications: Building strong employer branding in agile organizations contributes to improving the quality of the work environment, supports employee development and increases their integration with the values of the organization. Activities in this area can also positively influence sustainable social development by creating more responsible and inclusive workplaces.

Originality/value: The article provides an original perspective on employer branding in the context of agile organizations, integrating theoretical perspectives with empirical research results. It is a significant contribution to the development of knowledge on building employer branding in a dynamic business environment.

Keywords: agile organization, Employer Branding, multidimensional correspondence analysis (MCA), organization, employees.

Category of the paper: research paper.

1. Introduction

Modern organizations operate in a dynamically changing environment that requires flexibility, innovation, and the ability to respond quickly to changing conditions. In this context, agile organizations are becoming one of the key management models that allow for effective functioning in a demanding market environment (Routledge, 2020; Sajdak, 2021). At the same time, the importance of employer branding as a tool for attracting and retaining talents, which are a strategic resource of every organization, is growing. When these two perspectives are combined, there is a need for a thorough understanding of how an agile approach affects the building of the employer's image and what determinants of employer branding are key in this organizational model (Akkaya, 2021).

The topic is particularly important in the face of changing employee expectations, for whom the traditional approach to work and management is no longer sufficient. Employees are increasingly looking for flexible forms of work, technological support, a culture of openness and a quick response to their needs. Understanding these expectations and the ability to respond appropriately to them are becoming key determinants of success in building the image of an attractive employer. This topic is also gaining importance in the context of global trends such as digitization, remote work and the growing role of diversity and inclusiveness in organizations (Mrugalska, Ahmed, 2021).

The article consists of several related parts, which together create a coherent analysis of the issue of employer branding in agile organizations. The first part discusses the theoretical foundations of an agile organization and its key determinants, such as structure, organizational culture and technology. Then, the concept of employer branding is presented in the context of contemporary market challenges, emphasizing the importance of flexibility, innovation and social responsibility in building an employer brand. The next part contains the results of empirical research that analyzes the perception of key determinants of employer branding in agile organizations, as well as their impact on the perception of employer attractiveness. Finally, conclusions and practical recommendations for organizations that want to effectively build their image on the labor market are presented.

The aim of the article is to examine and describe the key determinants of employer branding in agile organizations and to understand their importance in building the image of an attractive employer. The article provides both a theoretical and empirical analysis of the topic, which allows for a better understanding of the issues studied. The added value is the use of a holistic approach that combines different perspectives - from management theory to empirical research - to present a comprehensive view of employer branding in the context of organizational agility. The research results and recommendations included in the article can provide valuable guidance for both management practitioners and researchers dealing with this topic.

2. Literature review

2.1. Agile organization in theoretical approach – essence and determinants

Agile organization in theoretical terms is a management concept that focuses on the ability of an organization to quickly and effectively adapt to changing market, technological and social conditions (Chen, Li, 2021; Fiddler, 2017; Nath, Agrawal, 2020). It is an approach that emphasizes flexibility, innovation and the ability to quickly respond to challenges and needs of the environment (Alshehhi, Nobanee, Khare, 2018). In the literature, organizational agility is sometimes defined as the ability to dynamically adjust processes, structures and strategies in order to achieve competitiveness and sustainable development. The essence of an agile organization is its ability to anticipate and use changes as an opportunity for development, not a threat (Luo, Ren, Cao, Hong, 2020). Such an organization is characterized by flat management structures that enable rapid information flow and decision-making. Employee engagement at all levels is also crucial, supporting a culture of openness, collaboration, and continuous improvement (Doz, Kosonen, 2008). Organizational agility assumes that a key factor for success is the ability to learn and adapt in the face of uncertainty and risk (García-Granero, Piedra-Muñoz, Galdeano-Gómez, 2020).

The determinants of an agile organization can be divided into several main areas. The first of them are structural factors, which include the flexibility of the organizational structure, simplified procedures, and decentralization of the decision-making process. Agile organizations abandon excessively complex hierarchies in favor of management models based on cooperation between teams and individuals (Jones, Adam, 2023). Another important determinant is the organizational culture, which promotes innovation, trust, and openness to change. Values such as responsibility, transparency, and willingness to take risks play a key role in creating an environment conducive to agility (Gao, Zhang, Gong, Li, 2020).

Technology and digitalization are other key determinants of an agile organization. Agility requires the skillful use of modern technologies to optimize processes, improve communication, and quickly respond to changing customer needs. Organizations that effectively integrate digital tools into their operations gain an advantage in a dynamic business environment. In the context of technology, tools supporting team collaboration, knowledge management, and process automation are also important. An important aspect of organizational agility is also human factors, which include employee competencies and attitudes (Sedej, Justinek, 2021). In agile organizations, skills such as creativity, the ability to work in teams, quick learning, and openness to change are particularly valued. Leaders in agile organizations act as mentors and catalysts for change, inspiring employees to take the initiative and engage in innovation processes (Rosário, Raimundo, 2021).

Theoretically, an agile organization is also strongly linked to the idea of sustainable development. Agility does not only mean short-term adaptation to changes, but also building a long-term ability to respond to challenges related to globalization, climate change or social pressure. Agile organizations are perceived as more resilient to crises and able to create value for their stakeholders in a responsible and sustainable way (Seifollahi, Shirazian, 2021).

In summary, an agile organization in theoretical terms is a model based on flexibility, innovation and adaptability. Determinants of agility include organizational structures, culture, technology and human factors, which together create the basis for effective functioning in a dynamically changing business environment. Developing an agile organization requires both a change in thinking and the adaptation of processes, structures and strategies in order to achieve long-term success.

2.2. Employer Branding Concept

The concept of employer branding refers to building and managing the employer's image, which is perceived by both current and potential employees. It is a strategic approach that aims to create an organization as an attractive place of work, where employees can fulfill their professional ambitions, develop skills and achieve professional satisfaction (Martin, 2008). The contemporary approach to employer branding assumes that it is a multidimensional process, combining marketing, management and social aspects, which together create a coherent image of the employer on the market (Szkudlarek, 2022).

One of the key assumptions of employer branding is to adapt the organization's strategy to the expectations of employees and market trends. The employer's image is not based solely on promotional activities, but on the actual value offered to employees, called Employee Value Proposition (EVP) (Rzewuska, Majewska, Berłowski, Woźniak, Marciniak, 2013). EVP includes financial benefits, professional development, organizational culture, and the possibility of balancing professional and private life. A properly defined EVP allows the organization to attract talents that are consistent with its mission and values, which affects the quality of recruitment and the level of employee engagement (Zając-Pałdyna, 2020).

The concept of employer branding includes two main dimensions: external and internal. In the external dimension, activities focus on building a positive image of the organization on the labor market through recruitment campaigns, presence in social media and participation in industry events. External employer branding focuses on attracting new talents and building awareness of the employer's brand among potential candidates (Lane, 2016). In the internal dimension, this concept refers to creating a work environment that supports employee development, builds their commitment and loyalty to the organization. Internal activities include development programs, motivational systems, integration initiatives and transparent communication (Matuszewska-Kubicz, 2020).

The literature emphasizes the growing importance of employer branding in the context of changing employee expectations and the labor market (Gillis, 2006). Employees increasingly expect not only employment stability, but also development opportunities, work flexibility, and alignment of the organization's values with their own beliefs (Mayo, 2001; Burke, 2007). This phenomenon leads to a change in the approach of employers, who must constantly adapt their strategies to these expectations in order to attract and retain the most talented employees (Jenner, Taylor, 2008).

Employer branding is also important in building an organization's competitive advantage. Companies perceived as attractive employers are more likely to attract the best candidates and retain key employees, which affects their efficiency and innovation (Kozłowski, 2016). Research shows that a strong employer brand reduces recruitment costs, increases retention and improves the organization's financial results. In this context, employer branding is not only an element of HR strategy, but also an important component of business strategy (Żółkiewicz, Olszewski, Czarnecki, 2021).

The importance of technology in employer branding is constantly growing, especially in the digital era. Tools such as social media, recruitment platforms and talent management systems allow organizations to reach a wide audience and personalize communication (Dąbrowska, 2014). Data analysis allows companies to better understand the expectations of potential candidates and adapt their activities to their needs. The modern approach to employer branding also includes the aspect of social responsibility and sustainable development. Employers who actively engage in pro-social and ecological activities are perceived as more attractive by younger generations of employees (Grzybowska, 2022). Transparency and authenticity in employer branding activities are becoming key in building trust among both current and future employees (Rosethorn, Mensink, 2008).

In summary, the employer branding concept is a multidimensional approach that combines management, marketing and communication activities to build a strong and attractive employer brand. It is a dynamic process that requires continuous monitoring of the labor market, analysis of employee needs and adjustment of strategies to changing conditions. Thanks to properly planned and implemented employer branding activities, organizations can not only attract and retain talent, but also build their competitive position on the market.

2.3. Employer Branding in an Agile Organization

Employer branding in an agile organization is a key element in building its image as an attractive employer, especially in a dynamically changing market environment. In agile organizations, which are characterized by flexibility, speed of action and the ability to adapt, employer branding must take into account the specificity of this type of work environment. The essence of activities in this area is to create a unique value proposition that combines the needs of the organization with the expectations of current and potential employees (Lendzion, 2023).

One of the foundations of employer branding in an agile organization is providing flexible forms of work, which play an important role in attracting talent. This flexibility is manifested in various aspects, such as the possibility of remote work, flexible working hours or the choice of a cooperation model adapted to the individual preferences of employees (Rahimi, Mansouri, 2019). In the environment of agile organizations, where the priority is to quickly adapt to changing conditions, this flexibility becomes one of the key determinants of employer attractiveness. Employees looking for a balance between work and private life increasingly pay attention to the possibility of adapting work to their needs, which makes flexibility an important aspect of the employer branding strategy (Wojtaszczyk, 2012).

The use of modern technologies is another important element supporting employer branding in agile organizations. Innovative tools and systems not only support operational efficiency, but also improve employee experience (Miś, 2020). Technology enables smoother communication, faster access to resources and facilitates teamwork, which is especially important in dynamic work environments (Kurnia, Chien, 2020). The use of modern solutions, such as project management tools or platforms supporting collaboration, not only improves the quality of work, but also increases the attractiveness of the organization in the eyes of potential candidates. Employers who effectively integrate technologies with everyday processes are perceived as modern and innovative, which strengthens their image on the labor market (Stuss, 2021).

Creating a culture of openness and harmony in the organization plays a key role in building the employer image in agile organizations. Such a culture promotes trust, strengthens the sense of belonging and supports cooperation between teams. Agile organizations that promote openness in communication and transparency in decision-making are more attractive to employees who value the opportunity to express their opinions and influence the functioning of the organization (Prieto, Talukder, 2023). Additionally, harmony in the workplace, achieved by supporting work-life balance and respect for diversity, is an important element of the employer branding strategy, influencing positive employee experiences (Zak, 2022).

Quick and flexible response to employee needs is another aspect that distinguishes employer branding in agile organizations. Organizations that can quickly identify and respond to the changing expectations of their employees build the image of a caring and responsive employer. This approach requires advanced mechanisms for monitoring employee needs and effective processes for managing their expectations. In agile organizations, where change is a constant element, the ability to respond quickly becomes an indispensable component of building a positive image (Machnicka, 2020).

In summary, employer branding in an agile organization focuses on elements that reflect its flexibility, innovation and ability to respond to employee needs. It includes not only activities aimed at attracting new talent, but also retaining and developing current employees, which is particularly important in the dynamic environment of agile organizations. An effective employer branding strategy supports building competitiveness on the labor market,

while strengthening the commitment and satisfaction of teams, which are key to the success of the organization.

3. Methods

The aim of the research was to identify the key determinants of employer branding in an agile organization and to determine how individual elements affect the perception of the organization as an attractive employer. The research also aimed to determine the relationship between selected factors and employee preferences in the context of building the employer's image. A hypothesis was put forward that key elements of employer branding, such as flexible forms of work, the use of modern technologies, promoting a culture of openness and harmony, as well as responding to employee needs, significantly affect the positive perception of the organization by employees.

The research was based on research questions regarding which determinants of employer branding are most important from the respondents' perspective, what relationships exist between the individual elements of building the employer image, and how these relationships influence the perception of the organisation as agile and attractive.

The research method was a survey conducted in April-May 2023 on a sample of 303 respondents. The research tool allowed for collecting data on respondents' assessments of various aspects of employer branding. After collecting the data, multivariate correspondence analysis (MCA) was conducted to identify hidden patterns in the responses and determine the relationships between the analyzed variables. This analysis allowed for the visualization of data in a multidimensional space, which facilitated the interpretation of the results, especially in the context of dependencies and similarities between categories.

The MCA was conducted to show which employer branding determinants are closely related and which of them have the greatest impact on the perception of the organization. The analysis also provided guidance on the priorities of employees in the area of employer branding, enabling better adjustment of the organization's strategy to their needs and expectations.

4. Results

The study attempted to identify the determinants of employer branding in an agile organization by analyzing the respondents' answers to questions about various aspects of building the employer's image (see Table 1). In the case of the variable concerning the provision

of flexible forms of work as an element of attracting talent, 10 people definitely did not answer, 20 respondents rather did not choose, 30 people indicated no opinion, while 110 participants of the study answered rather yes, and 133 definitely yes.

Table 1.

Determinants of Employer Branding in an Agile Organization

| Variable	Definitely NOT	I don't think so	I have no opinion	Probably YES	Definitely YES
Providing flexible work arrangements as an element of attracting talent (1)	10	20	30	110	133
Using modern technologies to support building the employer image (2)	12	18	45	100	128
Creating a culture of openness and harmony in the organization (3)	8	15	40	105	135
Quick and flexible response to employee needs (4)	11	17	35	95	145

Source: Own study based on research.

For the variable related to the use of modern technologies as support in building the employer's image, 12 respondents gave a definite no answer, 18 respondents rather didn't, 45 respondents indicated no opinion, 100 respondents rather yes, and 128 participants answered definitely yes. Another variable, concerning the creation of a culture of openness and harmony in the organization, received answers of definitely no from 8 respondents, rather no from 15 respondents, 40 respondents indicated no opinion, 105 participants rather yes, and 135 respondents answered definitely yes. In relation to the variable related to quick and flexible response to employee needs, 11 respondents chose the answer definitely no, 17 indicated rather no, 35 people declared no opinion, 95 participants rather yes, while 145 people expressed a definitely positive position on this issue.

The results indicate a diversity of opinions with respect to each of the analyzed variables, which allows for further consideration of their significance in the context of building the employer image in an agile organization.

In order to better understand the relationship between the determinants of employer branding in an agile organization and the way they are perceived by respondents, a multidimensional correspondence analysis (MCA) was conducted (see Figure 1). Its main goal was to examine how individual aspects of building the employer image, such as offering flexible forms of work, using modern technologies, promoting a culture of openness and harmony, or quickly responding to employee needs, are assessed by the study participants. The analysis allows for the identification of response patterns and relationships between categories that could be difficult to notice in traditional data analysis methods.
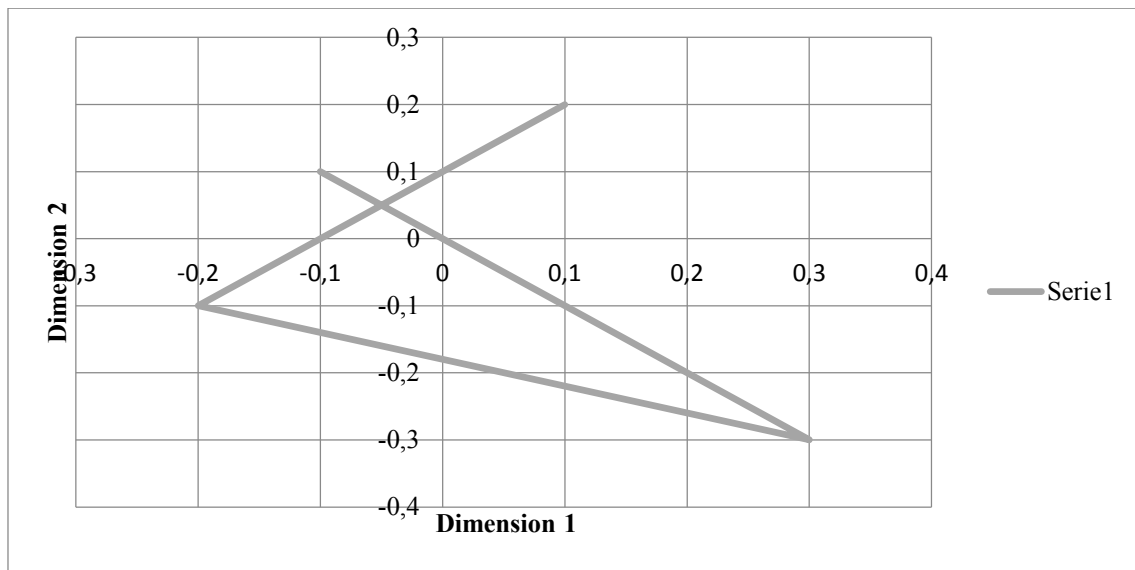
Figure 1. MCA Plot: Employer Branding Indicators.

Source: Own study.

By conducting MCA, the data was transformed into a multidimensional space, allowing its structure to be visualized in the form of a graph. This made it possible to illustrate similarities and differences between variables and assess their mutual relationships. For example, the proximity of certain response categories may suggest that they are perceived by respondents in a similar way, which allows conclusions to be drawn about employees' preferences and priorities. On the other hand, variables that are distant from each other may indicate differences in the perception of these aspects.

The results of the analysis indicate which elements of employer branding are most important from the perspective of respondents and how individual groups of answers, such as "Definitely YES" or "Rather YES", are distributed in relation to the analyzed variables. This analysis allows for a better understanding of the key aspects that affect the perception of the organization as an attractive employer, and the identification of areas requiring special attention. It is also a starting point for developing a strategy for building the employer's image in an agile organization, which will be more adapted to the needs and expectations of employees. Thanks to the use of MCA, it is also possible to precisely determine which actions can bring the greatest benefits in the context of increasing employee engagement and satisfaction.

5. Discussion

The conducted research indicates that the determinants of employer branding in an agile organization are perceived by respondents as important elements of building the employer's image, with their importance varying depending on the aspect analyzed. The key factor that gained the greatest recognition among the respondents turned out to be providing flexible forms

of work, which indicates growing expectations towards employers in terms of adapting working conditions to the individual needs of employees. Respondents particularly appreciate the possibility of adjusting working hours, work mode and other flexible solutions that allow for balancing professional and private life.

An important aspect of employer branding is also the implementation of modern technologies that support work-life balance. Respondents see the value of technology in facilitating communication, work organization and increasing efficiency, which emphasizes their importance in building a positive image of the employer. The introduction of innovative work tools can be seen as a manifestation of the organization's modern approach, which affects its attractiveness in the eyes of employees.

Promoting a culture of openness and harmony in the organization was also highly rated by respondents. The results indicate that creating an environment conducive to cooperation, mutual respect and transparent communication is seen as one of the pillars of an agile organization. A culture of openness is not only appreciated by employees, but also contributes to increasing commitment and loyalty to the employer.

Quick and flexible response to employee needs is another important determinant of employer branding that gained high recognition in the study. A responsible and quick approach to solving employee problems is perceived as an expression of care and professionalism of the organization, which significantly affects its image. These results confirm that agile organizations that can quickly adapt to changing employee expectations are better perceived by their teams.

It is recommended that companies, especially those operating in dynamic and agile environments, focus their activities on creating comprehensive employer branding strategies that combine various aspects influencing the attractiveness of the employer. A key element of these activities should be the introduction of flexible forms of work that allow employees to adjust their working conditions to their individual needs. Organizations should consider implementing solutions such as flexible working hours, the possibility of remote work and choosing a preferred work model, which will contribute to increased employee satisfaction and engagement. It is also important to invest in modern technologies that support work-life balance and increase work efficiency. These technologies may include tools for remote collaboration, digital communication platforms or applications supporting work organization. An innovative approach in this area not only strengthens the company's image as a modern employer, but also responds to the growing expectations of employees related to the digitization of the work environment.

Companies should place particular emphasis on promoting a culture of openness and harmony that fosters cooperation, mutual respect and transparent communication. Activities in this area may include introducing soft skills development programs, organizing regular team meetings, and building a space where employees feel heard and appreciated. Creating a culture of openness helps strengthen the bond between employees and the organization, which affects

their long-term loyalty. Quick and flexible response to employee needs should become a standard in the functioning of companies. It is recommended to develop systems for reporting and resolving employee problems and create mechanisms that allow the organization to quickly adapt to changing expectations. This approach demonstrates a high level of care for employees and contributes to building a positive image of the company.

The need for coherence and mutual complementation of employer branding activities is emphasized. Companies should integrate various initiatives to create a comprehensive strategy that responds to the key needs and expectations of employees. Implementing flexible solutions combined with modern technologies, building a culture of openness and responsiveness to the needs of the team can together create a strong foundation for building the image of an attractive employer. The long-term goal should be systematic monitoring of employee needs and regular updating of the employer branding strategy in response to changing market and social conditions. This approach will allow companies not only to attract the best talents, but also to increase the level of engagement and retention in the team, which is crucial in the context of organizational agility and efficiency.

6. Conclusions

It is worth comparing the results of the conducted research with the findings of other researchers. This comparison reveals both similarities and differences in the key determinants of employer branding in agile organizations. Näppä's study (2023) emphasizes the importance of co-creating the employer brand through the integration of strategy and organizational identity. These results indicate that organizations encounter difficulties in understanding and comparing employer branding practices, which makes it difficult to assess their own brand. Two main areas of focus were identified: building strategic structures and a collective identity consistent with brand values. Organizations differ in these dimensions, which affects the effectiveness of their employer branding activities.

Koch and Schermuly (2021) examined the impact of agile project management on organizational attractiveness and employee engagement. They found that agile project management indirectly affects organizational attractiveness through psychological empowerment of employees. People with high levels of sensation seeking are more attracted to organizations using agile methodologies. This suggests that agile practices can be an effective element of employer branding strategies, attracting professionals looking for modern and dynamic work environments.

Easa and Bazzi (2020) reviewed the literature on employer branding, emphasizing its role in increasing employer attractiveness, employee engagement, and retention. Employer branding was shown to be a key tool in attracting and retaining talent, as well as in building competitive

advantage. It is recommended that organizations develop unique value propositions for employees that meet their expectations and needs.

In summary, the results of the conducted research are consistent with the findings of other researchers, emphasizing the importance of flexible forms of work, modern technologies, a culture of openness and quick response to employee needs as key elements of an effective employer branding strategy in agile organizations. Integration of these elements can contribute to increasing the attractiveness of the employer and employee engagement and retention.

When analyzing the limitations of the research, it is possible to point out several key areas that may affect the interpretation and generalization of the results. First, the research was conducted only in the context of agile organizations, which limits the possibility of relating the results to organizations operating in more traditional management structures. The results may not be fully representative of companies that do not use agile methodology, and their approach to employer branding may differ significantly from the analyzed case.

Another limitation was the data collection method, based on a survey, which, despite its effectiveness in obtaining respondents' opinions, carries the risk of subjective answers. Respondents could provide answers that were consistent with social expectations, which may affect the reliability of the obtained results. In addition, the lack of the possibility of conducting in-depth interviews or other qualitative methods limits the understanding of the motivations behind respondents' answers.

Another limitation is the time and geographical framework of the study, which was conducted in April-May 2023 on a sample of 303 respondents. The results may reflect specific market and cultural conditions that will not necessarily be consistent with the situation in other countries or at a later time. The sample, although sufficient for specific analyses, may be considered relatively small in the context of broader comparative research. Another limitation of the MCA analysis used in the study is that it requires the interpretation of data in the context of their multidimensional relationships, which may lead to simplification or overlooking of certain relationships. The results of this analysis are exploratory in nature and should be treated as a prelude to more detailed research.

The identified limitations may constitute the basis for further research that would take into account a wider scope of organizations, more diverse research methods and a larger sample of respondents, which would allow for a deeper understanding of the issues studied.

Future research directions may focus on broadening the context of employer branding analyses to include various types of organizations, including those operating in traditional management models as well as hybrid organizations. It is worth considering comparative studies that would allow for the identification of differences in the perception of employer branding determinants between organizations from different sectors, organizational cultures and countries. Such studies may provide valuable clues regarding the universality and specificity of selected employer image building strategies.

Another research area could be to deepen the understanding of the impact of individual employer branding elements on different demographic groups of employees, such as younger, more experienced, or those working in different employment models. This research could include an analysis of employee expectations and priorities regarding flexible forms of work, the implementation of modern technologies, or organizational culture. Particular attention should be paid to the specific needs of employees in agile organizations that differ from traditional structures.

An interesting direction of research may also be the analysis of the long-term impact of employer branding activities on employee engagement, retention and satisfaction indicators. Including a time perspective would allow for the assessment of the effectiveness of selected strategies and their adaptation in a dynamically changing work environment. It may also be important to examine the synergy between employer branding determinants and other areas of management, such as competence development or organizational innovations.

Further research may also include the use of advanced analytical tools, such as predictive models or machine learning, which will allow for the identification of hidden patterns and relationships in the data. The inclusion of qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or observations, could also enrich the understanding of employee motivations and expectations towards employer branding activities. Extending research in this direction would provide valuable practical advice for organizations striving to build a strong image of an attractive employer.

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