

The Effect of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention and Employee Satisfaction of the Utility Industry in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Employer branding is an approach used by different companies to maintain their current employment and attract individuals to join the company. This study aims to determine the effect of employer branding on turnover intention and employee satisfaction among the utility sectors in the Philippines. This paper provides additional support for the organizations' present understanding by improving the employees' motivation to stay in the company. Data were collected using survey questionnaires to two hundred (200) employees from different utility industry in Metro Manila. A quantitative approach has been applied in this study by using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for testing the hypothesis. The result showed that employer branding and job satisfaction are positively related. And as job satisfaction increases, the turnover intention of employees decreases.

Keywords: Employer Branding, Job Satisfaction, Turnover Intention, Perceived Brand Strength.

INTRODUCTION

Employer branding is the current term used by companies as an extended definition of the company's reputation. It amplifies the companies' value for their knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience. It works as a value proposition to people inside and outside the company (Barrow & Mosley, 2005). This helps to promote and attract job seekers and influence the companies employees regarding the companies' mission, vision, culture, values, and overall perks of the employee received and the company (Lybrand, 2018). Employer branding can also be defined

as human resource marketing, as it helps to promote a positive impression for the company (Urbancová, et al., 2017). It helps to motivate the employees to lessen the turnover intention, job satisfaction, and work engagement. This served as an employee safeguard for the company from maintaining their human resources.

The intrinsic motivator is a strong influence on employees' satisfaction as it defines the social acceptance of an employee in the company and leads to the improvement of self-esteem (Wallace et al., 2014). The stronger the employer brand, the more efficient way of reducing employees' costs and maintenance and improving performance productivity (Schlager et al., 2011; Omidvari & Sadoughi, 2013). Maximizing and improving human capital is one important aspect of a company. Recognizing each employee's importance and treating them as part of a family will motivate them and increase job satisfaction. One of the greatest assets of a strong organization is satisfied employees.

This study contributes to increasing awareness and knowledge about employee branding in developing countries like the Philippines. It also focuses on the utility companies on how employer branding affects their turnover intention, employee satisfaction, and their direct relationship. A positive result of strong employer branding may lead to a positive relationship for job satisfaction and lowers turnover intention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research model applied for this study has been based on Keller's Brand Equity Theory: The Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE), which states that to build a reputable and robust brand, one must change the customers' perception and feel about the

product or service. Meaning, one needs to build the right kind of experience for their product. When the brand has a good reputation, it attracts not only customers but also new employee applicants. It can also help maintain the company's current team as it promotes a positive psychological fulfillment to them, which translates to a functional and economic organization (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Echoing this is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which explains individuals' basic needs composed of the following aspects: Physiological, Safety, Love and Belonging, Esteem, and Self-actualization. This states that people are drawn to brands that provide them with these needs.

Employer Branding

The individual consumers' beliefs about a product's or service's brand are usually affected by branding (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Nawi et al., 2019; Settembre-Blundo et al., 2018). While employer branding allows an organization to establish an identity that is unique and differentiated compared to competitors, it may be marketed internally or externally. Thus, the brand image generated and projected towards customers is crucial but can be controlled by the organization itself.

Ambler and Barrow (1996) define the employer brand as an economical, functional, and psychological package that gives and identified the employing organization. In their study, they applied the marketing brand management technique to Human Resource Management (HRM). They concluded that adding brand management principles to the HRM function reinforces and adds value to the corporate's equity from a customer-based perspective (Aggerholm et al., 2011).

Employer branding in several studies is illustrated as the organization's attempt to display its alluring workplace image to current and prospective employees. It is described as a targeted

long-term strategy used to manage awareness and perception of current and potential employees and related stakeholders of the firm (Mendis & Wanigasekera, 2013).

Berthon et al. (2005) illustrated five ways to measure employer brand applied to employees values, namely Social, Interest, Application, Economic, and Development. Social value entices the degree to which the organization has a friendly, pleasant, enjoyable working environment from its collegiality and teamwork culture. Interest Value is a cognizance wherein an organization promotes an encouraging and enthusiastic workplace that uses its employees' creativity and talent to develop or deliver a prestigious product and services. Economic Value is considered with respect to the perception that the organization pays wages that are above-average compensation packages, ensures job security, and offers opportunities for promotion. Development Value defines an individual enticed by an organization that gives proper recognition and promotes confidence, induced with career-boosting experiences that help future employment. Finally, Application Value is a value wherein the employee's interaction is allowed by the employer to be applied in their working scheme and be taught to co-employees in a customer-oriented and humanitarian workplace (Arachchige & Robertson, 2011).

Moreover, Wallace (2014) study stated that employer branding is the action taken by the organization that they expect to be differentiated from competitors and become a desirable place to work. In addition, it also suggests that the results from employer branding affect the quality of applicants for recruitment concerns. Some of the metrics that are significantly important when it comes to measuring their overall performance are satisfaction, engagement, and level of intent.

Employer branding is defined as how the company would market its own to their prospective employees, and how they would

convince their onboard employees to stay and promote loyalty that is present to the work environment (Biswas & Suar 2014). Kunerth and Mosley's (2011) interpretation of employer branding can be used to attract potential employees while also being able to influence the intention of hired employees to stay in the organization.

Christiaans (2013) article about employer branding highlighted that she applied the customer-value proposition in managing Human resources and considered it the employer value proposition. Wherein, core questions under customer-value proposition are applied to the HR field. "Why should a highly skilled and talented person work in my organization?", a question derived on why a consumer should choose your product over others.

For years, employer branding is an approach used by some organizations for the betterment of both employment experience and the organization's overall performance. Wherein it influences the employees' job satisfaction and later their turnover intention. Job satisfaction can be gained from intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, which can be brought by working under an employer with a strong employer brand. It can be hypothesized that:

H1: Employer branding has a positive relationship with Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction defines as a pleasurable positive emotional state resulting from the assessment of job experiences (Locke, 1976). It is a merging effect of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that leads an employee to be truly satisfied with his/her job. (Hoppock, 1977; El-Zohiry & Abd-Elbaqy, 2019). It can be influenced by several factors and can be classified into intrinsic, intangible in nature and results in a positive psychological state (Stumpf & Harman, 1984), and extrinsic,

tangible rewards such as salary/pay, incentives, bonuses, promotions, among others (Iqbal, 2010; Zin, 2017). Ideally, satisfied employees are more likely to stay in the company. But, job satisfaction varies from one environment to another and boils down to personality fit. At the end of the day, job satisfaction reflects the employee's behavior inside the workplace (Davis et al., 1992).

Job satisfaction is always interconnected with employee turnover rate. The higher the job satisfaction is, the better the productivity is for the employee (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). To support this, Wong (1989) investigated it and its impact on turnover intention or intent to change jobs among secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. His study showed that the lower the teachers' job satisfaction is, the higher the teachers' intention to quit the teaching profession.

As job satisfaction holds an important role as a determinant of employees' turnover intention. It is said that the two have a negative relationship with each other. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

H2: A high Job satisfaction would decrease employee turnover intention.

Turnover Intention

Turnover Intention is a responsive and intentional self-will to go away from the company (Tett & Meyer, 1993). To support this, Iqbal (2010) discussed how turnover intention and turnover negatively affects employees' workplace morale and tends to be a team performance disruptor. Former studies had found that employer branding lowers employees' turnover intention (Achoui & Mansour, 2007). Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

H3: Employer branding has a negative relationship with turnover intention

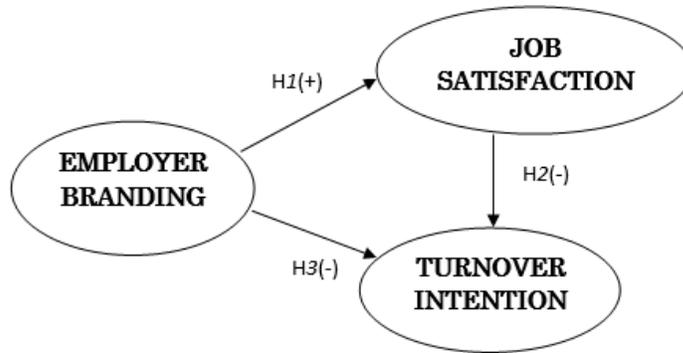


Figure 1. The Hypothesized Model

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study used a quantitative approach, and the method used is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Partial List Squares (PLS) as an approach for testing the hypothesis whether to know if it is right or not. The model has three (3) latent variables with three (3) hypotheses wherein Employer branding is considered exogenous, turnover intention is considered endogenous, and job satisfaction is the mediating variable.

The researchers seek to target Utility Company employees (e.g., Energy companies, Telecom companies) around Metro Manila. To achieve quality data for the study, only employees with a direct employer-employee relationship were included. This ensures that certain external employment factors, such as being outsourced, will not influence their answers while being involved with the study.

The survey instrument is composed of four (4) major parts consist of, Robotfoto, employer branding, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. For each variable that is to be measured, questionnaires were bot adopted and adapted from previous studies undertaken by researchers under Human Resource Management.

- *Robotfoto*. This contains the respondents' demographic information, namely, age, gender, civil status, number of dependents, educational attainment, and length of service within the current organization.

- *Employer Branding (EB)*. The questionnaire consists of thirty-two (questions). Using a 6-point liker-scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 6(strongly agree). These questions have a Cronbach alpha of 0.847

- *Job Satisfaction (JS)*. With a Cronbach Alpha of 0.964. Answerable using a 6-point liker-scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 6(strongly agree).

- *Turnover Intention (TI)*. Measured using Bothma and Roodt (2014) Turnover Intention Scale. With a Cronbach alpha of 0.816

Data Gathering Procedure and Ethical Consideration

Questionnaires and interviews are the main forms of the method used for data gathering of this study. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed and collected in Metro Manila from the different utility companies' branches. Before proceeding with the questionnaires' distribution, the researchers provided a letter of permission to the different companies and individual employees before they answered the questionnaire and clearly stating that this research will solely be used for educational purposes and will not disclose any sensitive information and be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

FINDINGS

Demographics

Table 1 shows the respondents' demographic profile. Half are male, and the other half are female, 77 are in the range 30-39 years old, 115 are married, and 99 have no dependents. In addition, 174 respondents' highest educational attainment was mostly college graduates holding a bachelor's degree. Coming closer to the topic, 61 respondents said that they had rendered more than five years of service. One hundred seventy are aware of what employer branding means, and 152 know how to practice it.

Table 1. Demographics Profile of the Respondents (n = 200)

<i>Profile</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Profile</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender			Length of Service		
Male	100	50	Less than 6 months	21	10.5
Female	100	50	6 months – Less than 1 year	21	10.5
Age			1 - 2 years	37	18.5
20-29	77	38.5	More than 2 years – Less than 3 years	22	11
30-39	77	38.5	3 -5 years	38	19
40-49	36	36.18	More than 5 years	61	30.5
50-59	10	5	Employer Branding Means		
Civil Status			Yes	170	85
Single	85	42.5	No	30	15
Married	115	57.5	Employer Branding Usage		

Dependents (Children)			Yes	152	76
None	93	46.5	No	48	24
One	59	29.5			
Two	29	14.5			
More	19	9.5			
Educational Attainment					
High school	5	2.5			
Bachelor's Degree	174	87			
Master's Degree	21	10.5			

Company employees. Using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) the results reveal that all items are usable in the model. Wherein the six proposed dimensions strongly affect employer branding. Development Value as an indicator of employer brand is most likely inhibited when employees receive a high profile, challenging tasks or responsibilities ($\beta = 0.727$). Likewise, when employees gain significant experiences that support their career progression. ($\beta = 0.706$). Social Value as an indicator of employer brand is most likely inhibited when employees have a supportive and encouraging team ($\beta = 0.73$). As well as when employees were able to develop a good relationship with their management ($\beta = 0.718$). Interest Value as an indicator of employer brand is most likely inhibited when employees can work on various locations ($\beta = 0.73$) and has the opportunity to become innovative ($\beta = 0.73$). Brand strength perception of employees as an indicator of employer branding is most likely inhibited when employees feel that they are working in an organization with high status ($\beta = 0.685$). And if their employers are clear with the type of relationship they offer towards their employees in comparison to other organization ($\beta =$

0.661). Intrinsic Value as an indicator for employer branding is most likely inhibited when employees feel like are ahead of other employees from different organization in the same industry. ($\beta = 0.763$). Also, when employees feel respected for working under their current employer ($\beta = 0.746$). Culture Benefits as an indicator for employer branding is most likely inhibited when employees are included in decision making ($\beta = 0.691$).

Table 2. Employer Branding

<i>Employer Branding Coefficient</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Reliability</i>
Application of Development Value (ADEV)		0.689
Gaining significant experience to support career progression.	0.706	
Receiving recognition and appreciation for work achievements.	0.617	
Feeling proud of the current organization.	0.617	
Receiving support for continued learning.	0.669	
Giving opportunity to work on high profile, challenging projects, task or responsibilities.	0.727	
Application of Social Value (ASOC)		0.613
Relax working environment.	0.317	
Good relationship with the management.	0.718	
Good relationship with my team.	0.634	
Supportive and encouraging team.	0.73	
Opportunity to socialize with my colleagues.	0.688	
Application of Interest Value (AINT)		0.679
Opportunity to work on interesting projects.	0.69	
Opportunity to design and innovate.	0.718	
Opportunity to use cutting edge technology.	0.634	
Offers to work in a variety of locations.	0.73	
Offers to work on a variety of projects.	0.688	
Perceived Brand Strength (PBS)		0.735
The organization provides a sense of fulfilment.	0.609	
The prestige feels in the organization.	0.633	

This organization differentiates from other organizations in terms of employment relationship.	0.661	
Respected and highly regarded treatment.	0.577	
This organization has high status.	0.685	
This organization is highly regarded.	0.557	
This organization is well respected.	0.628	
Intrinsic Value of the Employer Brand (IVEB)		0.695
This organization gives me sense of fulfilment.	0.573	
This organization makes me feel prestige.	0.626	
This organization makes me feel ahead of others in the same industry.	0.763	
Respected and highly regarded for working in this organization.	0.746	
This organization makes me feel part of a bigger community.	0.642	
Importance of Culture benefits (ICUL)		0.673
The organization makes quick decisions	0.619	
The organization has open management structure	0.656	
The organization has strong dynamic leadership	0.685	
Have an easy access to my managers.	0.639	
The organization includes me in decision making	0.691	

Emerging Model

This research asserts to evaluate the hypothesized model which accompany the mediating role of job satisfaction to employer branding and turnover intention of employees under Utility Companies (See Fig.1)

Different global model fit was used to assess the structural equation model. Average Path Coefficient (APC = .330, $p < .01$) which is the average of the absolute values of the path coefficients in the resulting model, average R-squared (ARS = .180, $p < .01$),

and average adjusted R-squared (AARS = .174, $p < .01$) are all significant and indicated good model fit of the data. The average block variance inflation factor (AVIF = 1.025) and average full collinearity variance inflation factor (AFVIF = 1.246) are less than 3.3, which indicates that there are no other latent variables that overlap in the meaning of the existing latent variables.

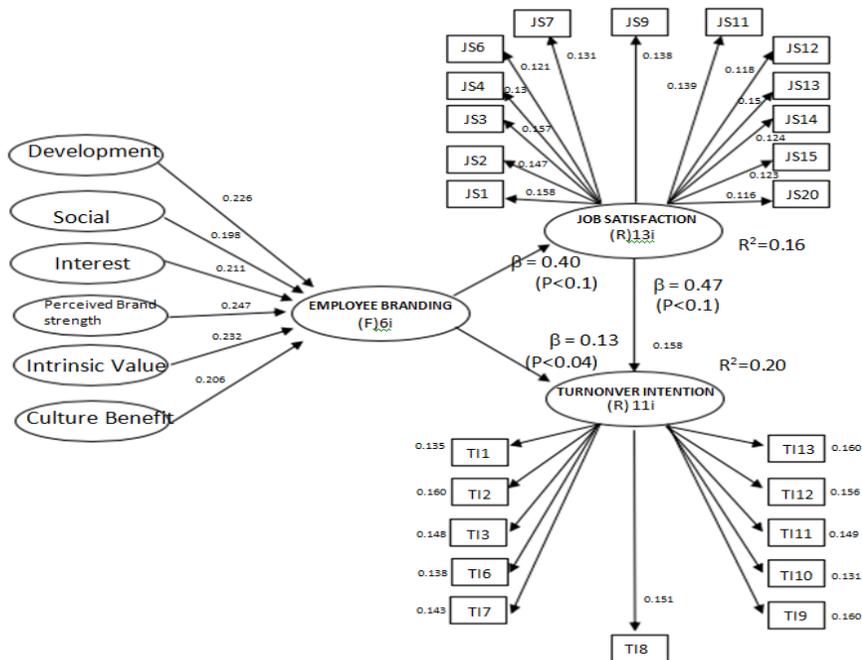


Figure 2. Emerging Model

R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR = .939) is greater than .90, which indicates that there are very minimal negative R-squared contributions in a model. Statistical suppression ratio (SSR = 1.00)

is greater than .70 indicates that a model is free from statistical suppression, which occurs when a path coefficient is greater, in absolute terms, than the corresponding correlation associated with a pair of linked variables. The emerging model of the causal relationship between employer branding, job satisfaction, and turnover intention of utility company employees

As previously shown in Figure 1, the study hypothesized the mediating effect of job satisfaction between the Employer branding status and employees' turnover intention. SEM analysis reveals the mediating effect of job satisfaction between employer branding as an exogenous variable and turnover intention as an endogenous variable (Figure 2). As shown, job satisfaction negatively affects turnover intention ($\beta = 0.47$). Increasing job satisfaction would lower employees' turnover intention. However, contradicting our initial hypothesis, employer branding doesn't have a concrete relationship with turnover intention ($\beta = 0.13$). Concerning the emerging model, the two tables (3 and 4) show the items' regression weights measuring job satisfaction and turnover intention.

Table 3. Regression Weight of Job Satisfaction of Utility Company Employees

<i>Job Satisfaction Coefficient</i>	<i>Regression Weight</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Reliability 0.823</i>
Current salary satisfaction	0.158	0.069	0.011	
Well compensated load.	0.147	0.069	0.017	
Advance salary policies satisfaction	0.157	0.069	0.012	
Overtime policies satisfaction	0.13	0.069	0.031	
Great working environment	0.121	0.069	0.041	
Easy manage work-load.	-	-	-	
Job autonomy satisfaction	0.131	0.069	0.03	
Bonus policies satisfaction	-	-	-	

Receive proper training	0.138	0.069	0.023
Old age benefits satisfaction	-	-	-
Provident funds satisfaction	0.139	0.069	0.022
Facility of transportation satisfaction.	0.118	0.069	0.045
Receiving gratuity fund satisfaction.	0.15	0.069	0.045
Promotion satisfaction	0.124	0.069	0.045
Interesting job	0.123	0.069	0.045
Chance to do different things.	-	-	-
Easy manageable work stress	-	-	-
Work achievement satisfaction	-	-	-
Learning from current job work	-	-	-
Achievable job target	0.116	0.069	0.045

Table 3 exhibits the impact of each indicator of the employees' job satisfaction. Utility company employees' primary source of job satisfaction is from their current received salary ($\beta = 0.158$). Items having 0.116 to 0.158 ($p < .05$) regression weight are founded to contribute to the variable being measured significantly.

Table 4. Regression Weights of Turnover Intention of Utility Company Employees

<i>Turnover Intention Coefficient</i>	<i>Regression Weight</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Consideration of leaving the job	0.135	0.069	0.026
Dreaming of getting another job with the same compensation level offered	0.160	0.069	0.010
Likely to accept another job with the same compensation level	0.148	0.069	0.016
Looking forward to another day at work?	-	-	-

Scanning the newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?	-	-	-
Compromising personal values at work	0.138	0.069	0.023
Thinking about starting a business	0.143	0.069	0.020
Responsibilities preventing from quitting the job	0.151	0.069	0.015
The benefits of the current job preventing from quitting the job	0.160	0.069	0.010
Emotionally agitated when arriving home after work	0.131	0.069	0.030
Current job is harmful to personal well-being	0.149	0.069	0.016
How does the “fear of the unknown” prevent you from quitting?	0.156	0.069	0.012
Scanning the internet for alternative job opportunities	0.160	0.069	0.010

Table 4 exhibits the impact of each indicator of the employee's turnover intention. Utility company employees tend to have a thought of leaving their current employer when another job can provide for their personal needs even better ($\beta = 0.16$). Items having 0.131 to 0.160 ($p < .05$) regression weight contribute to the variable being measured significantly and reliability is Reliability 0.832.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed a surprising result as compared to the initial hypothesized model. It provided strong support for the initial assumption that using employer branding is a great approach to working out employee's job satisfaction, which helps influence employees' turnover intention.

First, the resulting correlation between employer branding and job satisfaction is in line with Mendis and Wanigasekera (2013)

result, stating that employer branding is a useful tool in increasing employees' job satisfaction. Thus, studies have shown positive emerging results that having a developed strategy regarding handling the organization's employer brand concludes to a better productivity outcome (Aldousari et al., 2017). Minchington and Estis (2009) research supports the emerging result of the study presenting that a strong employer brand draws a positive image on the employees' minds that the organization is a great place for employees, therefore, has a high percentage of satisfied employees. Not only limited to the employees themselves but also the key stakeholders in the external market. Thus, the needs satisfied that follow through working on an employer with a strong brand with the application of Maslow's Theory (1943) explains how employees' job satisfaction is influenced.

Second, the resulting correlation between turnover intention and job satisfaction is in line with Tookson (2011) findings, stating that a high job satisfaction rating employees have a lower turnover intention (Griffeth et al., 2000; Amah, 2009). Satisfied employees are less likely to incur absences and have a lower intention of leaving their jobs (Neog & Barua, 2014). The implication of the results may dictate that improving employees' job satisfaction is needed to reach a lower turnover intention (Dick et al., 2004). Through ways such as having an equivocal pay system wherein employees' received pay is associated with their workload.

However, the initial assumption stating that employer branding directly influences lowering an employee's turnover intention is not supported by the study results. However, various studies explicitly claim that having a strong employer brand would lower turnover intention. The research did not express a result that could support the initial claim. In this study, it surfaced that if there is another job available that could satisfy their personal needs more compared to their current job, it is most likely the reason for an

employee to leave its current job and choose the more beneficial job believing that it could satisfy their personal needs even when the employee is currently working on an employer with a strong brand. Basiraya and Ahmed (2019) study implies that employees are also most likely to leave their current job for personal/family reasons. The results of their research could support the emerging results of ours. Wherein no significant relations were established between employer branding and turnover intention.

The findings arrived with several implications. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory applies to both the first two proposed hypotheses and contrary to the last hypothesis. This study's theoretical support could explain why an employee still intends to leave their current job even when an employer currently employs them with a strong brand. With respect to Maslow's Theory, wherein it implies that Physiological and Safety needs weigh more importance over satisfied areas contributed while working in an employer with a strong employer brand. For those who fall under love or belonging, Esteem and Self-Actualization need. And when needs are met, satisfaction is obtained. And as satisfaction increases, the more a person finds it sustainable and would decide to stay instead.

CONCLUSION

This study's overall result showed that employer branding has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and elaborated as if the employees are satisfied with their work. Their intention to leave will decrease, and this lead. This clearly explains that employer has a significant impact on their employees well behavior and needs. It is not solely applied to the human resource department but also the companies' different managers as this improves the

employee's self-confidence. In addition to that, the company's reputation also has an impact on branding its employer.

On the other hand, strong employee branding still can't provide a strong security to maintain and lower the employee's turnover because each individual has their personal needs, especially regarding the necessary external needs such as the reward and benefits that the employees received from the company. Each level of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs should be tackled and dismissed individually by the company to provide better individual motivation for their employees.

An employee-centered company will provide a compelling competitive advantage over other companies as it will boost the company's reputation. However, balancing the business side and employee-centered company may be difficult because it also depends on the economy and country status. Providing an excellent package that suits every employee may be difficult. Still, it will significantly increase the employee's job satisfaction, leading to a more productive and effective output from their jobs.

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