



**THE MEDIATING ROLE BRAND ORIENTATION AND BRAND
COMMITMENT ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN THE CASE
OF ZEMEN BANK**

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**FEBRUARY 2023
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DECLARATION

I, Ermiyass Andarge with identification number thus certify that this thesis is my original work and that it has never been submitted for examination for the award of any other degree or qualification at any other university, with full acknowledgement of all sources of materials utilized.

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This is to certify that the research thesis presented by Ermiyass Andarge, titled: **The Effect of Internal Branding and Brand Attitude on Employee Retention in the case of Zemen Bank S.C.** in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Art (MA.) in Marketing Management compile with the regulation of the university and confirms to the acceptable standards with the respect to the originality and the quality.

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Acknowledgment

First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to the almighty God for all of his blessings, as well as for providing me with the ability and strength to continue my studies.

Dr. Belaynesh Tefera , my adviser, has provided me with excellent professional and intellectual advice throughout the project. Prompt feedback has always left a lasting impression. Beyond the important scholarly advice, her demeanor was kind, courteous, and helpful, and she deserves a lot of credit

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Abstract

This essay attempts to investigate the relationships between internal branding, brand orientation, brand identity, brand commitment, and employees' intention to stay. The relation between brand orientation and retention is also examined, as well as the mediating effects of brand identity and brand commitment. The study employed PLS-SEM to do this. Due to its ability to estimate complicated models with several constructs, indicator variables, and structural pathways without imposing distributional assumptions on the data, PLS-SEM is particularly intriguing to many researchers. The multivariate analysis uses statistical techniques to study numerous variables at once. For this research a total of 320 questionnaires were prepared and distributed for Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Employees. From these 309 was returned and they were used for quantitative analysis and discussion; which indicates that the response rate was 85%, which is an acceptable percent. The findings showed that developing an internal brand positively impacts brand orientation, which positively influences brand attitudes, such as brand commitment and brand identity. These attitudes in turn have a significant impact on staff retention. Brand identity was revealed to be a partial mediating factor in the direct link between brand orientation and desire to stay. Finally the researcher recommend that the bank, managers of Zemen Bank must engage in internal brand-building activities to create and sustain an organizational brand mentality at a cultural level and to match these cultural brand values with the attitudes of the employees. Moreover, through frequent employee surveys, people data analytics, and performance index scorecards, brand managers and HR professionals should collaborate to continuously assess people's mindsets and attitudes about the Bank's and its brand values.

Keywords: Zemen Bank, Organizational Commitment, Brand Identification, Smart PLS, Intention to stay

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This section will address background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

A brand is a unique symbol, logo, name, character, or insignia that represents, denotes, or characterizes a certain product (Kotler and Armstrong, 2017). The etymology of the word "brand" can be traced back to the old German language, where it signifies "fire." In old English, the word "brand" meant "flaming." (Moore & Reid, 2008). In the eyes of current or potential customers, the brand image corresponds to perceived quality, features, traits, attributes, benefits, and side effects (Keller and Kotler, 2015; Biswas and Suar, 2016). The perceptual impression associated with an employer's features and attributes in the minds of current employees (internal customers) and potential employees is referred to as employer brand image (Barrow and Mosley, 2007; Priyadarshi, 2011). Dowling (1993) and Keller (1993) showed that an employer's image is translated into practical benefits.

According to Atilgan et al. (2005) brands vary in the amount of power and value they have in the marketplace. Some brands are largely unknown to most buyers. Other brands have a high degree of consumer brand awareness. Still others enjoy brand preference (buyers select them over the others). Some brands command a high degree of brand loyalty. A powerful brand has high brand equity. According to Caruana & Calleya (1988) brand equity is just a reflection of a brand's market share.

Internal branding assists businesses in focusing on brand value by cooperating and engaging in a consistent brand message so that employees understand the brand value and provide customers with the brand's full promise. Internal branding, in which companies invest in developing employees to live the brand, is one strategy that has received a lot of attention. This paradigm has key features; not only does it result in increased employee retention (Albrecht & Zemche, 1985, (Doyle 1989), but it also has the potential to provide a firm with a sustainable competitive advantage because the intangible aspects of a brand relationship are not easily duplicated by

competitors (Barney1991). Furthermore, it has the potential to ensure customer and employee satisfaction.

Employee turnover is expensive for all businesses and has substantial negative consequences. It is also seen as a critical issue for management in terms of workforce planning (DeMicco & Giridharan, 2017). As a result, firms must modify the way they inspire and engage with employees in the new era of transparency, as new technologies, social media, and immediate public exposure have transformed the job market and shifted power from the employer to the individual (Nazemetz & Ruch, 2016; Deloitte, 2015). Organizations, on the other hand, have struggled to engage employees, according to several research. According to Hewitt (2015), global employee engagement is 62 percent, but a Gallup survey conducted by Delloite (2015) found that only 13 percent of the global workforce is highly engaged.

Employee turnover has been a subject of research for scholars at least during the second half of the 1900s. Particularly, turnover is a common trend in a market labor thirsty for a myriad of technical skills that have followed technological advances, with corporations looking for the best prospects to benefit from those advances (Iyer , Davari, , & Paswan, 2018). The increased demand for highly skilled employees and a coexisting talent scarcity are reinforcing the competition among companies. In order to maintain a competitive and stable workforce, organizations have adopted employer branding as a strategic tool for talent acquisition, development, and retention (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013).

Employee turnover is a major concern for managers, as it becomes an increasing reality within the organizational behavior field (Oliveira et al., 2018). Currently, employees play an important role in the achievement of the organizational goals, strategic plan, objective and other missions that stated in the organization especially in promoting the quality of services. Employees can be considered to be internal customers and their jobs could be seen as the organization's products. So, the organization tries to treat employees in ways which enforce job satisfaction and motivate them to be more productive. This study aims to study the impact of Internal Branding on employee's retention and turnover in the case of Zemen Bank.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Employee retention has become a major concern for organizations in today's work scenario, in which human capital remains one of the few resources that can provide a sustainable competitive advantage. Organizations enormously invest in recruiting and selecting employees, and then invest even more in training and developing them over time. In order to get a return on such investment, organizations need to retain well-trained employees so that they remain with the workplace for the maximum time and contribute effectively to the organization's success (Tuominen et al., 2018). Losing good employees leads to reduction in productivity and work quality, and also represents economic costs in terms of direct costs (i.e., replacement, training, management time), and perhaps more considerably, in terms of indirect costs (i.e., morale, collaboration, pressure on remaining staff, organizational knowledge), as well as the loss of social capital.

Managing employee retention is an effective way of making sure that good quality or experienced employees remain, while maintaining organizational performance, morale, and positive customer retention. The factors that might lead an employee to leave may be different from factors that lead an employee to stay. For instance; new job opportunities, family situations, and personal concerns may lead employees to quit their current jobs. Instead, efforts to maximize retention may involve shared values or cultural beliefs that make the organizational environment as 'sticky' as possible in order to induce them to stay. One possible retention approach is to recognize employees as a key element of branding, and internal customers. The concept of a brand has its roots in the area of consumer products, and is often identified with a customer perception.

Internal branding is founded on the idea that employees are the ones who define a brand's values. Organizations must assist their employees in comprehending and embracing the brand's meaning, as well as acquiring the essential competences to execute on brand promises (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2017). While external marketing is vital for increasing brand awareness, an internal branding strategy is necessary for employees to understand and absorb the brand's meaning. It entails activities that assist employees in comprehending and buying into brand values, as well as assisting them in performing the tasks that management recommends, with the purpose of

maintaining consistency between internal and external brand messages (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013).

However, the concept has yet to be thoroughly investigated, particularly in the HR management literature. Despite the growing interest in the theory of internal branding, little has been written regarding the linkages between internal branding, brand attitudes, and employee retention. Prior research has concentrated on the impact of internal branding on brand-supporting behaviors and results, particularly in the service and hospitality industries (Terglave Konecnik and Kase, 2016; Yang et al., 2015). Internal branding can also help employees internalize organizational values (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013), develop brand attitudes and mindset (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010; Hirvonen & Laukkanen, 2014), and contribute to their willingness to stay with the company (Baumgarth & Schmidt, 2010; Hirvonen & Laukkanen, 2014).

There is currently a significant gap in the research on the mechanisms through which internal branding promotes brand attitudes and staff retention, particularly the investigation of these interactions within a single study. One of the contributions of the current study to academic research could be further analysis of these correlations and the expansion of research beyond the service sectors (i.e., sales organizations). As a result, the goal of this study is to gain a better understanding of the internal branding process through the eyes of employees. This study will be developed to scientifically analyze the linkages between internal branding, brand orientation, brand identity, brand commitment, and employee retention in order to fill the gaps stated above. It will also look at how brand identification and commitment play a role in the relationship between brand orientation and retention. The focus of this research is on Zemen Bank personnel, who serve as the organization's client contact.

In Zemen Bank, it is observed that senior employees and junior customer officers are leaving the bank including the managers and higher position levels; in contrary to its mission of ensuring for its staff an engaging, rewarding, and attractive work environment alongside a best-in-industry compensation scheme (Ayinalm, 2021).

The purpose of this research is to answer the question “how does internal branding affects employee retention and turnover in Zemen Bank?”. To find an answer to the problem the author will collect and research’s a vast amount of literature using books, journals, web sites, secondary surveys and reports, in areas of human resource management and marketing. Internal branding is

based on the principle that brand values are characterized through employees. Organizations need to facilitate their staff to understand and embrace the meaning of the brand, as well as to acquire necessary competencies to deliver brand promises.

1.3 Research Question

The general research question for the research will be- What is the effect of internal branding on employee retention and turn over in Zemen Bank?

Specifically, the following research question will be addressed in the thesis

1. To what extent internal branding affect brand orientation?
2. How does brand identification affect brand orientation and retention?
3. How to investigate relationship between internal branding, brand orientation, and brand commitment and employee intention to stay in Zemen Bank?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study will be to know the impact of internal branding on employee retention and turn over in the case of Zemen Bank.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study will have the following objectives

1. To analyses the impact of internal branding on brand orientation
2. The study will also to examine the roles played by brand identification and brand commitment on brand orientation and retention.
3. To investigate the relationships among internal branding, brand orientation, brand identification, brand commitment, and employees' intention to stay.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will benefit Ethiopian banks in general, and Zemen Bank in particular, to know the linkages between internal branding, brand orientation, brand identification, brand commitment, and employee retention intentions. More specifically the study will help the human resource management of Zemen Bank to evaluate their internal marketing strategy and fill the gap in order to reduce employee turnover and retain employees which in return contribute a lot to achieve the

overall company objectives and enable the company to obtain competitive advantage. Furthermore, the study can be used as a starting point for future research on service-providing businesses.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Geographical scope: Geographically, the scope of the study is limited to examining employee retention: the effects of internal branding and brand attitude in the case of Zemen bank in Addis Ababa city branches of Main Branch and other branches found in Addis Ababa.

Conceptual scope: Conceptually, the research is delimited to examining employee retention: the effects of internal branding and brand attitude in the case of Zemen Bank. It assessed how the examining employee retention: the effects of internal branding and brand attitude in the case of Zemen Bank

Methodological scope: These study employments both descriptive and explanatory research designs, mixed research approach and the study only includes data collected from 306 employees of Zemen bank through questionnaires that will be distributed and managed to them. This research will mainly concentrate on the discussion relating to the examining employee retention: the effects of internal branding and brand attitude in the case of Zemen of Zemen Bank S.C by collecting the required data from relevant source.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The first chapter describes the introduction part of the study like background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions. The remaining parts of this thesis are organized as followed. Chapter two presents concept and definitions, theoretical review, empirical review and conceptual framework of the study. In chapter three, the methodological framework of model, the research approach, method of data collection, and research design issues are presented. The empirical results with descriptive and inferential statistics of the model are presented and analyzed in the fourth chapter. Lastly, in chapter five, the main findings of the study are summarized and some recommendations are mentioned.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides theoretical and empirical reviews, as well as concepts and theories related to real employee retention and turnover, in order to present relevant literature in the subject and develop a proper conceptual framework. This study's theoretical framework is based on the notion of employee retention and turn over. The empirical review section comprises prior study findings and papers in the field.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

2.1.1 Branding Definition

The process of imbuing services and products with the value of a trademark is known as branding (Sammut-Bonnici, 2015). According to Sammut-Bonnici (2015), branding is the process of ascribing a purpose to a company, enterprise, commodities, or services by creating and molding a brand in the minds of customers. It's a marketing strategy used by businesses to help customers recognize and understand their brand, as well as provide them a reason to choose their products over the competition's, by clarifying what the brand is and isn't (Bastos and Levy, 2012).

Branding's purpose is to keep and attract loyal customers by continually delivering a product that is consistent with everything else the company offers (Sammut-Bonnici, 2015). Branding is important since it not only makes a distinct impression on customers, but it also informs them about what to expect from your company. It is a means of distinguishing oneself from competitors by describing what the firm offers that makes it the better option (Bastos and Levy, 2012).

2.1.2 Internal branding

A strong organizational brand can be built by a branding program that is aligned with the organization's vision, values, and culture (Iyer et al., 2018; Dechawatanapaisal, 2018). Xiong & King (2019) recommends businesses to use "internal marketing of external campaigns" to guarantee that branding campaigns are well-received and supported by their workforce. Unfortunately, there is a fundamental gap between external brand statements and internal brand principles in many firms. "Many organizations do a superb job of advertising and marketing to clients," according to Chawla (2020). Then there's the difficult part: delivering. While most firms

spend millions of dollars on marketing, few invest in ensuring that brand messaging are translated into reality in terms of the customer's experience. Employees must be engaged in order for the brand to come to life. As a result, signals about the brand conveyed to employees are just as significant as those sent to customers." This means that firms should balance not only external branding initiatives (such as consumer branding), but also internal branding processes to guarantee that staff behaviors align with external branding efforts; otherwise, investment efforts may be futile (Punjaisri and Wilson, 2017).

Internal branding is a concept that was created to help an organization promote its brand to its employees (Mitchell, 2002). The word has been used to describe an organization's endeavor to treat employees as internal customers and to assist them in embracing the company's ideals (Foster et al., 2010). It creates a shared knowledge of a brand across an organization by giving employees a clear direction and guideline for delivering brand messaging and appropriate customer experiences in a consistent manner (Boone, 2000; Burmann and Zeplin, 2005; Punjaisri et al., 2009).

Employees who agree with a company's brand are more likely to operate in ways that support how the company wants its customers to view or experience it. Similarly, the internal branding process tries to reassure employees that their company is a good place to work where they can commit and participate in achieving the company's goals (Barrow and Mosley, 2006). Employees will become brand guardians once they become excited, as the organizational principles get embedded in their hearts and minds. Then they become ardent supporters and promoters of the brand (Kimpakorn and Tocquer, 2009; Liu et al., 2017). Internal branding is intended to offer employees with a preferred work model and clear direction in order for them to effectively communicate brand meaning and values to external stakeholders (Lee et al., 2014; Yang et al., 2015). It's a crucial technique for operationalizing a brand orientation, as it ensures that employees share the brand's traits, which are critical for performing brand-building activities (Santos-Vijande et al., 2012).

Internal branding is based on communicating with employees and educating them about the company's principles in order to increase their intellectual and emotional involvement with the brand. The following can be accomplished by effective and consistent communication and training that reflects brand messages. For starters, it allows employees to gain brand awareness

and comprehend brand insights. Second, it strengthens the psychological bond that exists between the company and its employees. Third, it encourages employees to internalize brand values. While brand knowledge allows employees to comprehend the brand and expected work behaviors, psychological contract fulfillment motivates employees to internalize and live the brand. Employees should also be viewed as internal customers, with suitable incentives offered to encourage them to better understand marketing messages.

2.1.3 Internal Employer Brand

2.1.3.1 Definition

Internal employer branding is the process of a company's culture and brand identity being used to engage, motivate, and retain its employees. The purpose of these efforts is to provide businesses a long-term competitive advantage by focusing on human capital rather than traditional commercial procedures and methodologies (Neill, 2016). An employer brand must be effective in order for its values to align with the values of its employees (Neill, 2016).

The present economic downturn, according to O'Sullivan (2017), has forced a shift in focus from external branding to inside branding. Companies understood that using their employees as brand ambassadors was a more cost-effective way to get their message out, therefore they focused their efforts on building their employer brand internally (O'Sullivan, 2017). What greater advocates for a company could an organization have than its own employees? With this purpose in mind, businesses have begun to hire people who fit the company's culture and values, allowing them to function as brand ambassadors straight away. Once employees have absorbed the employer brand concepts, they will be able to give the brand promise and experience to others (O'Sullivan, 2017).

2.1.4 Internal Brand Management

The administration of an organization's internal brand, according to Neill (2016), is based on the exchange of tangible products in exchange for devotion and hard effort between the organization and its personnel. Its performance is judged by the working environment and whether or not it benefits its employees in order to foster the brand loyalty and devotion required for a successful internal employer brand. A well-developed internal brand will result in stronger organizational identification among employees, which has been found to reduce attrition and enhance employee performance (O'Sullivan, 2017).

2.1.5 Impact of Internal Branding

Official sources such as policies, processes, development, and training programs, which show the company's dedication to and value for its employees, may be used to portray a company's internal brand. Informal sources, such as coworkers' and management's sharing of values and messaging, also contribute to the brand's promotion. Effective communication between workers and management is critical when it comes to communicating the corporate brand. If this communication fails, the internal brand message may not be communicated to internal stakeholders, which might be devastating (Goswami, and Agarwal, 2015).

2.1.6 Employer Branding as Employer of Choice

2.1.6.1 The goal of Employer Branding

According to Kaiser and Regjepaj (2019), the purpose of employer branding is to become a "employer of choice," a place where people want to work. As stated by Kaiser and Regjepaj (2019), this requires developing a "value proposition" that communicates what the organization can provide its employees in terms of a "great place to work." A reasonable level of security; enhanced future employability as a result of the company's reputation for hiring and developing high-quality people, as well as the learning opportunities it provides; work-life balance-friendly employment terms; and a reward system that recognizes and values coworkers are all factors that contribute to being an employer of choice (Kaiser & Regjepaj, 2019).

Simply ensuring that people feel valued is an excellent retention tactic. As a consequence, all of the aforementioned criteria combine to create an employee value offer that understands that high-potential workers expect to be well-managed, have autonomy and flexibility, and have a high degree of job challenge and career possibilities as a method of attracting and retaining them. Many firms have developed or are contemplating implementing official employer branding strategies (Maheshwari et al. 2017). In terms of benefits, Ambler and Barrow (1996) define the employer brand as "the mix of functional, economic, and psychological advantages offered by employment, and identified with the employing organization." Employer branding, as a result, promotes firms as appealing places to work. Employer branding refers to how a company's characteristics as an employer contrast from those of its competitors. The employment brand highlights the firm's unique employment services or environment. "The employer brand establishes the firm's identity as an employer," according to Saqib et al. (2015). It encompasses

the company's value system, regulations, and behaviors aimed at attracting, inspiring, and retaining current and prospective personnel."

According to these criteria, employer branding means conveying a clear view of what makes a firm unique and appealing as an employer both within and beyond the organization. According to Backhaus (2016), employer branding is the process of developing a recognizable and distinct employer identity, and the employer brand is a concept of the company that sets it apart from its competitors. Employer brands are developed to complement the company's product and corporate identities. There are two key differences between the employer brand and the product and corporate branding, despite some similarities. One is that the employer brand defines the company's identity as an employer and is job-specific. Two, it caters to both internal and external clients, whereas product and business branding efforts are mostly directed at external clients. The technique of employment branding can be coupled with product and corporate branding efforts in specific cases.

Employer branding is founded on the notion that human capital provides value to a company and that by investing properly in human capital, a firm's performance may be enhanced, according to Saqib et al. (2015). This approach is supported by the resource-based view (RBV), which claims that resource attributes can contribute to long-term competitive advantage. It is debatable if owning rare, valuable, non-substitutable, and difficult-to-copy resources assists a firm to stay ahead of the competition (Saqib et al. 2015). According to Sellar, Prashansa, and Jayawardana (2020), human capital, together with plant, equipment, and capital, has been proven to be a crucial resource in producing competitive advantage. External employer brand marketing positions the organization as a desirable employer, helping it to recruit top talent.

Furthermore, once a recruit is drawn to the brand, they establish a set of assumptions about working for the firm that they will carry forward, therefore supporting the company's values and strengthening their loyalty. Internal marketing aids in the building of a workforce that is tough to duplicate by rivals. By carefully exposing workers to the value proposition of the employer brand, the workplace culture is shaped around the company's aims, allowing the firm to build a distinct culture based on conducting business in the company's manner. Internal marketing contributes to employee retention (Ambler & Barrow, 1996) by leveraging the product to

reinforce the role of quality employment and so contributing to employee willingness to stay with the company.

2.1.6.2 Employee Attraction

Employer attractiveness (Uebbing, 2015) is defined as the perceived benefit that potential employees feel they would obtain from working for a certain organization. Individuals desire to be perceived positively, according to Backhaus (2016), thus applicants who can identify with the company's brand or character are far more likely to apply for positions there. Highhouse et al., (2007) agreed with Backhaus (2016) findings and expanded on them by explaining this phenomenon with two types of attraction: first, "social adjustment need," where applicants will want to associate themselves with a positive image of a company because working for a well-regarded company improves an individual's public identity. Second, the notion of "value expression" was examined by Highhouse et al., (2007). Similarly, someone with a high degree of value expression wants to work for a reputable firm because they want to be proud of their boss.

A company is appealing if applicants want to apply for positions there; are interested in their professions; and want to stay; according to Maurya & Agarwal (2018). Firms used to rely solely on their physical benefits, like as compensation packages, to attract the best applicants; however, it is now acknowledged that there are other factors that impact candidates' attraction to companies. Intangible benefits like as recognition, praise, and flexible working arrangements have also been shown to increase motivation and organizational commitment, and candidates are drawn to firms that provide a good work-life balance (Saqib et al., 2015).

Talent recruiting has always been a critical component of human resource management, including performance management, planning, retention, reward, talent management, and change management (HRM). While each of these tasks is important for an organization's long-term performance, the function of talent attraction, selection, and recruiting has the potential to be the most successful and critical (Maheshwari et al. 2017).

Candidates are drawn to organizations whose image reflects their self-perception, according to Saqib et al. (2015), who agree with Backhaus (2016) and Highhouse et al., (2007). They go on to argue that an organization's image is made up of two parts: "instrumental qualities" and "symbolic meanings," with the latter relating to employee attitudes and perceived fit with the company, and the former referring to things like location and salary. According to Maheshwari et

al. (2017), an organization's brand and image are shaped by its advertising strategies, commodities, and services, as well as its employees, customers, and physical locations. Both components will aid a potential employee in deciding whether or not an organization shares the values that they regard to be significant and reflective of themselves, as this will ultimately affect their appeal to a particular organization (Saqib et al. 2015; Backhaus 2016; Maheshwari et al. 2017).

Wong (2014) pioneered an incredibly popular method of measuring organizational attractiveness by using three measures: corporate desire, intent, and reputation. Several researchers have used these three criteria in the years since (Highhouse et al., 2007). The attractiveness of a firm reflects an individual's feelings about it, but it does not always imply that the individual will act on those feelings. Intent, on the other hand, takes a step further by exposing if the individual intends to act on their feelings. Highhouse et al. (2007) define prestige as the study of whether an organization's reputation is favorable or unfavorable in the eyes of individuals and the wider public.

According to Stuss (2018), the stronger an organization's employer brand is, the more enticing it is. There are a number of tactics that may be implemented to build a great employer brand and so increase recruitment, retention, and overall happiness. In recent years, corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities have become one of the most popular business strategies. Such an approach has a dual purpose: it not only gives them a competitive edge by enhancing their employer's brand, but it also allows them to check a box in terms of charity. CSR, in addition to corporate commitment, is a deciding factor in employment selection, according to Stuss (2018). Organizations have successfully merged their CSR strategy with their employer brand, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish which came first. A company that clearly cares about its corporate social responsibility will, without a doubt, gain a positive reputation as a result. The global financial crisis, according to Stuss (2018), prompted this shift toward CSR as a brand strategy. Organizations devised complex strategies to restore their reputation and restore the trust that had been lost in them.

2.1.7 Retention and Turnover Intent

2.1.7.1 The intention of Retention and impact of Turnover rates

In recent years, the labor market has become increasingly candidate-driven. High turnover rates are a constant source of anxiety for employers, with employees quitting positions at a higher pace than ever before. While some of this is unavoidable due to retirement and natural attrition, losing key employees to competitors can hurt an organization's performance due to the loss of critical information and skills (Mamun and Hasan, 2017).

High staff turnover can also have a negative impact on the company's culture and the morale of its current employees. As a result, it is critical that businesses take the required efforts to improve employee retention and decrease turnover. To accomplish so, they will need a thorough understanding of the factors that motivate employees to stay loyal to their company (Kyndt et al., 2009).

Employer branding as a strategy for employee retention is a relatively new concept. Companies should differentiate themselves and outperform their competitors' employment offers, according to Mamun and Hasan (2017), so that their employees are never tempted to leave. If a company properly constructs and uses its employer brand, an employee will be shifted from a labor contract to a psychological contract. The psychological contract concept is intricately linked to employer branding tactics (Sadiq et al. 2015).

Branding gurus have embraced the psychological contract theory as the core of their branding endeavors to construct a psychological contract with their employees. According to Sadiq et al. (2015), the psychological contract refers to the intricacies of the working relationship between employees and employers, and it is what determines an employee's conduct and sentiments while at work. Employees are no longer motivated just by monetary incentives, and organizations are striving to build a psychological contract with them by cultivating strong employer brand loyalty in order to retain top talent (Sadiq et al. 2015). During the recruitment phase, a corporation can begin constructing the psychological contract and continue to do so throughout the employee life cycle. The psychological contract includes developmental opportunities, job security, trust in management, fairness, and equal rights, as well as faith in the employer to keep its commitments. The psychological contract, on the other hand, may be broken if a corporation forgets about its commitments to its employees and focuses solely on its own goals and ambitions. As a result, it's

possible that turnover will rise. According to Kyndt et al. (2009), employer branding has a positive association with the psychological contract since it influences workers' attitudes and behaviors.

According to "social identity theory," a strong employer brand promotes "organizational identification" among employees, which has been found to be a powerful factor of turnover intention (Highhouse et al. 2007). Employees with a high level of organizational identification may be deployed as brand ambassadors by the corporation to spread the word to other employees. Employer branding is an excellent strategy for maintaining staff in Irish retail companies, and this concept of "organizational identification" is in accordance with that (Highhouse et al. 2007).

Turnover intention is defined as the likelihood of an individual changing occupations within a specific timeframe (Mamun and Hasan, 2017). It is "the degree to which a worker intends to leave an organization," according to Mamun and Hasan (2017). Turnover intent, on the other hand, is not binary, and there is a discrepancy between turnover intent and actual turnover that has been researched extensively. A desire to depart is closely linked to high turnover rates (Mamun and Hasan, 2017). This is significant given the focus of this study, which will be on employer branding as a viable strategy for retaining employees in Irish retail companies (Mamun and Hasan, 2017).

2.1.7.2 The Impact of Employer Branding on Employee Retention and Attraction

Branding's purpose is to give a product a good image. This image will influence the perceived value of the product and increase the perceived value of the brand among customers, resulting in brand loyalty. An employer brand may help firms efficiently compete in the labor market and generate employee loyalty via efficient recruiting, engagement, and retention efforts. Every firm has an employer brand, whether or not they have worked hard to build it. Their brand will be determined by how future employees, present employees, and employees retiring or departing the organization see them as a "place to work" (O'Sullivan, 2017).

According to Goswami and Agarwal (2015), the brand should not only be visible to applicants during the hiring process, but also define the organization's people management strategy. The company's approach to induction, reward, and performance management, for example, might be influenced by the brand. Developing an employer brand is a difficult endeavor. A well-organized

approach, as well as top-level management support, are required. What are your long-term goals? Forming a Brand Team developing and maintaining an employer brand is a long-term endeavor that benefits from teamwork. The team should contain professionals who are in charge of strategic direction approval and human resource inventiveness.

What benefits and drawbacks do you have? What makes your company stand out? Determine the distinctive features of the work environment, business history, and values that lure, inspire, and retain high-quality individuals. Through focus groups, surveys, or in-depth interviews, learn what is important to potential applicants when it comes to choosing an employer, how they see themselves as individuals, and how they want to be seen. This will disclose which audience group best fits your business and whom you should target with your brand. The effect of brand awareness on customer response to product promotions is referred to as customer-based brand equity (Goswami and Agarwal, 2015).

Brand equity refers to the influence of brand knowledge on potential and present employees in the context of employer branding. Because of the employer's brand equity, potential prospects are motivated to apply. Furthermore, employer brand equity motivates current employees to contribute to and support the company. Employer brand equity is the desired outcome of workplace branding activities. In other words, because of the underlying employer brand equity associated with distinct organizations, same recruitment, selection, and retention efforts from diverse organizations would elicit different responses from potential and present employees (Sellar, Prashansa, and Jayawardana, 2020).

According to Alshathry, Clarke, and Goodman (2017), "knowledge about the employer (including image, reputation, and familiarity) strongly predicted both interest in applying for a job and actual application activity." Similarly, Goswami and Agarwal (2015) suggest that there is a significant correlation between applicant actions such as acceptance, job search, and selection intents and their perceptions of an organization's attractiveness.

2.1.8 Brand Orientation

"An approach in which the organization's processes revolve around the creation, development, and protection of brand identity in an ongoing manner with target customers with the goal of achieving a lasting competitive advantage in the form of brands," according to the definition. Urde et al., 1999, p. 117. The major goals of this notion were to improve understanding of how

brands may be used as a strategic resource and to increase knowledge of how to manage a brand effectively (Urde, 2009). The major criticism of the conventional approach to brand management is that a brand must be given integrity not just in regard to consumer demands and desires, but also in connection to corporate strategic intent and values. An inside-out approach to brand orientation acknowledges brands as the hub of an organization's value-creation strategy (Baumgarth et al., 2013; Urde et al., 2013). Brand orientation may also be characterized as a certain form of organizational culture or a specific corporate attitude from a cultural standpoint (Gromark and Melin, 2013). Brand orientation, according to Hatch and Schultz (2008), is made up of culture, vision, and image. Culture serves as a foundation, vision serves as a center of gravity, and image serves as the brand's outward face. The brand is used to drive business strategy and establish organizational cultures in a brand-oriented corporation (Wong and Merrilees, 2007). It enables the execution of organizational support activities that foster a common knowledge of brand values and acceptance of work-related standards among workers, who are viewed as the organization's focal point for implementing brand-related activities (Baxter et al., 2013).

The idea of brand orientation has been developed by researchers from two perspectives: philosophical and behavioral (Urde et al., 2013). The behavioral approach focuses on the extent to which corporate marketing tactics support the brand, whereas brand orientation as a philosophy demonstrates organizational values, beliefs, and attitudes toward branding. The behavioral viewpoint, on the other hand, has recently been chastised for failing to pay enough attention to the worry that the brand must first and foremost be formed at a philosophical level (Evans et al., 2012; Urde and Koch, 2014). As a result, the current research focuses on brand orientation from a philosophical standpoint. Wong and Merrilees (2008), for example, establish the existence of such a viewpoint and describe brand orientation as a "mindset" within the business, which in turn defines a distinct organizational culture. Organizations may benefit from brand orientation by embracing the brand on a cultural level. It serves as a guiding concept for organizations in interpreting cultural meanings and cultivating brand attitudes and perceptions (Evans et al., 2012). That is, a brand-oriented strategy fosters employee enthusiasm for the brand and encourages them to be more open to brand-relevant information so they can see how their jobs contribute to the overall brand.

2.1.9 Brand Identification

The theoretical foundation for identification research is social identity theory, which proposes that individuals organize themselves and others into groups in order to make sense of the world (Tajfel and Turner 1985). According to Ashforth et al. (2008), people prefer to categorize themselves and others into different social groups based on common features attributed to or gained from group members. The theoretical notion emphasizes the importance of collective identification in influencing workers' cognitive and emotive awareness of the brand and organization (Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006). Employees with a strong sense of social identity are more likely to have affective cognitions and perceptions about any organizational activities that align with their value propositions (Urde et al., 2013).

Employees describe themselves in terms of their impression of 'oneness' with or 'belongingness' to a particular corporate brand, which is a type of social identity (Mael and Ashforth, 1992). Identification with a brand is defined by "a strong emotional attachment to the brand and a sense of belongingness to the brand (or business that owns the brand)," according to Donovan et al. (2006, p. 126). It has a tremendous impact on how consumers perceive a brand. When people connect closely with an organization's brand, they feel more compelled to it (Van Knippenberg and Van Schie, 2000; Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006). Employees' levels of identification with an organizational brand affect how they attribute and apply brand attributes to themselves, as well as how they behave in order to be considered organizational members (DeConinck, 2011). The more employees adopt organizational values or culture as their own, the more likely they are to identify with their organizational brand, act in accordance with the organization's 'prototype,' and share a common destiny with their place of employment, making the organization's success and failure their own success and failure (Riketta, 2005). "The degree to which a person defines himself or herself by the same traits that he or she feels constitute a brand," according to this metric.

2.1.10 Brand Commitment

The organizational commitment theory of Allen and Meyer was used to conceptualize brand commitment in this study (Allen and Myer, 1990). Employees' psychological attachment to the brand impacts their conviction and readiness to conduct in line with brand values and devote substantial effort toward achieving organizational brand objectives, which is characterized as brand commitment (Burmam and Zeplin, 2005; Ind, 2007). The Social Exchange Theory (Blau,

1964), which states that something must be offered in exchange for something else, is the foundation of commitment. Although there are three categories of commitment: normative, continuation, and affective, the current study focuses solely on affective commitment, which is likely linked to favorable sentiments of workers toward the business and a feeling of fondness for the brand (Terglav et al., 2016). This form of commitment also displays a desire to stay in a stable trade relationship through social links, as well as a belief in keeping rather than ending a partnership (Cifci and Erdogan, 2016). Employees that are emotionally dedicated stay with their company because they want to and tend to connect themselves with the company's ideals. As a result of this mindset, people are more likely to have favorable attitudes and greater levels of desire to help a business accomplish its goals and become devoted brand citizens (Burmam and Zeplin, 2005; Punjaisri et al., 2009).

2.1.11 Employee retention

One of the most powerful determinants of employee retention is the will to stay (Griffeth et al., 2000). Employers must consider the possibility of losing well-trained staff who may seek better opportunities elsewhere. Turnover is an unwelcome event in the management of an organization because uncontrolled personnel loss disrupts organizational communities, raises expenses, reduces productivity, and affects morale among those who remain (Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011). The negative impact of staff turnover, particularly among salesmen, is represented in revenue losses and losses from the organization's investments (e.g., training). It has the potential to radically alter the character of the most important client relationship, resulting in customer switching and unproductive purchasing behavior in the short and long term (Subramony and Holtom, 2012). Replacement expenses for those who leave include not just recruiting and new hire training, but also the time it takes for new hires to establish themselves in respective territory, earn trust, and create acceptable income streams (Sunder et al., 2017). To address this issue, businesses may need to implement proactive efforts to retain experienced workers.

According to branding research, employee retention is influenced by the alignment of brand values, organizational culture, and strategy, as well as how workers perceive and embrace these characteristics (Anisimova and Mavondo, 2010; Matanda and Ndubisi, 2013). Employees that are attitudinally enthused about the brand are more likely to live it, affectively commit to it, and stay with the company they work for. The capacity of a business to successfully adapt to market

requirements and maintain customer loyalty, which leads to organizational success (Bloemer and Odekerken-Schroder, 2006; DeConinck, 2011), is dependent on its willingness to stay. Retaining good staff decreases indirect expenses such as diminished productivity, disrupted service levels, and lost consumers, as well as offsets replacement costs.

2.2 Empirical literature Review

2.2.1 Internal branding and brand orientation

Internalizing the brand in the workplace and matching workers' perceptions and attitudes to the brand values are challenges for organizations. Employees may be helped to align and integrate their thinking with their brand by building and spreading a shared understanding of brand values, norms, or cultural beliefs (Baumgarth, 2010; Hirvonen and Laukkanen, 2014; Mosley, 2007). Internal branding, according to this study, can have an impact on brand orientation, which is the foundation of brand knowledge and comprehension (i.e., values, norms, artifacts, assumptions). This is because, by utilizing an inside-out strategy, brand orientation aids in the development of a proper brand attitude. Few empirical studies examine the impact of internal branding on brand orientation, though several scholars (e.g., Baumgarth and Schmidt, 2010; Baxter et al., 2013; Evans et al., 2012; Hirvonen and Laukkanen, 2014) have assumed that promoting the brand within the workforce and treating employees as internal customers will increase awareness of the brand as an important element in the development of organizational brand culture. As a result, it is suggested that:

H1. Internal branding has a positive impact on brand orientation.

2.2.2 Brand orientation and brand attitudes

To explain the impact of brand orientation on brand attitudes, this study uses the balancing theory (Heider, 1958). According to the idea, a person wants to preserve consistency among a trio of related motives that act as drives to keep one's values consistent throughout time. The triangle consists of an employee's belief system, the organization's brand, and communications that represent the brand's values, conventions, and assumptions (Punjaisri et al., 2009). Tension will be created by an uneven relational mechanism, which must be changed toward a balanced condition. To rebalance the system, an employee might adjust his or her attitude toward the item to be compatible with corporate ideals, conventions, or assumptions (Liu et al., 2017). That is,

when workers adopt a different perspective regarding their company's brand, they will attempt to re-establish the psychological balancing system.

The mindset of a company is referred to as brand orientation, and it is the catalyst for the creation of brand attitudes (Urde, 1999; Wong and Merrilees, 2008). It is critical to the implementation of corporate strategies because it depicts the degree of organizational traits that encourage brand attitude across all personnel. Mitchell (2002) claims that in order to bring the brand to life, firms must build an attitudinal connection with workers in order to match their thinking with the brand's values, culture, and business goals. According to Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010), after creating brand orientation, businesses must encourage the adoption and absorption of brand-oriented values among workers, as well as advise them on how to act in order to support the execution of the brand strategy.

Employees who are highly aware of and oriented to the organization's brand are more likely to work effectively and become attitudinally connected to brand delivery (Baxter et al., 2013; Hirvonen and Laukkanen, 2014). This notion is consistent with previous research, which suggests that brand-oriented procedures are more likely to instill intellectual and emotional commitment, as well as a feeling of belonging, in workers, allowing them to form a strong social identification toward the organization's brand (Urde et al., 2013). Employees might be advised and guided by organizational standards or brand values on how they should act. Organizations can start with a brand-oriented mentality to generate preferred brand attitudes (Baumgarth et al., 2013; Hirvonen and Laukkanen, 2014).

As a result, it is suggested that an organization's efforts to instill the value of the organizational brand among its workers tend to boost employees' brand identification and commitment. Few empirical research (e.g., Baumgarth and Schmidt, 2010; Baumgarth et al., 2013) have examined the influence of brand orientation and brand attitudes (i.e., brand identification, brand commitment). Clarification of these impacts, particularly in the context of sales forces, might be one of the present study's contributions to academic research. As a result, it is proposed that:

H2. Brand orientation has a positive impact on brand identification.

H3. Brand orientation has a positive impact on brand commitment.

According to previous research, the components of identification and commitment should be viewed as distinct ideas (e.g., Mael and Ashforth, 1992; Riketta, 2005). According to Ashforth et al. (2008) of the organizational behavior literature, identity is not currently characterized by commitment. Identification, according to their research, relates to a feeling of belonging to a group and a sense of being linked to the group's prototype. Employees are happy to be members of the organization and to be a part of the brand, and this is likely to lead to a psychological connection to the brand and a readiness to go above and beyond for the organization's success, i.e. dedication (Baumgarth and Schmidt, 2010; Punjaisri et al., 2009). As a result, brand identification has been proposed as a predictor of employee brand loyalty. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H4. Brand identification has a positive impact on brand commitment.

2.2.3 Brand Attitudes and Employee Retention

Organizations with strong employee brand attitudes, according to Moroko and Uncles (2008), might possibly improve employee retention and relationships. Employees are more likely to match their views with brand values if they are conveyed and thoroughly absorbed (Mitchell, 2002). Bloemer and Odekerken-Schroder (2006) found that a positive opinion of an organization's brand can predict whether or not people want to work there. Employees that are committed to growing alongside the company they work for are regarded as one of the company's most important assets. Loyalty is important for building organizational strengths and contributing to corporate success (Lee et al., 2014).

Retention results in cost savings through decreased resourcing and training expenditures, which are direct expenses, as well as indirect costs from experienced performers who are up to speed and familiar with day-to-day work and relevant stakeholders (DeConinck, 2011). As a result, it's not unexpected that retention issues continue to pique people's curiosity (e.g., Hancock et al., 2013; Punjaisri et al., 2009). Both scholars and practitioners continue to demand for more study into the attitudinal viewpoints of workers in order to establish what variables maintain them with their current workplace.

Employees that have a strong sense of brand identity and dedication are more likely to stay with the company, according to previous studies (Lee et al., 2014; Punjaisri et al., 2009; Van Knippenberg and Sleebos, 2006). They view themselves in connection to their company, and

they are more inclined to internalize the company's values and ambitions (Riketta, 2005). Employees that are committed have been observed to have a generally steady and deliberate inclination to engage in a connection with their boss (Foster et al., 2010).

It is hypothesized that such attitudes serve as a uniting factor for workers to adopt organizational and brand ideals. Employees with poorer identification and commitment, on the other hand, may desire to distance themselves from the business, believing that they do not share its aims, beliefs, or characteristics. They have a tendency to act in ways that are destructive to the organization's growth and success, and they may consider quitting (Hancock et al., 2013; Riketta, 2005). As a result, it is hypothesized that brand recognition and brand commitment will play a crucial role in determining the degree of retention in this setting. In this way:

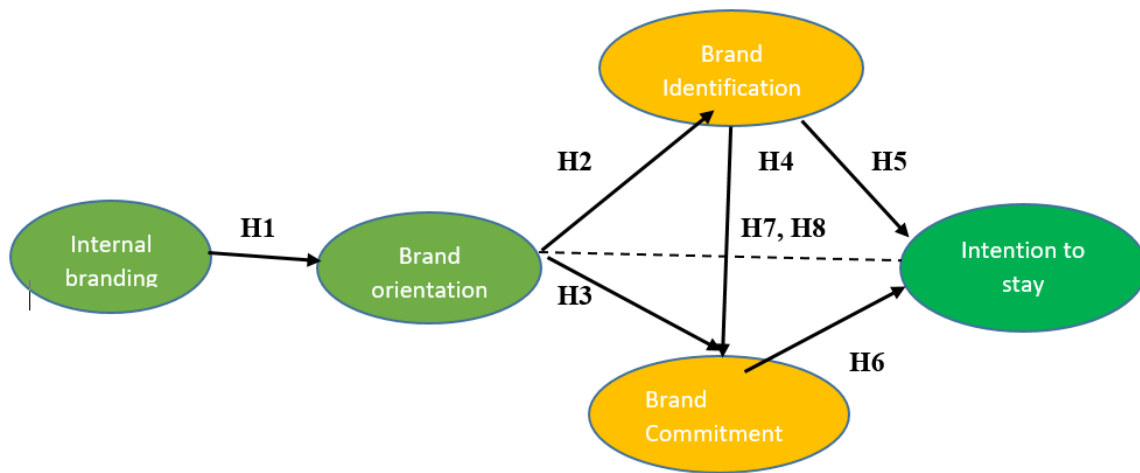
H5. Brand identification has a positive impact on intention to stay.

H6. Brand commitment has a positive impact on intention to stay.

2.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on the theoretical and empirical literature review the following conceptual framework is developed. The first line H₁ depicted that internal branding has effect on brand orientation. The second hypothesis H₂ and H₃ indicated that Brand orientation has effect on brand identification and brand commitment. H₄ represented that Brand identification has effect on brand commitment. H₅ represents that brand identification has a positive effect on intention to stay in the Bank. H₆ represented that brand commitment has effect on intention to stay. H₇ represented that Brand identification mediates the relationship between brand orientation and intention to stay in the Bank. H₈ depicted that Brand commitment mediates the relationship between brand orientation and intention to stay.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Source: Based on the empirical and theoretical review cho et al. (2009)

H1. Internal branding has a positive impact on brand orientation.

H2. Brand orientation has a positive impact on brand identification.

H3. Brand orientation has a positive impact on brand commitment

H4. Brand identification has a positive impact on brand commitment.

H5. Brand identification has a positive impact on intention to stay.

H6. Brand commitment has a positive impact on intention to stay.

H7. Brand identification mediates the relationship between brand orientation and intention to stay in the Bank.

H8: Brand commitment mediates the relationship between brand orientation and intention to stay.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The research design and technique utilized to attain the study's goal was discussed in this chapter. The study's research methodologies and methods, data collecting sources and tools, study population, sampling procedure and methodology, sample size determination, data gathering procedure and method of data analysis, and study reliability and validity will be all described.

3.1 Research Approach

Quantitative research is frequently connected with the positivist/post positivist worldview. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is most commonly connected with the social constructivist paradigm, which stresses reality's social construction. Quantitative data collecting methods are far more regimented than qualitative data collection approaches, which allow for more flexibility (Saunders et al, 2009).

Because researchers seldom have access to all members of a certain group while doing quantitative research, being able to make conclusions about the wider group is anticipated. However, when choosing a sample, it must be representative of the entire population. The amount to which generalization is feasible is determined on the quantity of people and their representativeness. Because qualitative research is so in-depth, it usually has a smaller number of participants. Mixed research, on the other hand, is a study that employs both qualitative and quantitative methods. Combining these two methodologies has the benefit of allowing triangulation of data, investigators, theories, and methodological approaches (Saunders et al, 2009).

Advocacy/participatory research, on the other hand, may entail informal interactions or even living among the study participants (sometimes referred to as co-researchers). Researchers should engage the group being investigated in the research at all phases, if possible. The research findings are frequently conveyed using the exact words of the research participants (Bell et al., 2018).

For the goal of conclusiveness and the nature of the industry being investigated, the researcher will adopt a quantitative research technique in this study. As a result, a deductive (generic to specific) strategy is adopted. As a result, the ultimate conclusion is reached by extrapolating the

results from the sample to the entire population. Questioners with a 5-point Likert scale is used to collect data (first-hand information). When creating the questionnaire, special attention is paid to the layout in order to avoid influencing people's responses to the subsequent question. Therefore; the researcher used a quantitative research approach to examine the variables of the study.

3.1.1 Research Design

Research design is a comprehensive arrange for information collection in an observational investigate project. It is a general plan for empirical research aimed at answering research questions or testing specific hypotheses (BhattacharjeeA, 2012) Research can be classified as descriptive, explanatory and exploratory depending on the particular reason that the inquire about tries to address. Descriptive research sets out to depict and to decipher what is it looks at people, bunches, institutions, strategies and materials in arrange to depict, compare, differentiate, classify, analyze and interpret the entities and the occasions that constitute the different areas of inquiry. It points to portray the state of issues because it exists. On the other hand, explanatory research, points at building up the cause and impact relationship between variables, the researcher employments the realities or information as of now accessible to analyze and make a basic assessment of the data/information. Exploratory research is frequently conducted in unused regions of request, where the objectives of the inquire about are: (1) to scope out the greatness or degree of a specific phenomenon, (2) to generate some initial ideas about that phenomenon, or (3)to test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study regarding that phenomenon (HusssenM, 2012)

In this study the researcher used descriptive and explanatory research designs since, it is most fitting to achieve the objective of the study.

3.2 Population Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.2.1 Sampling Technique

Zemen Bank has more over 50 branches in Addis Ababa, each with its own history of service. Because brand equity has a long-term positive influence, branches that have supplied services for more than two years will be included in this study, which enables us to consider factors affecting customer brand equity in Zemen bank using stratified sampling. Stratified random sampling is a method of sampling that involves the division of a population in to smaller sub groups known as

strata. In stratified sampling or stratification, the strata are formed based on members shared attributes or characteristics such as educational attainment.

3.2.2 Population Sample Size

Zemen Bank has more over 50 branches in Addis Ababa, each with its own history of service. Because brand equity has a long-term positive influence, branches that have supplied services for more than a year are included in this study. As a result, branches with fewer than those years of experience are omitted from this research. The main branch was taken as a sample because it has provided the service for more than ten years. Other branches that have provided bank service for a year or more years are included, totaling 30.

By using the simplified formula provided by Yaman (1967), which is written below sample size has been calculated.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where: e^2 - Error rate (95% Confidence)

n- Required Sample Size

N-Target Population

The target population (N) for this study is 1300. Therefore, the required sample size is calculated as

$$n = \frac{1300}{1 + 1300(0.05^2)}$$

This gives us a sample of 306.

As a result, 306 employees from the 30 branches will be chosen to participate in the data collecting. Employees of these branches were also be polled for this research. The distribution of the questionnaire was based on the time interval for those customers who appear within 10 minutes at the selected branches of the banks after approving their willingness, in order to obtain a representative sample.

3.3 Sources Data

In the study, both primary and secondary data source will be used.

3.3.1. Primary Data

The researcher will collect primary data through distributing questionnaire to target respondents. The primary sources of data where comprised of the information collected from customers through close-ended questionnaires.

3.3.2. Secondary Data

To accomplish this study, the researcher used written manual, internet and other document as secondary data.

3.4 Data Type and Sample Determination

In general, most researchers have employed primary data from questionnaire items, such as a five- or seven-point Likert scale, in the PLS model. However, using secondary data is relatively uncommon—this is because PLS-SEM is well-known for its ability to handle various data kinds and scales, including interval, nominal, ordinal, and ratio (Latan and Ghazali, 2013). Secondary data is becoming more widely available for investigating real-world events. In contrast to survey measures, which are normally structured to validate a well-developed theory, secondary data sources typically do not include measures that are generated and modified over time for confirmatory analysis (Sarstedt and Mooi, 2019). As a result, in most research scenarios, getting a model fit with secondary data measures is unlikely. However, the major advantage of PLS-SEM is it permits the unrestricted use of single-item and formative measures (Hair, Sarstedt, Hopkins, and Kuppelwieser, 2014).

As previously mentioned, data characteristics such as minimum sample size, non-normal data, and measurement scale are among the most commonly reported reasons for using PLS-SEM. When models contain multiple constructs and a high number of objects, PLS-SEM provides solutions with modest sample sizes (Hair et al., 2017). The PLS-SEM technique does this by computing measurement and structural model interactions separately rather than concurrently (Hair et al., 2017). According to Diamantopoulos et al. (2012), a single-item can be used if the sample size (N) is less than 50, the effect size is less than 0.30, the inter-item correlation is more than 0.80, the Cronbach alpha is greater than 0.90, and the item is semantically redundant.

Because evaluating an outer PLS model is different from evaluating main data, data attributes from secondary data or a single-item construct should be included in the report. This is particularly true if the variables are categorized as category, binary, or ratio. A rule of thumb for the total minimum sample that should be developed in PLS-SEM model estimation has been provided in certain PLS research. To give a statistical power analysis, the total of the data sample should be supplied in PLS-SEM data analysis. According to Hair et al. (2017), the sample size should be ten times larger than the model's longest route. Because the current study model comprises two routes, the sample size for this study should be more than 20.

The estimation of the PLS-SEM Model provides empirical measures of the associations between indicators and constructs (measurement models) as well as associations between constructs (structural model). The empirical measures may aid in the comparison of theoretically established measurement and structural models with reality as represented by the sample data. It can assess how well the theory matches the evidence, to put it another way. As a result, the model's measurement and structural model resilience should be evaluated.

3.5 Measurement Model Evaluation

In performing social science research, measurement is a crucial idea. Because the thing to be measured is abstract, complicated, and not readily visible, measurement in this sense is significantly more difficult. A latent variable can be operationalized in one of two ways: in a reflecting measurement model or in a formative measurement paradigm (Lowrey & Gaskin, 2014). The formative construct must be conceptually (theoretically) unified, and indications identify the "latent" construct entirely. The indicators are not interchangeable and should not be removed since removing one will likely affect the meaning of the latent construct, whereas reflective indicators are basically interchangeable, therefore removing one will not change the meaning of the underlying construct (Hair et al., 2014).

The Cronbach alpha and composite reliability are used to assess internal consistency; individual indicator reliability; average variance extracted (AVE) is used to assess convergent validity; and the Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations can be used to assess discriminant validity. Furthermore, utilizing correlation and Variance Inflation Factors, the outer model evaluation examines the formative construct's convergent validity (VIF).

3.5.1. Internal Consistency Reliability

The initial stage in the PLS-SEM process is to create a model and test the PLS algorithms. The PLS algorithms are a strategy that aids in the diagnosis of an important measurement (outer) model. Internal consistency dependability is a method of ensuring that outcomes are consistent among elements of the same construct (Hair et al, 2014). The PLS algorithm's output allows us to examine the model's internal coherence. As part of its integrated model analysis, PLS calculates a composite reliability score (which is comparable to Cronbach's alpha in that they are both indicators of internal consistency) (Lowrey and Gaskin, 2014). Internal consistency dependability is usually the first criterion to be assessed.

The traditional criterion for internal consistency is Cronbach's alpha, which provides an estimate of the reliability based on the inter-correlations of the observed indicator variables. The composite reliability scale ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating better degrees of dependability; it's comparable to Cronbach's alpha in that it's read in the same way. In exploratory study, composite reliability values of 0.60 to 0.70 are acceptable, whereas values of 0.70 to 0.90 can be considered adequate in more advanced stages of research (Hair et al., 2017). Values less than 0.60 indicate a lack of internal consistency reliability; nevertheless, values more than 0.90 (totally greater than 0.95) are not necessary since they indicate that all construct indicators assess the same notion and hence are not likely to be a legitimate measure of the construct (Hair et al., 2017).

3.5.2 Indicator Reliability

The indicator's dependability indicates how much of an item's fluctuation is explained by the variable (Hair et al., 2017). The PLS algorithm's output may be used to test the outer loading and outer weight robustness of reflecting and formative indicators. Indicator reliability assesses the relevance of each indicator's outer weight (relative importance) and outer loading (absolute importance) for formative and reflective measures using bootstrapping. The outer loadings of the indicator should be more than 0.70, and indicators with outer loadings between 0.40 and 0.70 should only be considered for deletion if the deletion results in an improvement in composite reliability and AVE beyond the specified threshold value (0.5). (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt and Ringle, 2019). The justification for this rule can be understood in the context of the square of a standardized indicator's outer loading, which indicates an item's communality; the square of a

standardized indicator's outer loading represents how much of an item's variation is explained by the construct, and is labeled as the variance extracted from the item (Hair et al., 2017).

When the outside weight of an indication is non-significant but the outer loading is large (i.e., greater than 0.50), the indicator should be understood as absolutely crucial rather than comparatively essential (Hair et al., 2019). In this case, the indicator should be kept; however, if an indicator has a non-significant weight and the outer loading is less than 0.50, the researcher(s) must determine whether the indicator should be kept or removed by examining its theoretical significance and possible content commonality with other indicators of the same construct (Hair et al., 2019).

3.5.3. Convergent Validity

The degree to which a measure correlates favorably with other measures of the same construct is known as convergent validity (Hair et al, 2014). The domain sampling model treats indicators of a reflective construct as distinct (alternative) ways of measuring the same construct (Hair et al, 2014). As a result, items that are indicators (measures) of a certain reflective construct should converge or have a large proportion of variance in common. The outer loadings of the indicators and the average variance retrieved are used to assess the convergent validity of reflective conceptions (AVE).

Convergent validity is investigated using correlation and collinearity in the example of the formative concept. High correlations between items in formative measurement models are not expected, unlike reflecting indicators, which are basically interchangeable. Collinearity, or high correlations between two formative indicators, can be troublesome from a methodological and interpretational viewpoint. This is known as multicollinearity when there are more than two indicators involved. The influence of high levels of collinearity amongst formative indicators on the estimate of weights and their statistical significance is a critical problem. Most crucially, collinearity increases standard errors, reducing the ability to demonstrate that the estimated weights differ considerably from zero (Hair et al., 2017).

3.5.4. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to how dissimilar a concept is from other constructs according to empirical standards; hence, establishing discriminant validity demonstrates that a construct is unique and captures phenomena not reflected by other constructs in the model (Hair et al., 2017). Researchers have traditionally relied on two discriminant validity metrics. The cross-loadings

technique is the first method for determining the discriminant validity of indicators. It posits that an indicator's outer loading on the associated concept is greater than any of its cross-loadings (i.e., correlation) on other constructs (Hair et al., 2017). The Fornell-Larcker criteria compares the square root of the AVE values to the latent variable correlations, which is the second way to determining discriminant validity. Explicitly, the square root of each construct's AVE should be bigger than any other construct's greatest correlation (Garson, 2016). The Fornell-Larcker technique is based on the concept that a construct's related indicators share more variation than any other construct (Hair et al, 2014).

Recent study has demonstrated that neither cross-loadings nor the Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity evaluation successfully discover discriminant validity concerns (Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt, 2014). When two constructs are fully linked, cross-loadings fail to reveal a lack of discriminant validity, rendering this criterion ineffective for empirical study (Hair et al., 2017). Similarly, the Fornell-Larcker criterion performs poorly, especially when the indicator loadings of the constructs under consideration differ only slightly (e.g., all indicator loadings vary between 0.60 and 0.80) when indicator loadings differ more strongly, the Fornell-Larcker criterion's performance in detecting discriminant validity issues improves but remains poor (Hair et al., 2017).

Henseler et al. (2014) propose evaluating the relationships' heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) as a solution. In simple terms, HTMT is the ratio of between-trait to within-trait correlations. HTMT is the average of all indicator correlations across constructs measuring distinct constructs compared to the (geometric) mean of the average correlations of indicators measuring the same construct (Henseler et al., 2014). They stated that an HTMT value greater than 0.90 indicates a lack of discriminant validity; when the route model's components are conceptually more different, a lower and hence more cautious threshold value of 0.85 appears reasonable (Henseler et al., 2014).

3.6 Structural Model Evaluations

The structural model is used to depict one or more dependencies that are similar to the hypothesized model's construct evaluating the structural model Hair et al. (2019) suggested a five-step process for evaluating structural models: I Examine the structural model for issues of

collinearity. ii) Evaluate the path coefficient iii) Evaluate the R² level iv) Determine the impact size f², and v) Determine the predictive relevance Q².

3.6.1 Collinearity Assessment

Collinearity must be checked before evaluating structural relationships to ensure that it does not influence the regression findings. The Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) values are calculated using the latent variable scores of the predictor constructs in a partial regression, which is comparable to analyzing formative measurement models. VIF values more than 5 indicate that the predictor constructs are likely to be collinear, however collinearity difficulties can also emerge with lower VIF values of 3-5. (Hair et al., 2019). If collinearity is a concern, creating higher-order models that can be justified by theory is a common solution (Hair et al., 2017). Besides, to alleviate this problem of collinearity: (1) reducing the indicator that has a high cross-loading value, (2) cutting the single-item or the construct with fewer indicators, (3) adding more indicators and, (4) doing a two-step analysis (Kock & Lynn, 2012).

3.6.2 Path Coefficient Assessment

Because bootstrapping is the only method for measuring the relevance of route coefficients in PLS analysis, it is necessary to adopt the bootstrapping approach while evaluating PLS path modeling (Chin, 2010). When bootstrapping, a large number of bootstrap samples are derived with replacement from the original sample each bootstrap sample has the same number of observations as the original sample (Hair et al, 2017). 5,000 bootstrap samples are required to obtain the best result (Afthanorhan, Aimran, and Ahmad, 2015). The so-called inner model or structural model is built from the relationships between all dependent and independent latent variables, and the model reveals the causal relationships between the not immediately measurable constructs, with the latent variables operationalized by measurable indicators. Since the present of bootstrapping approach in PLS-SEM is fairly significant to persuade the effectiveness of t-test for testing significant level, the t-test is employed to test the significant level of causal linkages. As a result, academics who use PLS-SEM rely on the t-test to determine the significance level for each model created (Afthanorhan et al., 2015).

3.6.3. Coefficient of Determination

The structural model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R²) value. The squared correlation between actual and predicted values of a given endogenous construct is used to calculate this coefficient, which assesses the model's prediction accuracy (Hair et al., 2017). The R² value indicates the quantity of variation in the endogenous constructs is dictated by all of the exogenous constructs associated to it, and it also shows the exogenous factors' combined impact on the endogenous latent variable (Hair et al., 2019). GoF is determined in PLS-SEM as a geometric mean of average communality for the outer model and average R² for the inner model; R² values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are regarded considerable, moderate, and weak, respectively (Hair et al., 2019). Many researchers view the R² statistic as a measure of their model's predictive power; however, this interpretation is incomplete because R² only reflects the model's in-sample explanatory power and says nothing about the model's predictive potential outside of the sample (Shmueli, 2010).

3.6.4 Effect Size

The effect size (f²) is used to check if external constructions have a significant impact on endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Because the path coefficient can't tell you how big the exogenous latent variables are on the endogenous construct, it's crucial to figure out how important the examined route is and how much it changes the endogenous construct's explanatory power (Cohen, 1988). Manually compute the f² by multiplying (R² included – R² excluded) by (1 – R² included) (Cohen, 1988).

The researcher (s) can also see how removing a predictor construct changes the R² value of an endogenous construct. The effect size (f²) is a measure that is similar to the size of the route coefficients. When comparing the magnitude of the path coefficients and the f² effect sizes, the rank order of the predictor constructs' importance in explaining a dependent construct in the structural model is generally the same. In such cases, the f² should only be disclosed if editors or reviewers request it. If the rank order of the constructs' relevance differs when comparing the size of the path coefficients and the f² effect sizes when explaining a dependent construct in the structural model, the researcher may report the f² effect size to explain the presence of, for example, partial or full explanations (Nitzl, Roldan, and Cepeda, 2016). Small, medium, and large f² effect sizes are represented by values greater than 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, respectively (Cohen, 1988).

3.6.5 Predictive Relevance

The structural model assessment in PLS-SEM comprises calculating the predictive importance of structural model relationships using two procedures: blindfolding and the PLS-predict process. Each technique is described in detail below.

3.6.5.1 Blindfolding Procedure.

Calculating the Q² value is one technique to examine the predictive usefulness of the PLS path model (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). This measure is based on the blindfolding technique, which involves removing single points from a data matrix, imputing the removed points with the mean, and estimating model parameters (Hair et al., 2017). The path model estimates of both the structural model (scores of the antecedent constructs) and the measurement model (target endogenous construct) of data prediction can be used to calculate Q² value using two different approaches: first, cross-validated redundancy approach—builds on the path model estimates of both the structural model (scores of the antecedent constructs) and the measurement model (target endogenous construct) of data prediction (Hair et al., 2017). The second method is cross-validated commonality, which uses only the construct scores predicted for the deleted data points and ignores the structural model information. They use blindfold running with a 7-point omission distance and cross-validated redundancy as a measure of Q² because it contains the structural model, which is a major component of the route model, to forecast deleted data points (Hair et al., 2017). The Q² is a combined measure of out-of-sample prediction and in-sample explanatory power, rather than an out-of-sample prediction metric (Shmueli, Ray, Velasquez Estrada & Shatla, 2015). As a result, different metrics for expected relevance were required.

3.6.5.2 PLS Predict Procedure.

The PLS Predict process is an alternate method of determining the predictive significance of the PLS structural model, which was devised to address the issue of blindfolding. Shmueli et al. (2015) suggested a set of processes for out-of-sample prediction that entails estimating the model on an analysis (i.e. training) sample and testing its predictive performance on data other than the analysis sample, known as a holdout sample. In PLS-SEM software, the PLS predict method provides holdout sample-based predictions (Hair et al., 2019).

The formation of the k-subgroups is a random process that may result in extreme partitions that might lead to abnormal solutions; researchers should run PLS predict numerous times to rule out

such abnormal solutions (Hair et al., 2019). Regardless of the proposed option ($k = 10$), researchers must ensure that each subset's analysis sample (fold) fulfills minimum sample size criteria (Hair et al, 2019). PLS predict should be done only once if the goal is to imitate how the PLS model will eventually be used to predict a new observation using a single model (calculated from the complete data set) (Hair et al, 2019).

Researchers can use several prediction statistics to quantify the amount of prediction error in the PLS predict based assessment of a model's predictive power, such as the mean absolute error (MAE), which measures the average magnitude of the errors in a set of predictions without considering their direction (over or under) (Hair et al, 2019). The MAE is the average absolute difference between the forecasts and the actual observations, weighted equally for all individual deviations (Hair et al, 2019). The root mean squared error (RMSE) is a prediction metric that is defined as the square root of the average of the squared discrepancies between forecasts and actual observations (Hair et al, 2019). When analyzing predictive significance, Shmueli et al. (2019), as mentioned on hair et al., offer the following four principles (2019). (1) If the PLS-SEM analysis produces greater prediction errors in terms of RMSE (or MAE) for all indicators when compared to the naive LM benchmark, the model lacks predictive ability. (2) When the bulk of the dependent construct indicators have greater prediction errors than the naive LM benchmark, the model is said to have weak predictive potential. (3) A modest predictive capacity is demonstrated when a limited number of indicators produces larger prediction errors than the naive LM benchmark. (4) When none of the indicators have a higher RMSE (or MAE) value than the naive LM benchmark, the indicator is considered to be a failure.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS, DISCUSSIONS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The objective of this thesis is to look at the Effect of Internal Branding and Brand Attitude On Employee Retention in The Case of Zemen Bank. And in this chapter, the information collected from respondents, utilizing surveys, is displayed, analyzed & translated to address the investigate questions and destinations; which are expressed in chapter one. SPSS 26 program was utilized for investigation purposes. Nonresponse predisposition, pilot testing of the survey, respondents profile, information quality, and figure examination, and discoveries of observational come about, individually are included in this chapter. Hence, this is chapter deals with the data analysis and presentation using descriptive and inferential statistics by the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Science Students (SPSS) software version 26.

As you know, the effect of internal branding and brand Attitude on Employee Retention in the case of Zemen Bank is the topic of this chapter. The study employed PLS-SEM to do this. Due to its ability to estimate complicated models with several constructs, indicator variables, and structural pathways without imposing distributional assumptions on the data, PLS-SEM is particularly intriguing to many researchers. The multivariate analysis uses statistical techniques to study numerous variables at once. The variables often reflect measures related to people, businesses, events, activities, circumstances, etc (Hair et al, 2017). The measurements may be gathered from databases that contain secondary data, but they are frequently obtained via surveys or observations that are used to gather primary data.

4.2 Non response bias and response rate of respondents

The investigate blame, when evaluating the populace property based on a test of study information, in which, certain sorts of respondents are under-represented, due to non-response, is said to be non-response predisposition. When either of the two non-responses, to be specific Thing non-response or unit non-response happens it is said that predisposition happened. Thing non-responders might take off a thing on a survey clear, or reacting, saying they don't know, to a few questions whereas giving a substantial reaction to other questions. Though, Unit non-response may be a total non-participation on the portion in which the study proposed to incorporate. Diverse procedures are accessible for utilizing the somewhat completed reactions

returned from item non-responders to control for contrasts. On the off chance that the whole units are lost from a test no test or rectification for predisposition is accessible without obtaining extra information Berg (2005). In spite of the fact that there was no nonresponse within the collected information, unit non-response was watched due to different reasons.

For this research a total of 320 questionnaires were prepared and distributed for Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Employees. From these 309 was returned and they were used for quantitative analysis and discussion; which indicates that the response rate was 85%, which is an acceptable percent.

4.3 Individual Demographic Data

From the table below, which describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents, 130 (42%) of the respondents were female and 179 (58%) of the respondents were male. Regarding the position of the respondents in the bank, 160 (52%) were teller, 40 (13%) were cashier, 45 (14%) were credit analyst, 40 (13%) were senior operations, 15(5%) were manager and 8 (2%) was director. Regarding the work experience in the bank, 185 (61%) had 1-5 years of experience, 55(18%) had less than one years' experience, 39 (13%) has greater than 10 years of experiences and 30 (8%) of the respondents had 6-10 years of experience. When we come to educational background of the respondents, 230 (74%) of the respondents were holder of bachelor degree and 79 (26%) of the respondents were holder of master's degree.

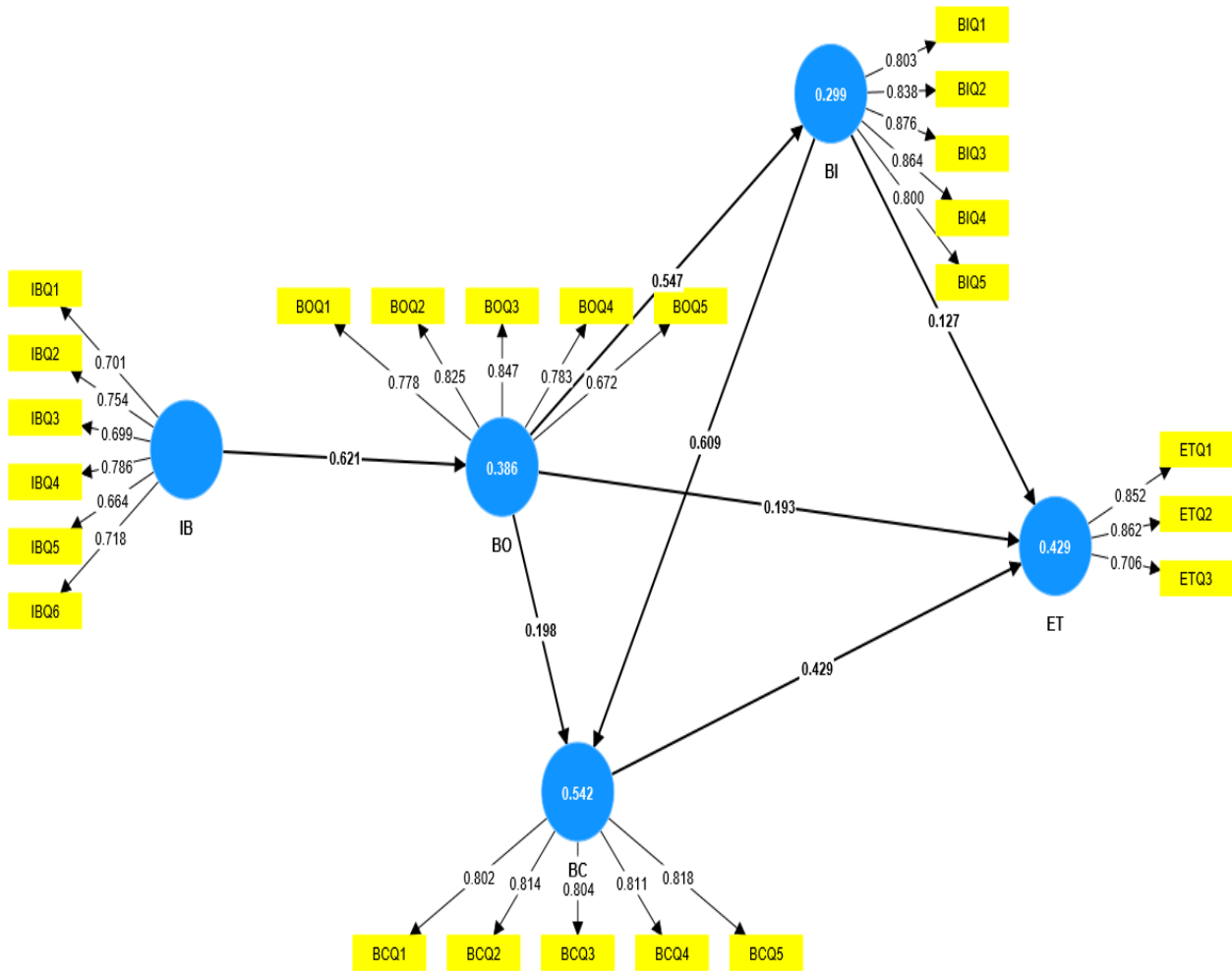
Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	130	42%
	Male	179	58%
	Total	309	100%
Your current position in Zemen Bank	Teller	160	52%
	Cashier	40	13%
	Credit analyst	45	14%
	Senior operation	40	13%
	Manager	15	5%
	Director	8	2%
	Other	1	1%
	Total	309	100.0%
Indicate your work experience in Zemen Bank	<1 year	55	18%
	1-5 year	185	61%
	6-10 year	30	8%
	>10	39	13%
	Total	309	100.0%
Educational Background	BA	230	74%
	MA/MSC and above	79	26%
	Total	309	100%

4.4 Measurement Model Evaluation

A type of validity checks on the capacity to assess latent (unobservable) constructs is measurement validity. The reflective and formative measurement models are typically the two options that the researcher (or researchers) can select from. When using PLS-SEM, the measurement (inner) model is evaluated using the following criteria: individual indicator reliability, internal consistency, discriminant validity, and convergent validity.

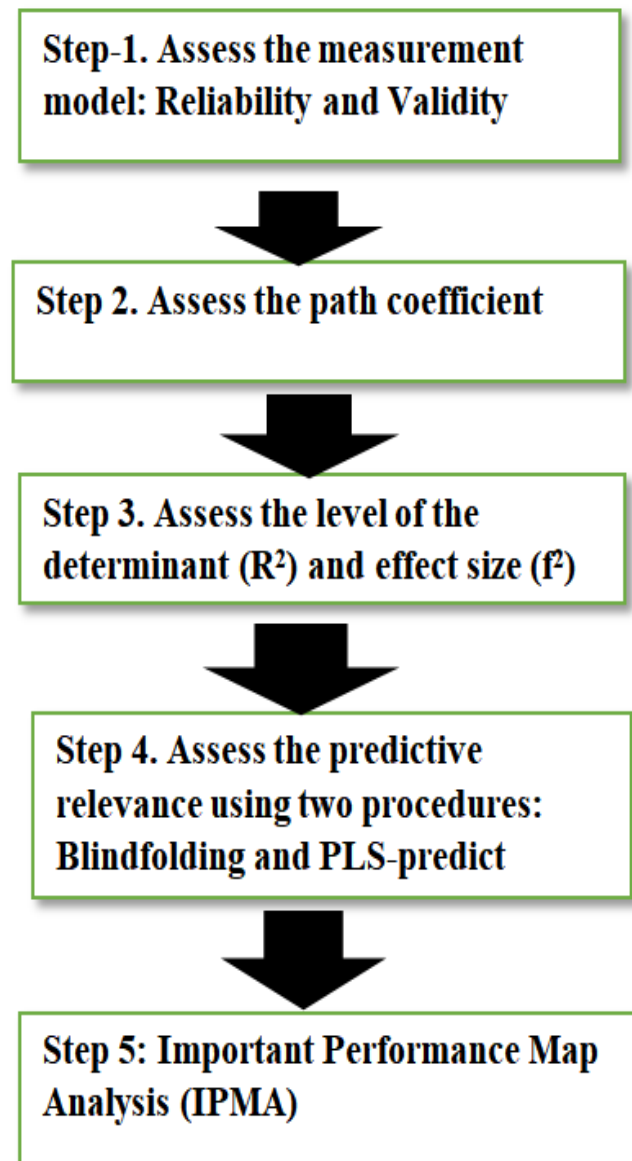
In the case of Zemen Bank, this model investigated the impact of internal branding and brand attitude on employee retention. In order to do this, the study used a technique that may present a comprehensive view of the analytical framework. So, the study used the Structural Equation Model to comprehend the results of the second-generation statistic that was stated before in the research strategy chapter (SEM). The study utilized the software suite Smart PLS Version 4 to do this. This model has five latent variables: internal branding, brand orientation, brand identification, brand commitment, and intention to stay. Each latent variable has selective indicators that capture the contents of the construct. Thus, internal branding is exogenous variables measured by six sub questionnaire. The second variable Brand Orientation which have effect on brand identification and brand commitment. Brand orientation is measured by each five Likert scale questionnaire. The third variable brand identification mediates the relationship between brand orientation and intention to stay in the bank. The third variable (Brand Identification) is explained by five Likert scale questionnaire (see in the appendices part of the questionnaire. The fourth mediating variable, Brand commitment mediates the relationship between brand orientation and intention to stay in the bank. The variable is explained by five sub categories (questionnaires as shown in the figure below). Finally, the last variable (dependent variable), intention to stay (employee turnover) is explained by three sub categories questionnaire.

Figure 4.1: PLS-SEM Outer Model



As shown in figure 4.2, the PLS-SEM approach employs a methodical sequential process for studying and assessing the theoretical model.

Figure 4.2 Steps in PLS-SEM analysis techniques



Source: researcher compiled from different sources (2023)

Also, a summary of the method used to evaluate the measurement (outer) model is provided in table.

Table 4.2 General Guideline for Measurement Model Evaluation

Reflective measurement models Reflective indicator loadings Internal consistency reliability	Minimum 0.70 (or 0.60 in exploratory research), and a maximum of 0.95 to avoid indicator redundancy, which would compromise content validity—recommended b/n 0.7—0.9. Test if the internal consistency reliability is significantly higher (lower) than the recommended minimum (maximum) thresholds. (Hair et al., 2017, 2019).
Convergent validity Discriminant validity	AVE \geq 0.50 For conceptually similar constructs: HTMT < 0.90 For conceptually different constructs: HTMT < 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015).
Formative measurement models Convergent validity (redundancy analysis) Collinearity (VIF)	\geq 0.70 correlation probable (i.e. critical) <u>collinearity</u> issues when VIF \geq 5 Ideally show that VIF < 3 (Hair et al, 2017, 2019).
Statistical significance of weight	Loadings of \geq 0.50 that are statistically significant are considered as relevant and acceptable (Hair et al, 2017, 2019).

Source: Compiled by the researcher from different sources (2023)

4.4.1 Measurement Validity

It is crucial that techniques and findings be valid in order for the study to be valuable and applicable in a variety of situations. Research data gathering techniques must also seem trustworthy and repeatable for results to be legitimate. A type of validity check on the capacity to assess latent (unobservable) constructs is measurement validity. The reflective and formative measurement models are typically the two options that the researcher (or researchers) can select from. Individual indicator reliability, internal consistency, discriminant, and convergent validity are all considered in the evaluation of the measurement (inner) model in PLS-SEM.

4.4.2 Indicators Reliability

Depending on the construct's nature, such as reflecting or formative, indicator dependability is measured using the outside loadings or outer weight. It describes how much variance in an item is explained by the variable (Hair et al, 2017). Items should be dropped that have an outer loading value of less than 0.4 and those with an outer loading value of more than 0.7 should be preserved. A hidden variable should typically account for at least 50% of the variation of each indicator, according to a widely accepted rule of thumb. In turn, this shows that the variation between the concept and its indicator is greater than the variance of the measurement error.

Indicators/ Construct	Item reliability		Convergent validity		
	Loading's	VIF	CR	AVE	Alpha
Internal Branding			0.866	0.520	0.822
IBQ1	0.701	1.582			
IBQ2	0.754	1.969			
IBQ3	0.699	1.809			
IBQ4	0.786	2.012			
IBQ5	0.664	1.557			
IBQ6	0.718	1.278			
Brand Orientation			0.877	0.614	0.841
BOQ1	0.778	1.896			
BOQ2	0.825	2.138			
BOQ3	0.847	2.213			
BOQ4	0.783	1.883			
BOQ5	0.672	1.535			
Brand Identification			0.921	0.700	0.892
BIQ1	0.803	2.027			
BIQ2	0.838	2.464			
BIQ3	0.876	2.897			
BIQ4	0.864	2.784			
BIQ5	0.800	2.070			
Brand Commitment			0.905	0.656	0.869
BCQ1	0.802	1.843			
BCQ2	0.814	2.001			
BCQ3	0.804	2.032			
BCQ4	0.811	2.103			
BCQ5	0.818	1.957			
Employee turnover(intention to stay)			0.850	0.656	0.732
ETQ1	0.852	1.877			
ETQ2	0.862	1.959			
ETQ3	0.706	1.209			

As explained in the table 4.3, the outer loading of reflective measures, for the outer loading of employee turnover (Intention to stay), Brand commitment and Brand Identification have outer loading above the minimum level of threshold which is 0.7. Nonetheless, as emphasized by Hair et al. (2017), the concept that the goal is exploratory is reasonable with outer loading or outside weight over 0.6. As a result of this the outer loading level below 0.7 like (IBQ3,IBQ5 and BOQ5).

4.4.3 Construct-Level Reliability

Because of the construct-level dependability, elements belonging to the same constructions showed a stronger link to one another (Hair et al., 2017). Using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, the current study looked at internal consistency reliability. Although Cronbach's alpha tested the internal consistency of a multi-item scale's uni-dimensionality, and composite reliability looked at how effectively the construct was assessed using the items provided (Hair et al., 2017). From the table above, the Cronbach's alpha value is greater than 0.7, therefore there is problem of construct level reliability, so the researcher understand that the data set was reliable.

4.4.4. Discriminant Validity

Evidence that measurements of dimensions that theoretically should not be substantially linked with one another are actually not found to be significantly correlated with one another serves as proof of discriminant validity. In reality, convergent validity coefficients should be substantially larger than discriminant validity coefficients. Usually, the cross-loadings are the first method used to evaluate the indicators' discriminant validity. An indicator's outer loading on the linked construct, or its correlation with other constructs, should explicitly be bigger than any of its cross-loadings (Hair et al., 2017). Chin (1998) advised looking at the cross-loading inside factor loading since at the item-level discriminant validity signifies the size of a particular construct separate itself from other constructs in the model. The study's cross-loading result is more than the 0.4 levels recommended by Hair et al (2017).

The second method for evaluating discriminant validity is the Fornell-Larcker criteria. It contrasts the correlations between the latent variable and the square root of the AVE values. AVE may be used to prove discriminant validity as well. According to the Fornell-Larcker

criterion, the square root of an AVE for any latent variable should be larger than its correlation with any other latent variable (Garson, 2016). The square root of AVE is displayed in the diagonal cells of the Fornell-Lacker criteria table in the Smart PLS output, and correlations are displayed below it (Garson, 2016).

Constructs	Internal branding	Brand Orientation	Brand Identifications	Brand Commitment	Intention to stay
Heterotrait-monotrait ratio					
Internal branding					
Brand Orientation	0.679				
Brand Identifications	0.611	0.631			
Brand Commitment	0.629	0.617	0.808		
Intention to stay	0.539	0.633	0.669	0.773	
Fornell-Larcker criterion's					
Internal branding	0.837				
Brand Orientation	0.621	0.783			
Brand Identifications	0.550	0.540	0.837		
Brand Commitment	0.551	0.531	0.717	0.810	
Intention to stay	0.444	0.490	0.540	0.622	0.810

As shown in table 4, no inter-construct correlation value exceeded the square-root of the AVE, satisfying the discriminant validity condition. According to Henseler et al. (2014), the HTMT value should be less than 0.90, and for conceptually dissimilar constructions, it should be less than 0.85. According to the general guidelines, Table 4 demonstrates that all construct values are smaller than the maximum permitted values, which further suggests that the study model achieved discriminant validity.

4.4.5. Convergent Validity

The degree to which a measure correlates well with other measures of the same variable is known as convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017). AVE is calculated to evaluate the reflection measurement's convergent validity. The study's model met the criteria for convergent validity since the AVE value needed to be more than 0.50 (Hensler et al., 2014). PLS-SEM studies based on smaller sample sizes have problems because of the collinearity issue (Hair et al., 2017). The model must thus be free of the collinearity problem in order to achieve robust estimate. The VIF need to be lower than 5. (Hensler et al., 2014). By collinearity diagnosis, the convergent validity of the formative construct is evaluated (Hair et al., 2017). The outer and inner VIF values are below 5, as shown in tables 3 and 5 correspondingly, and as a result, the formative construct of the model has established convergent validity.

4.5 PLS-SEM Structural Model Evaluation

4.5.1 Goodness of Fit

R2 values were employed as a measurement of predictability by the researcher(s). The Godness of Fit (GoF) is a measure that combines effect size and convergent validity; however, because it supplies the essential data, it is not produced by Smart PLS and can range from 0 to 1. (Garson, 2016). GoF is calculated as follows in PLS-SEM.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{GoF} &= \sqrt{\text{Average commonality} * \text{Average } R^2} \\ &= \sqrt{0.787 * 0.714} = 0.6334 \text{ or } 63.34.18\% \end{aligned}$$

R2 values of above 0.67, 0.67 - 0.33, and below 0.0.33 are regarded as big, moderate, and weak, respectively, for a model (Hair et al., 2017). As a result, the computation above clearly shown that the research model's R2 is higher than moderate. This suggests that the model's predicted accuracy is high.

4.5.2 Path Coefficient Diagnosis

The PLS SEM calculated coefficients may be checked for significance using the bootstrap sample; the technique generates several bootstrap samples; a 5,000 resample is advised (Hair et al., 2017).

Hypothesis	Path relation	F2	R2	VIF	Path coefficient	t-test	Report
H1	IB -> BO	0.627	0.386	1.00	0.621	19.661***	Supported
H2	BO -> BC	0.060	0.542	1.427	0.198	3.801***	Supported
H3	BO -> BI	0.427	0.299	1.00	0.547	11.890***	Supported
H4	BI -> ET	0.013	0.429	2.237	0.127	1.773*	Not Supported
H5	BC -> ET	0.148	0.429	2.182	0.429	6.397***	Supported
H6	BO -> ET	0.043	0.429	1.513	0.193	2.951***	Supported
H7	BI -> BC	0.567	0.542	1.427	0.609	13.849***	Supported

Note: IB is internal Branding, BO is brand orientation, BC is brand commitment, BI is Brand Identification and ET is employee turnover (measured by Intention to stay). ***, **, and * indicated that 1 percent, 5 percent and 10 percent level of significance, the variable are significant.

The above table demonstrated that Internal Branding has a significant and positive effect on Brand orientation in Zemen Bank. The findings showed that internal branding had an impact on brand orientation, which is the foundation for understanding and knowing how Zemen Bank's brand messages (i.e., values, norms, artifacts, and assumptions) are applied within the company. This is so that workers can perform and deliver in accordance with the Bank's requirements. Brand orientation does this by assisting in the development of a proper brand attitude utilizing an inside-out strategy. Because of this, strengthening Zemen Bank's internal branding would immediately strengthen brand orientation. In addition to the findings, the researcher is aware that marketing the brand among workers and treating them as internal clients would increase understanding and recognition of the brand as a crucial component in the formation of organizational brand culture. The study finding supports with studies who found that internal Branding is a major determinant of Brand orientation (Iyer et al., 2018; Kucherov et al., 2022; Dechawatanapaisal; 2018).

Brand orientation has significant and positive effect on brand commitment in the case of Zemen bank. Clarity regarding your target audience is produced by brand positioning. It also explains to your target market why they should choose you as their firm and what makes your goods or

services unique. You may use it to support your pricing strategy. A price plan may be supported by the brand's positioning. From the result in the above table, improving the level of brand orientation in the bank will automatically improve the employee's commitment towards Zemen Bank. The corporate brand should be the focal point for developing all areas of strategy, and employee brand-oriented conduct in the retail setting should be in line with it. The degree of brand orientation throughout the organization should have an impact on this alignment.

When we come to the third relationship which explained that Brand orientation has a positive and significant effect on Brand identification. The foundation of brand orientation is the idea that brands may be crucial to the direction and success of a business. This is due to the synchronistic interaction between a brand orientation that is oriented on brands and a marketing orientation that is centered on customers. The two orientations can both be useful and desired. The same holds true for a corporate marketing orientation that prioritizes stakeholders and a corporate brand orientation built on corporate brands. In the instance of Zemen Bank, the researcher has finally realized that raising brand orientation is a deciding element in brand identification. The result is align with Balmer et al., (2021), Merk & Michel (2019) and Reid et al. (2005).

The other relationship the effect of Brand identification on employs turn over (Intention to stay), the researcher find that brand identification have no a significant effect on intention to say. This means that improving or decreasing the level of brand identification has no effect on employs turn over and intention to stay.

Brand commitment has a significant and positive determining factor for employs intention to stay in the bank. One of the bank's most precious assets is a loyal employees interested in developing along with the workplace. In order to build organizational strengths and contribute to economic success, loyalty is essential (Lee et al., 2014). Retention impacts cost reductions through reduced resourcing and training expenses, which are direct costs, as well as indirect costs from experienced performers who are familiar with daily activities and associated stakeholders they are interacting with (DeConinck, 2011). It follows that the retention issues continue to be of significant importance. As a result the researcher anticipated that working on the improvement of brand commitment has a higher and significant effect on intention to stay in

Zemem Bank, i.e, developing and working on brand commitment has automatically and better mechanism to stay item employs within the organizations.

Lastly brand orientation has a significant effect on employees stay within the bank, if the bank organizations and higher officials facilitating and giving brand orientation to the new comer as well as to the existing staffs will automatically improve the level of working with bank. The other variable, brand identification has a positive and significant relationship with brand commitment.

4.5.3 Mediation Effects Assessment

With the third construct mediator, path coefficient analysis measures both the direct influence of the exogenous construct on the endogenous construct as well as the indirect effect of the endogenous construct on the exogenous construct (Hair et al., 2017). We validate the processes behind the cause-effect link between the exogenous construct and the endogenous construct by examining the strength of the mediator variable's associations with the other constructs. A series of investigations focused on the importance of the indirect and direct effects are necessary for the mediation effect to operate.

Depending on how important the model interactions are and how they relate to one another, researchers should distinguish between various forms of mediation and non-mediation. As suggested by Hair et al. (2017), the study employed bootstrapping rather than the Sobel test to examine mediating effects because the latter is inapplicable on a PLS-SEM scenario.

Hypothesis	Path relationship	Sample mean	T-test	Report
H8	BO -> BI -> ET	0.069	1.770*	Not supported
H9	BO -> BC -> ET	0.086	3.257***	Supported
H10	IB -> BO -> ET	0.121	2.884***	Supported

Note: T-statistics is calculated through bootstrap procedures. *90% significant level; **95% significant level; ***99% significant level.

Table above describes that the mediation effect of brand attitude in terms of Brand identification and Brand commitment on intention to stay as well as the mediation effect of brand orientation on the relationship between internal branding and intention to stay. From the result Brand commitment statically and positively mediates on the causal link between brand orientation and intention to stay is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. Like that of Brand commitment, Brand orientation statically and positively mediates on the causal link between internal branding and intention to stay is statistically significant at 5% level of significance therefore, Brand commitment have a significant positive mediation effect on the indirect effect of brand orientation on intention to stay of employees in Zemen Bank. This implies that brand commitment plays a further worsening role in intention to stay. However, Brand identification has no statistically significant mediating effect on the casual association between brand orientation and intention to stay.

Variance Accounted Factor analysis can be used to determine the strength of the mediator once the significance of the indirect impact has been determined (VAF). It is determined using the indirect-to-total effect ratio, and the VAF measures how well the mediation process accounts for the variance in the dependent variable (Hair et al., 2017). A straightforward mediation VAF is calculated as follows.

$$(x * y) / (x * y + z) = (0.386 * 0.299) / (0.386 * 0.299 + 0.429)$$

= 0.21199 or 21.19%

This suggests that the mediating variable brand commitment accounts for 21.19% of the connection between brand orientation and intention to stay. According to the rule of thumb, if the VAF is less than 20%, one should assume that very little mediation takes place; if it is between 20% and 80%, one may describe the scenario as a typical partial mediation; and if it is over 80%, one could assume that full mediation has taken place (Hair et al., 2017). As 21.19% falls between 20% and 80%, the brand commitment therefore partially mediates the effect.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overview of the study's key results, the study's conclusion, its suggested policy implications, and its addition to the body of academic research are all highlighted in this chapter. The study first reexamines the research issues and evaluates how well the theoretical orientation addresses them. Second, the study made an effort to reconfirm the major research results in light of the literature and the contributions the investigation has made to the theory. Finally, it identifies the advantages and disadvantages of the methodology and data used. Lastly, it identifies potential research directions and policy ramifications.

5.1 Discussions

Generally from the result the researcher understand that internal branding has a significant effect on brand orientation. From the result the researcher depicted that Zemen Bank has been doing its internal branding as identity is the cornerstone of one of the most important areas of study in recent years. In addition the researcher understand that in Zemen Bank, employees' attitudes and internal branding play a key role in achieving a high level of customer satisfaction. This study was supported by Kucherov et al. (2022), Mainardes et al. (2022). Accordingly, Zemen bank in particular and banks in general, should pay special attention to the facets that are part of the corporate brand identity (employee and client focus, corporate visual identity, brand personality, consistent communications and human resource initiatives). This will foster the bonds between the employees and the organization, and as a consequence, their performance and satisfaction.

The Brand Orientation has a significant effect on brand commitment in the Zemen Bank. In recognition of the long-term value of retained and committed customers, Zemen Bank is increasingly focusing on managing customer relationships, and seeking to increase revenues through targeted marketing activities aimed at developing, maintaining, enhancing successful relationship with customers due to its working in Brand orientation. Banks increasingly work on brand orientation has improving the brand commitment and finally helps them to get more customer base and reducing their employee turnover (Barros-Arrieta & García-Cali, 2021).

Additionally, internal branding has significant activity effect on brands represented a new, and powerful, platform by which organizations and stakeholders could have on-going, bi-lateral, and mutually profitable exchanges and relationships. At its core, a corporate brand denotes a powerful covenant (an informal contract) between an organization and its customers and other stakeholders. Corporate brands are only meaningful when they meet the wants and needs of customers and other stakeholders, and account must be given to their perceptions of the corporate brand.

5.2 Conclusions

The study employed PLS-SEM to do this. Due to its ability to estimate complicated models with several constructs, indicator variables, and structural pathways without imposing distributional assumptions on the data, PLS-SEM is particularly intriguing to many researchers. The multivariate analysis uses statistical techniques to study numerous variables at once. The variables often reflect measures related to people, businesses, events, activities, circumstances, etc (Hair et al, 2017). The measurements may be gathered from databases that contain secondary data, but they are frequently obtained via surveys or observations that are used to gather primary data.

For this research a total of 320 questionnaires were prepared and distributed for Commercial Bank of Ethiopia Employees. From these 309 was returned and they were used for quantitative analysis and discussion; which indicates that the response rate was 85%, which is an acceptable percent.

The researcher from the result concluded that internal Branding has a significant and positive effect on Brand orientation in Zemen Bank. The findings showed that internal branding had an impact on brand orientation, which is the foundation for understanding and knowing how Zemen Bank's brand messages (i.e., values, norms, artifacts, and assumptions) are applied within the company. This is so that workers can perform and deliver in accordance with the Bank's requirements. Brand orientation does this by assisting in the development of a proper brand attitude utilizing an inside-out strategy. Because of this, the researcher concluded that strengthening Zemen Bank's internal branding would immediately strengthen brand orientation. In addition to the findings, the researcher is aware that marketing the brand among workers and

treating them as internal clients would increase understanding and recognition of the brand as a crucial component in the formation of organizational brand culture.

The researcher concluded that brand commitment has a significant and positive determining factor for employees' intention to stay in the bank. One of the bank's most precious assets is a loyal employees interested in developing along with the workplace. In order to build organizational strengths and contribute to economic success, loyalty is essential (Lee et al., 2014). Retention impacts cost reductions through reduced resourcing and training expenses, which are direct costs, as well as indirect costs from experienced performers who are familiar with daily activities and associated stakeholders they are interacting with (DeConinck, 2011). It follows that the retention issues continue to be of significant importance. As a result the researcher anticipated that working on the improvement of brand commitment has a higher and significant effect on intention to stay in Zemen Bank, i.e, developing and working on brand commitment has automatically and better mechanism to stay item employs within the organizations.

Lastly the researcher found that brand orientation has a significant effect on employees stay within the bank, from the result the researcher concluded that, if the bank organizations and higher officials facilitating and giving brand orientation to the new comer as well as to the existing staffs will automatically improve the level of working with bank. The other variable, brand identification has a positive and significant relationship with brand commitment.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the discussions and conclusions, the researcher advised the following recommendations and policy implications.

- For managers in the fields of branding, marketing, and HR management of The Bank, The findings imply that managers must engage in internal brand-building activities to create and sustain an organizational brand mentality at a cultural level and to match these cultural brand values with the attitudes of the employees. The results offer empirical proof of the significance of brand orientation in ensuring that workers have positive brand experiences. This strengthens their psychological bond and sense of belonging, which increases their intention to stay. This means that because the process immediately

affects an organizational brand attitude and culture as a whole, brand creation is not simply the responsibility of brand managers or marketers, but also a shared duty of all employees at all levels. New positions should be created to enable organizations to jointly generate brand experiences for workers, just as they do for external customers, and the barriers between HR and marketing operations should be torn down. This shows that working together on brand management and HR initiatives is crucial and should not be disregarded.

- Since brand identification mediates the relationship between brand orientation and intention to remain, leaders at all levels should concentrate on helping employees in the bank feel like they belong. With focused internal communication (e.g., outlook communication, bulletin board, and corporate newsletter), efficient brand education programs on relevant brand messaging and how to internalize them, and maybe work incentives, managers should support and promote the internal branding process. Without managers who explicitly state the organizations and brand's goals and missions and routinely engage staff, the process won't be effective. Employees' pleasure in and commitment to the brand will be enhanced by regular internal branding initiatives, which will also encourage them to individually recognize and embrace a brand-oriented work culture. Organizations may successfully retain their personnel in the future in addition to building brand recognition.
- Moreover, through frequent employee surveys, people data analytics, and performance index scorecards, brand managers and HR professionals should collaborate to continuously assess people's mindsets and attitudes about the Bank's and its brand values. This will give prompt notice of any issues with internal brand-building procedures. Employees' feelings of commitment to their existing jobs and impressions of the brand may be impacted by management's failure to respond to their perceptions and responses, which may raise the likelihood that they will quit. The cost of turnover and human capital management may be reduced by encouraging staff to stay, which in turn maintains and even increases productivity, continuous service levels, customer satisfaction, and profitability.

5.4 Limitations and directions for future research

Although the study adds to knowledge and managerial practice, numerous flaws call for care when interpreting the findings. The possibility for shared method variation from a single source may be increased, first, by self-report surveys on all measures. As a result, longitudinal study using time series data and a variety of measuring techniques might be examined, taking into account potential correlations between the underlying elements on a larger scale. Second, the study simply examined intent to remain, which might not accurately reflect behavior. An employee's decisions may be impacted by developing circumstances.

In summary, the aim of this study was to comprehend how internal branding affects brand orientation, which in turn affects brand perceptions and staff retention. A sample of employees from the total population was used to test the hypothesis. The results of this study show those strong internal branding influences workers' perceptions of the brand. The appropriate attitudes persuade workers to stay because they foster brand identification and commitment. The research adds to the body of knowledge by highlighting internal branding as one of the solutions to the difficult question, "What keeps employees around?" That is, people with the correct attitudes and perceptions will feel proud of the brand when employees are prepared to be more brand-oriented.

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Appendices
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING

Dear respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data from employees of Zemen Bank for conducting Masters of Marketing thesis on the title “The Effects of Internal Branding and Brand Attitude on Employees Retention” In The Case of Zemen Bank. Please be honest and objective while filling the questionnaire. The information you give is used only for academic purpose and will be kept confidential.

Thank you, for your cooperation and timely response in advance

Thank you!!!

ERMIYASS ANDARGE

Data Collection Format

Part I: Background Information

1. Gender

- a. Male b. Female

2. Your current position in Zemen Bank

- a. Teller d. senior operation
b. Cashier e. Manager
c. Credit analyst f. Director

Other, please specify _____

3. Indicate your work experience in Zemen Bank

- a. Less than 1 year c. 6-10 years
b. 1-5 years d. above 10 years

4. Indicate your Education background

- a. Grade 1-12 c. first Degree
b. Collage Diploma d. Master Degree and above

SECTION TWO – QUESTIONS ON THE EFFECTS OF INTERNAL BRANDING AND BRAND ATTITUDES IN THE CASE OF ZEMEN BANK.

Instruction: Please rate the following statement on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2= Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4= Agree (A) and 5= Strongly Agree (SA).

No	Internal Branding	1	2	3	4	5
1.	To what extent do you feel you have the knowledge to do your job in a way that supports the brand values?					
2	To what extent do you feel that you have enough knowledge about the brand values in order to deliver them correctly to the customers?					
3	To what extent do you feel it is important for you as an employee to understand what has been promised to the customer in relation to the service you provide?					
4	To what extent do you take it personal if someone commented negatively about Zemen Bank?					
5	To what extent do you feel emotionally attached to the brand in Zemen Bank?					
6	To what extent do you feel that you are proud to tell others that you are part of Zemen Bank?					
	Brand Orientation					
7	Branding aspects influence all marketing activities that Zemen perform with business partners.					
8	Branding is an essential aspect when Zemen chooses what business partners to cooperate with.					
9	Zemen brand is an asset that helps us to establish relationships with strong business partners.					
10	Zemen business partners understand that branding our product/service is a top priority for our firm					

11	Branding flows through in all Zemen marketing activities.					
	Brand Identification					
12	Zemen brand says a lot about the kind of person I am and I want to be					
13	Zemen brand plays an important role in my life					
14	I am very attached to Zemen Brand					
15	I feel a strong sense of belonging to brand Zemen Brand					
16	The decision to choose this Company is based on values that I judge to be important in my personal life.					
	Brand Commitment					
17	I consider myself to be loyal to Brand of Zemen Bank					
18	When another bank's brand is on sale, I will generally choose it rather than my usual stay in Zemen.					
19	To me, Zemen is the same as other Ethiopian Banks					
20	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me					
21	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my life in Zemen Bank					
	Employee turnover / intention to stay					
22	I do not feel emotionally attached to this bank					
23	I have intention to resign from Zemen within a shorter time					
24	Whenever I get a job in another bank definitely I leave this bank					
25	I am being dissatisfied working for Zemen due to different reasons, so I would probably look for outside opportunities.					