Research Article

THE IMPACT OF ETHICAL HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND CSR MEDIATIONS ON EMPLOYER BRANDS OF EGYPTIAN BANKS

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ABSTRACT

This research will study the relationship between HRM ethics, CSR and its impact on employer brand. (or) A question that arises in this context is then how the two constructs – HRM ethics and CSR – are correlated and what is their impact on the employer brand? To achieve the aim of this research, it is divided into three main sections. In the first section, a theoretical framework related to ethical HRM, CSR and employer brand is outlined. The second, empirical section begins with research design and sampling, data collection and measurement followed by validity and reliability of the survey instrument. At last, the research provides the statistical techniques used to test the hypotheses. Finally, the conclusion section summarizes the major contributions of the research, and the implications for theory, practice and for future research.

INTRODUCTION

It is not only financial competitiveness that the survival of a nowadays organization depends on. It is no less relevant for organizations to justify their existence in the eyes of their multiple stakeholders. Respectively organizations face increasing pressure to act in a socially responsible manner (Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012). To demonstrate their corporate social responsibility (CSR), organizations develop codes of ethics. Human resources management (HRM) plays a critical role in achieving the above aim, throw performing its functions in an ethical manner. The association between HRM and CSR is twofold. On the one hand, HRM, as a management function of an organization, can be looked upon as an object of CSR. Socially responsible organizations are believed to be taking better care of their employees and continuously seeking to improve their working conditions and well-being. The latter are definitely a prerogative of HRM. On the other hand, it is through an organization's employees that actual CSR manifests in everyday activities of an organization. Even more they can be viewed as an indicator of CSR (Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012). Such activities expose the organization's social responsibility to the public through their everyday interaction with customers and other external stakeholders inside and outside the organization (Shoemaker *et al.,* 2006).

As the intangible assets become the crucial factor for success for a company in a highly competitive market, a brand, being a valuable intangible asset, is a part of the market capital of the company. At the present time, the meaning of the brand concept has undergone considerable changes. Earlier brands related exclusively to products and services and were mainly defined as personified trademarks. Nowadays the semantic field "brand" has broadened considerably. Due to interdisciplinary studies in marketing and HRM in the middle of 1990s the employer brand concept emerged (Kucherov and zavyalova 2012). Employer branding has emerged from applying marketing principles to the field of HRM. This means that the employment experience is seen as a product and employees are seen as consumers of this product (Lievens, 2007). Thus, employer branding could be defined as application of branding principles and technologies to HRM. Employer branding (EB) is a term often used to describe how organizations market their offerings to potential and existing employees, communicate with them and maintain their loyalty, "promoting, both within and outside the firm, a clear view of what makes a firm different and desirable as an employer" (Jiang and Iles 2011, p.98). In other words, employer branding allows the organization to differentiate itself from other employers competing for talent and to attract applicants (Foster *et al.,* 2010). Here, we will focus our views on the employees within the company, because they more be affected by applying HRM ethics, besides their perception about the CRS are composed, which in turn impact the image of the organization as an employer.

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Also, this research develops integrative approaches to HRM ethics, CSR and marketing by focusing on the customer and employee stakeholders. Customers expect that the products and services they buy are sourced and produced, and can be used and disposed of, in socially responsible ways. Employees have similar expectations that recruitment, deployment, development and release practices embody employer commitment to ethical people management. Each stakeholder group uses its respective set of expectations to assess the CSR component of the brand value propositions that Egyptian banks offer.

It is noteworthy; however, that little research has been conducted on the CSR-HRM linkage so far. Thus, this research contributes to prior research in the field, as among other Issues it looks into the relationship between HRM ethics and CSR. Besides, there is no empirical studies illustrate the impact of the relationship between HRM And CRS on the employer brand. To be more specific, this research will study the relationship between HRM ethics, CSR and its impact on employer brand.(or) A question that arises in this context is then how the two constructs – HRM ethics and CSR – are correlated and what is their impact on the employer brand?

To achieve the aim of this research, it is divided into three main sections. In the first section, a theoretical framework related to ethical HRM, CSR and employer brand is outlined. The second, empirical section begins with research design and sampling, data collection and measurement followed by validity and reliability of the survey instrument. At last, the research provides the statistical techniques used to test the hypotheses. Finally, the conclusion section summarizes the major contributions of the research, and the implications for theory, practice and for future research.

Literature Review and Exploratory Evidence

Accordingly, the literature review and exploratory evidenceof this research will cover five main research streams, namely:

- Ethical HRM.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): As an Intermediate Business Creed and Policy
- Employer Brand (EB).
- Linkage between ethical HRM, CSR and EB
- Analysis of institutional context of secondary data.

Ethical HRM

In the previous decades, ethics have received considerable attention from researchers, whereby a significantincrease in researching on this concept has been made. Ethics is an important issue in all relationships formed,either inside or outside organizations, particularly the relationships with stakeholders, including customers,suppliers, owners, and employees. Management scholars and practitioners have recognized the importance ofethics in enhancing business relationships, and help organization satisfy its stakeholders` needs. Failure to dealeffectively with issues of ethics and justice can often lead to organization failure in achieving its goals (Judeh 2011). Since ethicscan be considered one of the main factors that affect the organizational credibility, managers should stick to theirpersonal and organizational values, and enhance the truth climate in their organizations.

So, organizational ethics are considered to be one of the most important ingredients that affect not onlyorganizational effectiveness but also survival. In particular, much attention has been paid on ethical climate in organizational ethics literatures (Choi *et al.,* 2013), because ethical climate is a critical factor influencing the employees' perception of how their organization emphasizes the ethical aspect of business (Martin and Cullen, 2006) and encourages employees' ethical work behaviors (Schminke *et al.,* 2007). Human resource (HR) practices have been recognized by many scholars as a crucialfunction in enhancing organizational productivity and performance. Moreover, many scholars (Bhanugopan*et al.,* 2013) View human resource management (HRM) as a means of sustaining competitive advantage for organizations. HRM practices deserve particular attention because they are the primarysource through which employees experience organization's attitude towards them (Pucetaite *et al.,* 2010). For example, if these practices are perceived as just and fair, employees' attitudes toward the organization as a benevolent actor, their motivation to follow organization's values and norms and act positively may become stronger (Cropanzano and Stein, 2009). Consequently, such behavior builds the basis for a reciprocal attitude from the organization's side.

According to all above, HRM ethics means applying code of ethics on HRM practices, which is an essential element of a corporate ethics programme. The importance to apply ethical values to all practices of HRM and how to apply leaves companies to integrity risks and reputational damage to stakeholders inside and outside the organization (e.g., Choi *et al.,* 2013; Hussein 2009). Then, it seemed thatethics and personnel might develop a close relationship, based on both the likelihoodthat new ethics management duties would fall largely on personnel units. The idealseemed to be a synergy between ethics and HRM (Plant and Ran 2009) that saw ethics as a considerationin the hiring process, education and training, the monitoring and enforcement ofstandards and values, and the application of penalties for noncompliance. Accordingly, the intention to link ethical beliefs to HRM is important, because these values areexpected to shape the preference for HRM policies and practices.The major and most common policies and practicesapplicable or used in a number of organizations in different contexts categorize into six groups (Katou *et al.,* 2010), as follows:

- Planning and nature of the job choices: Fair and just HR planning (Sillup and klimberg 2010).
- Recruitment choices: Fair and just hiring (e.g., Szalkowski and Jankowicz 1999; Hussein 2009).
- Performance evaluation choices: Fair and just evaluation (e.g.Sillup and klimberg 2010; Katou 2013).
- Rewards and compensation choices: Fair and just rewarding (e.g., Szalkowski and Jankowicz 1999; Francis 2002).
- Training and development choices: Ethical Training (e.g., Francis 2002; Pucetaite *et al.* 2010; Bradshaw 2013).
- Employee relations: Open communication and employees' Participation (e.g., Szalkowski and Jankowicz1999; Mariappanader 2013).

Previous research indicates thatHRM practices such as fair and just selection and hiring, evaluation, rewarding, dismissal can contribute positively to organizational trust. Also Cropanzano and Stein (2009) note that organization's just rewarding can influence individual's decision to act ethically.

Thus, it can be stated that fair and just HRM practices may enhance employees' self-regulation and motivate them to act in a predictable and trustworthy way at least for economic reasons, which constitutes the background for cognitive trust (Pucetaite *et al.,* 2010), which in turn effects on the organization as an employer. Consequently, employees' ethical behavior may lead to reciprocity from an organization's side, which could be expressed by the organization's care about the employees' well-being. An example of organizational care is a set of practices which are responsive to employees' needs and interestsfor example, flexible time arrangements, life insurance, provision of a credit for household purchases and self-development training. Such practices constitute a motivation package that exceeds the minimum of rewarding practices required by law in most developed countries. Finally, although the field of HRM and ethics was expanding as an area of interest among researchers, a few empirical studies were accomplished. This research will discuss how to reduce this gap.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): As an Intermediate Business Creed and Policy

There are many CSR definitions (Ferreira and Real de Oliveira 2014) and this concept has been studied in various scientificfields. Aguilera *et al.* (2007) use a definition of CSR which refers to "the firm'sconsiderations of, and response to, issues beyond the narrow economic, technical, andlegal requirements of the firm to accomplish social [and environmental] benefits alongwith the traditional economic gains which the firm seeks". Others defined CSR as "a conceptwhereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their businessoperations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis". CSR is "the commitment to improve community well-beingthrough discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources". In other words it can be argued that CSR can be defined as policies and practices thatorganizations engage regarding creating positive social, including environmental, changes aimed at different stakeholders. It is important to note that this is a voluntary approach. Starting in the 1960s and in the decades thereafter, the development of SR gainedmomentum and evolved into a concern of scholars for corporate social responsibility (CSR). Keith Davis, considered a forerunner of the modern CSR field (Evans *et al.,* 2013), stated that he was actually pushed into the social issuesarena by businesspeople in the 1960s, rather than the other way around. According to Davis, many businesses seemed lost at the time and wereseeking guidance on how to address social issues since these matters were not beingdiscussed in academic classrooms. Davis and others moved to fulfill this need duringthe late 1960s and early 1970s, further solidifying the growing CSR management field. Some researches provided conceptual clarity regarding the notion of CSR by delineatingfour types of business responsibilities: economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary. Hisconceptualization of CSR attempts to encompass the full range of obligations organizations have to society. He espoused a central claim of modern era thinkers that CSR actions go above and beyond the basic legal requirements and incorporate actionsthat address concerns of constituents beyond shareholders (Evans *et al.,* 2013).

In the past few decades, CSR has gained a growing research and practitioner attention. This by large has been conditioned by such factors as the conception of the negativeoutcomes of globalization, relevance of cooperation, and value transformations innowadays society. However, despite its popularity, the CSR concept still lacks auniversally accepted definition.One of the most widely used CSR definitions has been offered by World BusinessCouncil for Sustainable Development (Buciuniene and Kazlauskaite 2012). According to this definition, CSRis an organization's commitment to a discretionary behavior that leads to economicdevelopment and contributes to the welfare of its employees, local community andsociety at large. Similarly, Kotler and Lee argue that CSR is an organization'scommitment to the enhancement of the community's well-being through ethicalbusiness practices and contribution of corporate resources. It is noteworthy; however, that in the latter CSR concept definition the term "community well-being" incorporatesboth human conditions and environmental issues. McWilliams and Siegel (2006) refers to CSRas an organization's disinterested and voluntary, i.e. not required by law, engagementinto activities leading to the attainment of some social good. Thus, it can be stated that CSR encompasses voluntary organizational commitment to further the well-being of itsemployees and society at large, and discretion in doing business. So**,** the essence of CSR though appears to be social Responsibilities, those voluntary actions (e.g. adherence to established norms and actions that support community), which are undertaken to address more than the fundamental responsibilities of profits and obeying the law (Evans *et al.,* 2013). Thus, CSR is multifaceted and encompasses a number of topics, including, but not limited to, philanthropy, managerial values, corporate governance, politicalinvolvement/behavior, regulation, ethics, and of course, monetary matters such as finance/economics**.**Obviously, whereas classical view focuses CSR as to maximize profit; socio economic approachfocuses on going beyond profits and includes protecting and improving social welfare insideand outside companies. According to all the above, Adhikari (2012) offers four components of CSR. These are:

- Economic (responsibility is to make a profit and grow);
- Legal (duty to obey the law and play the ''the rules of the game'');
- Ethical (obligation to follow the norms placed on them by society); and
- Discretionary (philanthropic activities that support the broader community).

According all the above, researchers found that CSR impacts mainly on financial performance of the organization. However, taking financial measures as the key performanceoutcome is inconsistent with the multiple-stakeholder approach to business, as it isexclusively focused on the shareholder interests. Besides, this underlines the relevanceof studying the CSR impact on multiple performance outcomes. Which performance measures should be used to examine CSR effectiveness?. Speaking of the HRM-performance linkage, Simmons (2009) and Kazlauskaite (2012) distinguish thefollowing categories of performance outcomes.

Financial/accounting outcomes. Organizational outcomes (e.g. productivity, quality, and service). HR-related outcomes (e.g. absenteeism, labor turnover, individual/groupperformance); and .Stock-market performance**.**

But, what's about the organization as an employer from employees' and customers' perspectives?

CSR implications involve each of external (customer) and internal (employee) markets. Socially responsible organizations provide accurate andcomprehensive information via marketing, pricing and sales promotion so that prospectivepurchasers can make informed decisions on whether the goods and services offered meettheir needs. Then these organizations aim to confirm to thosewho have purchased goodsand services that these represent the quality and value that was promised. Responsible organizations make supplementary product informationavailable to customers post purchase, seeking assurances that what they have purchased is safe to use – both personally and interms of its environmental impact (Simmons 2009). Prior research (Pucetaite *et al.,* 2010) found that perceived good treatment –by implementing code of ethics-between the organization and its employees can incite their obligation to reciprocate theorganization (Eisenberger *et al.,*2001). Moreover, the feeling of benevolence between the organization and its employees as well as certainty that the other party will not take an advantage in a risky situation could be strengthened if the organization is open to its employees. This means that the organization clearly communicates its direction of development and managers can beeasily approached for advice and constructive discussions on the job-related matters. Regular and sincere communication puts organizational members in a constant contact, which supports exchanging information about interests, desires and approaches to problems. Thus, an organization learns the reality of its employees and the employeeslearn its preferences and the objectives. That helps to make a firm different and desirable as an employer, increase loyalty and engagement of the employees.

Employer Brand (EB)

Ambler and Barrow (1999) initially introduced employer branding as a researchdiscipline with an explorative study among UK companies of the relevance of applyingbrand management techniques to HRM. Regardless of a certain empirical resistance tointroducing marketing vocabularies and practices to the HRM discipline, the authorsconclude that the employer brand concept is potentially valuable for organizations andthat applying brand management to the HRM function reinforces the strength of andadds value to corporate equity from a customer perspective. Thus, it brings return toboth HRM and branding (Aggerholm *et al.,* 2011). Ambler and Barrow (1996, p. 187) define the employer brand as: "the package of functional, economic and psychologicalbenefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company". EB thereforeprovides both instrumental (economic) and symbolic (psychological) benefits toemployees. This definition has later become a key definition in research on employer branding. Which features could make the company attractive as an employer? In currentliterature there is no common classification of employer brand attributes.

Some authorsseparate employer brand attributes into rational and emotional (Mosley, 2007). Otherssuch as Lievens (2007) consider instrumental and symbolic attributes. We adopt – as (Kucherav and Zavyalova 2012) proposed - todivide employer brand attributes into four groups:

- Economic attributes (high salary, fair system of rewards and bonuses, stableguarantees of employment, the work schedule).
- Psychological attributes (strong corporate culture, positive interpersonalrelations in company, team-working; objective assessment of work).
- Functional attributes (content of work, training perspectives, opportunities ofcareer growth, opportunities to realize fully employees' knowledge and skills).
- Organizational attributes (leadership in market segment, international scope ofactivity, company's history, reputation of consumer brands, reputation oftop-managers, management style).

Employer branding (EB) is a term often used to describe how organizations markettheir offerings to potential and existing employees, communicate with them andmaintain their loyalty, "promoting, both within and outside the firm, a clear view ofwhatmakes a firm different and desirable as an employer" (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004) EB thus represents a further extension of branding theory and research, involvingefforts to communicate to existing and prospective staff that the organization is adesirable place to work, creating compelling, distinctive employee value propositions.HRM interest in EBis due to the contemporary power of brands, HR's continuing search for credibility andincreasing interest in employee engagement has coincided with tight labour marketconditions, leading to the "war for talent" and a growing interest in talent management (Jiang and IIes 2011). The practice of employer branding is predicated on the assumption that humancapital brings value to the firm, and through skillful investment in human capital, firmperformance can be enhanced. Human resource practitioner literature describes employer branding as firm develops the "value proposition" that is to be embodied in thebrand. Using information about the organization's culture, management style, qualitiesof current employees, current employment image (Heilmann 2010), and impressions of product orservice quality managers develop a concept of what particular value their companyoffers employees. Intended to be a true representation of what the firmoffers to its employees, the value proposition provides the central message that isconveyed by the brand Organizations have found that effective employer branding leads to competitive advantage, helpsemployees internalize company values and assists in employee retention (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004).

Linkage between HRM ethics, CRS and EB

This paper develops integrative approaches to HRM, CSR, EB by focusing onthe customer and employee stakeholders, and by demonstrating how closer alignment ofexternal (customer) brands and internal (employee) brands can be achieved. As HRM becomes the management of employee and/oremployer identities based on mutual trust, commitment and matching of expectations inrelation to diverse groups of stakeholders, CSRand the concept of socially responsible employers come into play.

When organizations were rated higher on a full range ofsocially responsible features (community and employee relations, environmental policies, product quality and treatment of minority groups), they tended to be seen as moreattractive as an existing employer (Albinger and Freeman, 2000; Sen *et al.,* 2006). In line with the above, some researchers define ethical HRM as"those long-term oriented conceptual approaches and activities aimed at a sociallyresponsible and economically appropriate recruitment and selection, development,deployment, and downsizing of employees", interpreting sustainable HRM as across-functional task in which value creation and sustained competitive advantage arethe focal points (Aggerholm *et al.,* 2011; Osman *et al.,* 2011). As a result, socially responsible employerscan be defined as employers who seek more than just profit maximization in makingbusiness decisions. It is employers who seek to be good corporate citizens by contributingto the general welfare of the larger community or society even though it may mean sometrade-offs or concessions in the area of profit making. In this paper, we take a broader view and argue that HRM plays acritical role in promoting and enhancing CSR, as it contributes to the development of thesynchronicity between economic and social goals and performance of the organization.One way to disclose the HRM relevance in the CSR implementation is to look into thedrivers of CSR.The organizational pursuance of social goals and engagement in CSR areheavily dependent on corporate values. Besides all and as mentioned before the goal of this research is not onlyto ensure quality in employer-employee relations,but rather to secure a quality in building and sustaining long-term brand-costumerrelationships.

Anorganization's with ethical climate (applying ethical HRM functions) can improve customer satisfaction by encouragingemployees to make efforts to treat customers fairly and to satisfy them.For example, employees who work in organizations with an ethical climate are likely to try toprovide a high quality product to customers, because they think that it is ethicallydesirable to meet guidelines such as product safety. These employees' adherence toethical guidelines will lead to a high quality of exchange relationship and/or trust withcustomers. Because of this, customers would trust products or services provided byemployees working in organization with an ethical climate. In addition, customers mayalso perceive employees working for ethical organizations as more reliable (Mulki *et al.,* 2006), and thus, customers may be more satisfied with customer service. Organizations with an ethical climate are likely to make best theireffort to encourage their employees to behave ethically in order to maintain an ethicalreputation. In this regard, organizations with an ethical climate may provideethics-related training to employees. From this perspective, Weeks *et al*. (2004) arguethat organizations stressing ethics may train their employees to behave ethically whendealing with customers. In sum, when considering that customers' decision to buy isaffected by not only the objective value but also the perceived value of products orservices, customers' perception of an organization's ethics will positively affectcustomers' decision to buy.and thus, lead to better EB. Several studies (Jong 2011) have shown that employees are salient stakeholders to many organizations. Salience is defined as "the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholderclaims".

The organization must stimulate the development of mutual trust and value creation.Trust in employees is indicated by the degree to which employees are givenresponsibility in the execution of their tasks. If mutual trust is to arise,both parties must recognize that the gains of production are fairly distributed amongthe stakeholders of the organization (the principle of distributive fairness) and thatemployees are sufficiently satisfied, involved and participating in the functioning ofthe organization (principle of procedural fairness) (Van Buren, 2005; Brammer *et al.,* 2007). In exchange, employees will actively engage in behavior that supportsachievement of the firm's goals. All these in turn, result in the organizational commitment of employees in the form of reciprocation behavior – i.e. organizational citizenship – and thus in favorable consequences for employee performance. Also, employees' needs and interests and values willcontribute to the organization. Taken together, it is expected that anorganization's ethical climate will be positively related to EB.

Analysis of Institutional Context of Secondary Data

The empirical study of this research was accomplished on National Bank of Egypt (NBE), which considered as one of the best national banks in Egypt for many reasons.NBE is the oldest commercial bank in Egypt. During the FY 2012/2013, NBE managed to achieve positive performance indicators, further provided a set of distinguished finance schemes that meet the needs of key economic sectors. All such efforts resulted in achieving a net profit (before income taxes) of EGP 7.1 bn., increasing 17.4% yoy. Net profits rose 8.1% yoy to record EGP 3 bn. NBE received many awards from international organizations in recognition of its outstanding performance. For example, the Bank won the Euromoney Project Finance Magazine-African Petrochemicals Deal of the Year 2012. Furthermore, NBE was ranked number three in terms of loan syndication in Europe and Middle East Area (EMEA) with a market share of 6.1% coming ahead of global institutions and banks according to Bloomberg Loan Syndications rankings in 2012. NBE was also ranked number-five mandated lead arranger by market share in MENA region with a 6.3% market share as NBE arranged 9 loans in the amount of USD 1.3 bn.NBE is keen to support and enhance its human resources to be equipped with new diversified competencies via a set of advanced training programs in Egypt and abroad in collaboration with world financial institutions. NBE further courts highly-qualified candidates and appoints high-caliber cadres in the leading positions. Oracle Human Resources and Oracle Financials have virtually gone live .In July 2013 issue, The Banker ranked NBE 259th ahead of all Egyptian banks, among the largest 1,000 banks worldwide and 7th among Arab banks, by total assets.

NBE is always keen to render up-to-date banking services and products that are perfectly developed for its esteemed customers so that the Bank can preserve their precious confidence and maintain its leadership in the local banking market. In turn, all of the above reflect on its reputation and brand as an employer to both employees and customers. According to the literature review and the exploratory study, the following hypotheses provide specific directions to this research:

H1: There is a significant and positive impact of HRM ethicson CSR adoptionat NBE.

H2: There is a significant and positive impact of CRS adoption on employer brandat NBE.

H3: CSR mediates significantly and positively therelationship between HRM ethics and employer brand (employees, customers) at NBE.

The interrelations among the discussed conceptual components are depicted in Figure1.The figure shows the assumed positive interrelations between:

- HRM ethics and CSR;
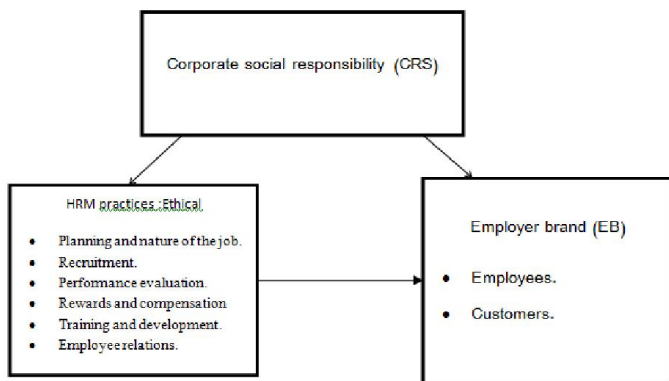- CRS and employer brand; and
- HRM ethics and employer brand.

Figure I. Conceptual frame work of interrelations among HRM ethics, CSR, EB

Research Methodology

Theadopted methodology for this researcher is composed of:

- Sampling and Data Collection.
- Measurement and Scaling.
- Validity and Reliability of the survey instrument.
- Hypothesis testing.

Sampling and Data Collection

Data for this research was collected using two questionnaires. The first was directed to 200 employees asking them about their opinion towards HRM ethics, CSR and EB of the bank. The second questionnaire was directed to 200retail customers asking them about their opinion towards NBE ethics and the impact of its human resources management policies on its employee's performance when serving them. Prior to the primary data collection, a pilot study was undertaken.

A draft version of the two questionnaires were pretested involving a sample of 50 employee and 50 customer. On the basis of the comments received from the sample participants, the questionnaires were modified for more clarity on words and formatting.

Measurement and Scaling

The research constructs herein were measured using5-point Likert scales directly drawn or modified from priorliterature (see Appendix A). We have distinguished threemain variables in the empirical study, HRM ethics, CSR and EB. Only close-ended questions are used in the two questionnaires, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

*Ethical HRM policies and practices.*The construct of ethical HRM practices comprised of six subscales: Ethicalplanning and nature of the job (JOB), Ethicalrecruitment and selection (SEL), Ethicalperformance evaluation (PA), Ethical rewards and compensation (COM), Ethical training and development (TRA) andEthicalemployee relations (ER). Each subscale included a number of sub-subscales. For example, Planning and nature of the jobcomprised of three sub-subscales, Recruitment and selection comprised of three sub-subscales and so on. Examples of the items included"The load of work is equal for all employees" (planning) and "Interview panels are used during the recruitment and selection processes." (Recruitment) (seeAppendix A).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The construct of Corporate Social Responsibilitycomprised of nine items (CSR1: CSR9). Examples of the items included"The organization has a comprehensive code of conduct and ethics" and "This organization is recognized as a company with good business ethics".

Employer Brand (EB). The construct of Employer Brand (EB) was measured- as mentioned before- according to two points of view:

Employees The construct comprised of seven items (EBE1:EBE7). Examples of the items included "This organization provides a good work environment and quality of work life for employees" and "This organization encourages employees to develop their skills continually". Customers, Theconstruct comprised of fourteen items (EBC1: EBC14). Examples of the items included"I Feel that thisorganization encourages its employees to spare no efforts to treat customers fairly" and "I may perceive employees as more reliable because they are working in an ethical organization".

Construct	Subscales	Number of items	Cronbach's ∝	Percentof variance explained
HRM Practices				
	-Planning andnature of the job	3	.80	72
	-Recruitment	3	.85	77
	-Performance E.	3	.82	66
	-Rewardsand C.	3	.75	71
	-Training andD.	3	.79	73
	-Employee R.	3	.75	67
CRS		9	.91	68
EB				
	employees	7	.88	58
	customers	14	.96	66

Table I Summary of Measuring Instruments

ValidityandReliabilityof the Survey Instrument

To investigate the validityand the consistency of the survey instrument, SPSS 16.0 was conducted. The two questionnaires used in the study are based on well acceptedand validated items developed in the literature and modified according to the pilot study, thus establishing content validity. Construct validity was examined by evaluating the percentage of the total varianceexplained by each dimension obtained by applying CFA with varimax rotation and thecriterion that the eigenvalues should be greater than one. The percentage of total varianceexplained is reported in Table I as greater than 50 per cent, and all items loaded well ontheir respective factors, indicating acceptable constructvalidity for the survey instrument (Hair *et al.,*2008). Construct internal consistency was investigated by evaluating the computed Cronbachalfa.The figures in Table 1 indicate that the survey instrument is reliable for testing the modelshown in Figure 1, as all Cronbach's alfa are much higher than 0.70 (Hair *et al.,*2008).
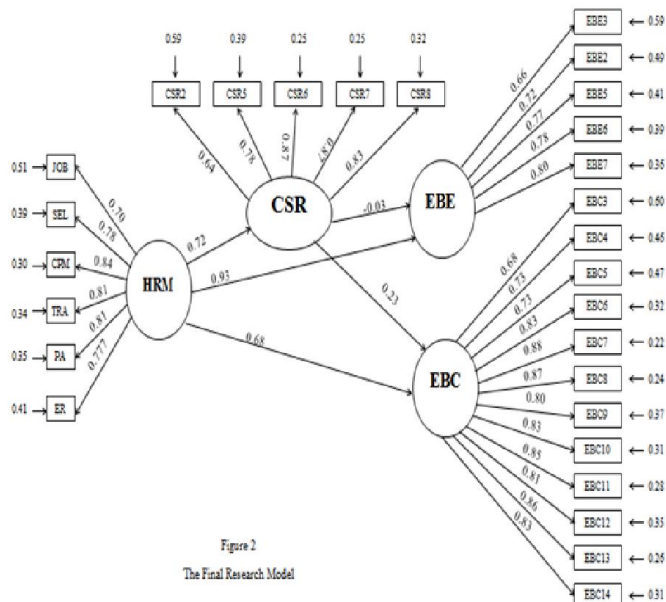

Figure 2
The Final Research Model

Hypothesis Testing

To test the hypotheses developed of the proposed framework the methodology ofstructural equation models (SEM) or "Latent variable models" was used, using LISREL8.50. SEM is effective when testing models that are path analytic withmediating variables, and include latent constructs that are being measured with multiple items.We assessed the overall model fit following Bollen's (1989) recommendation to examinemultiple indices, since it is possible for a model to be adequate on one fit index butinadequate on many others. We used the chi-square (with critical significance levelp < 0.05) and the normed-chi-square tests ratio (with critical level no more than 3, or at most 5)

A non-significantchi-square (i.e. p > 0.05) indicates that the proposed model is an adequate presentationof the entire set of relationships. However, in cases of significant chi-squares and highnumbers of degrees of freedom, the value of the normed-chi-square (i.e. value of chi-square/degrees of freedom) should be used. The goodness of fit index (GFI, with critical level not lower than 0.80, or 0.70 for complexmodels), the normed fit index (NFI, with critical level not lower than 0.90), the comparative fit index (CFI, with critical level not lower than 0.90), and the rootmean squared error of approximation (RMSEA, with critical level not more than 0.05, 0.08, and 0.10 to indicate excellent, good, and mediocre fit, respectively) (Kenny, 2011). Regarding the confirmatory factor analysis, ensuring that the factor loading of all items related to latent variables (Ethical HRM, CSR, EB to both employees and customers) was at least 0.5 or more, and removing the items with the lowest coefficient values [four items belonging to CSR construct (CSR1, CSR3, CSR4, CSR9), two itemsbelonging to EB employees construct (EB1, EB2) and two itemsbelonging to EB customers construct (CUS1, CUS2)], the results of the research model according to most of the above fit indices showed that this model yielded a better goodness-of-fitindex (Normed chi-square=4.5), CFI = 0.937, NFI= 0.922, NNFI = 0.93, IFI = .937, RMR = 0,067, RMSEA = 0.13 .Figure 2 shows the path diagram for the final model showing the main constructs HRM practices, CSR, EBE, EBC.

Research Findings

Considering that there are 28 observable variables, the presentation of a 28X28 tableof correlation coefficients may be confusing. However, Table 2 presents means,standard deviations and bivariate Pearson's correlations between all the constructs used in the study. We observealmoststrong, positive andsignificant correlations between all structural constructs. Nevertheless, correlation coefficients are used as first step indicatorswith respect to the support or not of the stated hypotheses, whilst the completeinvestigation of these hypotheses is undertaken using the partially mediation model.

As shown in table III, Considering that both the direct and theindirect standardized effects are significant, we may conclude that:

- Ethical HRM practices have a significant and positive impact on CSR adaptation, supporting thus *H1*.
- CSR has a significant and positive impact on EBC, but a negative impact on EBE, supporting partially thus *H2*.
- Regarding to the mediating relationship, HRM has an indirect positive effect on EBC, but an indirect negative effect on EBE. This means that CSR partially mediates the relationship between ethical HRM practices and EB, supporting partially *H3*.

	Mean	SD	Ethical HRM Practices	CSR	EBE	EBC
Ethical HRM Practices	2.96	.71	1			
CSR	2.98	.74	.71	1		
EBE	2.99	.80	.78	.58	1	
EBC	3.1	.83	.78	.71	.78	1

Correlation Coefficients

TableII Means, standard deviations, andcorrelation coefficients of aggregate variables.

Notes : significant at P < 0.01

Model relations	Standardized direct effects	Standardized indirect effects	Standardized total effects
HRM → CSR	0.716 (0.10)	-	0.716 (0.10)
CSR → EBE	-0.026 (0.075)	-	0.026 (0.075)
CSR → EBC	0.235 (0.073)	-	0.235 (0.073)
HRM → EBE	0.926 (0.10)	-0.018 (0.10)	0.908 (0.10)
HRM → EBC	0.682 (0.10)	0.168 (0.10)	0.850 (0.10)

Table III Estimates of SEM

Notes : significant at P ≤ 0.1

Empirical Analysis Interpretation

There are three major findings of this study.

- First, Applying all practices of Human Resources Management (HRM) ethically has an positive, almost strong influence on CSR, ensuring that ethical HRM practices play a critical role in promoting and enhancing CSR programs, supporting the findings of Cropanzano and Stein(2009), and Pucetaite *et al*. 2010.
- Second, The positive impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR on Employer Brand to Customers (EBC), comparing the negative impact on Employer Brand to Employees (EBE), means that customers are more satisfied with their organization's ethical climate- throw applying ethical HRM functions-.
- Third, CSR mediates partially the relationship between HRM ethics and Employer Brand.

A. According to customers, the positive indirect impact of ethical HRM practices on EBC – in the existing of CSR – means a highquality of exchange relationship and/or trust withcustomers, raising by organization' ethics.
B. According to employees, although the positive direct impact of ethical HRM practices on EBE, its negative indirect impact – in the existing of CSR – implies that the organization tended to be seen as less attractive as an existing employer, due to the absence of some values, regulations, ethics which in turn influence the welfare inside the organization, supporting (Evans *et al*. 2013).

Theory Implications

The aim of this study was to investigate the HRM-CSR-EB linkage, and determine the direct and indirect impact of applying HRM practices ethically on the employer brand according to two points of view, employees and customers.
First, we were interested in studying whether ethical HRM practices can contribute in formulating CSR programs in the organization and shaping its ethical climate for both their employees and customers as an attractive employer. The analysis showed that there was a positive relationship among ethical application of HRM functions (e.g., planning and nature of the job, recruitment and selection, performance evaluation, rewards and compensation, training and development andemployee relations), and CSR and EB. Moreover, this ethical application was a direct impact on promoting and enhancing CSR. Also, this direct impact of HRM ethicswas not only onthequality in employer-employee relations, but rather the quality in building and sustaining long-term brand-costumerrelationships.

Indeed, organizations that are perceivedas having a high level of corporate ethics had a better EB throughsatisfying the various stakeholders, from employees' perspective, besides, customers' perspective. Second, we found that CSR mediates the relationship between ethical HRM functions and EB. The existence of CSR explained this relationship. Values, ethics and regulationsapplied in the organization had a positive direct and indirect impact on its customer, comparing the negative indirect of these elements on employees. This means that customers are more satisfied than employees when dealing with their organization. From all the above, this study contributesto the growing number of studies that try to concentrate on putting code of ethics to/for managers and employees at two levels: Departments level, HRM especially and the corporate level of an organization, adopting CSR. Besides, it is the first time to discuss the CSR as a mediator between the relationship between two variables (HRM and EB) which was not previously coved in the literature. Beyond the above, an important further contribution of this workrelates to the interdisciplinarybetween HR area and marketing era by finding the relationship between HRM ethics and employer brand.

Practice Implications

This study has clear implications for organizations. If these organizations desire to be more attractive to employees, they have to engage into CSR-related policies and practices, by supporting the ethical application of HRM functions. Besides, providing their employees With ethics-related training, not only to act and perform their tasks ethically, but also to behave ethically when dealing with customers. Thus, employees reactions, attitudes, performance will improved, whichin turn make them see their organizations better.

Limitations and Further Researches

This study has three main limitations. First, the data was collected using a questionnaireat a single point in time. As a result, the study does not allow for dynamic causalinferences (Katou 2013). Future research would benefit from employinglongitudinal data. Second, this research focused on the impact of HRM ethics on the employer brand, mediated by CSR, from employees and customers'perspectives. Thus, further research in the field should address to other stakeholders groups. Third, the study was applied in the Egyptian context (Banking sector) which has different regulations, labor laws, social and economic circumstances from other countries, and thus the findings from the sample may not generalize across borders. Future research should include othercontexts such as different countries and other sectors

A Conclusive Research Note

The conceptual model and the empirical testing of these research arguments pinpoint a continuous development cycle business phenomena. It entails that ethical HRM practices within all main areasof the HRM functions in terms of foe sight pooling recruits, managing employees' performance, material motivation, capacity building and promoting intimacy payoff in two critical and consequential areas. Ethical HRM is an infrastructure for supporting and enacting CSR policies and actions that makes CSR returns materialize with special reference to two vital objective functions of modern HRM strategic intents and outlooks. These crucial agendas are emphasized in building and maintaining strong equities for organizational dual branding snapshots in its labor market as an employer and business market as a marketing entity. This set of interrelationships should serve as a HRM developmentcycleleading to new academic understanding and managerial practices of HRM and marketing phenomena on the academic level, such development cycle should serve for new theoretical dynamics of a brand- driven conceptualization of a new rationale for ethical HRM practices and CSR initiatives on the managerial practice level, this development cycle should open venues for new branding-orientedinnovative and more effective visualization of HRM ethical codes and CSR principles and ideologies.

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Appendix A: NBA employee questionnaire

Dear Company Employee

This research aims at know your opinion towards adopting corporate social responsibility on your organization, and its impact upon the brand of it as an employer. feel free in answering the statements of this questionnaire. All data given by you will be strictly used for only scientific research purposes .

Thank you in advance for your help.

Please, indicate to what extent you agree / disagree with the following statements according to the below scale rating from strongly agree = 5 to strongly disagree = 1

Statements	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
HRM practices * Planning and Job Choices 1- The load of work is equal for all employees.					
	5	4	3	2	1
2- The organization adjusts the job description of all jobs continually.					
	5	4	3	2	1
3- The organization permits me to actively participate in preparing my job description. *Recruitmentand Selection 4- Interview panels are used during the recruitment and selection processes.	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
5- The organization depends on job description during recruitment and selection processes. 6- There is no bias in applying recruitment and selection processes.	5	4	3	2	1
	5	4	3	2	1
*Rewards – System 7- The organization pays a fair wag for my job.					
	5	4	3	2	1
8- The compensation system in my organization is fair.					
	5	4	3	2	1

	5	4	3	2	1
9- I feel satisfied with my pay compared with pay of the other people at my work place.	5	4	3	2	1
*Training					
10- The organization is committed to the training and development of its employees.	5	4	3	2	1
11- The training programs are determined according to employees' needs assessment.	5	4	3	2	1
12- Justice is applied throughout all steps of the training process.	5	4	3	2	1
*Performance Appraisal					
13- My performance is more often measured with objective and quantifiable results.	5	4	3	2	1
14- Current performance appraisal system is fair.	5	4	3	2	1
15- I feel dissatisfied with the equity of use of the performance appraisal policy in my organization.	5	4	3	2	1
*Employees Relations					
16- The organization gives equal opportunity to all employees to participate in decision making process.	5	4	3	2	1
17- I feel satisfied with the treatment I get comparing my colleagues.	5	4	3	2	1
18- The organization treats all its employees fairly and justly.	5	4	3	2	1
*Adopting your company to corporate social Responsibility					
1- The organization has a comprehensive code of conduct and ethics.	5	4	3	2	1
2- Fairness toward co – workers and business partners in an integral part of the employee evaluation process in this firm.	5	4	3	2	1
3- This organization provides accurate information to its business partners.	5	4	3	2	1
4- This organization is recognized as a company with good business ethics	5	4	3	2	1
5- A confidentiality procedures are in place in the firm for employees to report any misconduct or non- compliance at work.	5	4	3	2	1
6- This organization allocates its resources into employees before supporting community needs.	5	4	3	2	1
7- The organization communicates CSR activities to employees.	5	4	3	2	1
8- The organization supports its employees ' role in CSR initiatives.	5	4	3	2	1
9- The organization helps employees to learn and apply CSR – ethics standards.	5	4	3	2	1
*Your companyclimate					
1- This organization provides a quality and safe working environment for employees	5	4	3	2	1
2- This organization provides career development – oriented training for employees.	5	4	3	2	1
3- This organization encourages employees to develop their skills continually.	5	4	3	2	1
4- The organization really cares about employees ' well – being.	5	4	3	2	1
5- The organization shows little concern for the best interest of its employees.	5	4	3	2	1
6- The organization takes about employees ' opinions into consideration.	5	4	3	2	1
7- The professional and personal assistance available from the organization when its employees have a problem.	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix B: NBA customer questionnaire

Dear Company Customer

This research aims at Seeking your opinion about The company ethics and the impact of its human resources management policies on its employees performance when serving you.

Please, indicate to what extent you agree / disagree with the following statements according to the below scale rating from strongly agree = 5 to strongly disagree = 1

Statements	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
I 1- I Feel that this organization encourages its employees to spare no efforts to treat customers fairly.	5	4	3	2	1
2 2- The employees provide a high quality of exchange relationship with customers.	5	4	3	2	1
3 3- I can trust the services standards provided by employees working in this organization that has an ethical climate.	5	4	3	2	1
4 4- I am more satisfied with customer services offered by this organization, due to high commitment of employees.	5	4	3	2	1
5 5- I may perceive employees as more reliable because they are working in an ethical organization. 6	5	4	3	2	1
6- I feel that the employees are concerned with respecting and protecting my needs, as a part of the company policy.	5	4	3	2	1
7- I think that the employees introduce accurate information I need about the services I want, as apart of their job description.	5	4	3	2	1
8- The organization is recognized as a company with good ethical practices toward its employees.	5	4	3	2	1
9- I Feel that the employees introduce all possible help I need, when I have a problem out of their high motivation.	5	4	3	2	1
10- I Feel that this organization encourages its employees because they introduce the best services I can get.	5	4	3	2	1
11- I Feel that this organization provides its employees with relevant training programs in the field.	5	4	3	2	1
12- I consider this organization as one of my best choices to treat because of the intimacy and professionalism of its employees.	5	4	3	2	1
13- I will say positive word of mouth about the employees to those who look for a good service.	5	4	3	2	1
14- I Feel that these organization employees are trusted and empowered by management to do their best to meet my needs as a customer.	5	4	3	2	1

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