



THE ROLE OF EMPLOYEE BRAND CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR IN INTERNAL BRANDING: A PUBLIC SECTOR CASE STUDY



Mini-dissertation submitted in fulfilment of **Master of Commerce in
Strategic Brand Leadership** at The Independent Institute of
Education, Vega School.

Akhona Gushman



Supervisor: Prof I. Struweg

10 / 30 / 2024

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research project is the result of my independent work. It is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Commerce degree in Strategic Brand Leadership at The Independent Institute of Education, Vega School. This work has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. Additionally, I confirm that I have secured the requisite authorisation and consent to conduct this research.

A. Gushman

29 October 2024



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Struweg, Ilse. Your leadership has shown me the power of maintaining high standards while being incredibly empathetic. Thank you for your guidance, friendship, and care. With leaders like you, greatness feels within reach, and I am forever grateful for the alignment and synergy in our work ethic.

To Janey Nixon, our wonderful Academic Support Coordinator, thank you for always being there and going above and beyond to support me. Your kindness and patience have been invaluable, even through countless emails and inquiries.

Dr. Ara Ramnund-Mansingh, my editor, thank you for your meticulous attention to detail and professionalism. Your kind words and affirmations have been a great source of encouragement.

To my partner, Deji – thank you for taking our daughter to your soccer practice and giving me the space and time to study. Your support has been crucial.

To my daughter, Mayine – you are my motivation and the reason I strive so hard!

To my household manager, Ma P, thank you for keeping everything at home running smoothly.

And to my grandparents, Magush and Poncuka, thank you for instilling in me the value of education. The legacy you've planted is generational, and it's onwards and upwards from here.

Next stop, a PhD!

ABSTRACT

The Department of Public Service Administration in South Africa (2006) highlighted initiatives aimed at enhancing employee commitment within organisations by ensuring adequate resources to meet job demands, empowering employees, and fostering a culture of ownership where employees feel integrated into the organisation. Additionally, the selected National Government Department's Annual Performance Plan (APP) for 2023/2024 underscores the importance of cultivating a positive organisational culture and strong leadership to uphold the department's brand promise. This necessitates a focus on internal branding and employee brand citizenship behaviour, particularly in the public sector, where it has been overlooked despite being a comprehensive method to enhance employee performance.

This study employs a conceptual framework to investigate the role of internal branding in promoting employee brand citizenship behaviour within a selected NDG (therefore, this is used as a pseudonym throughout the study to avoid identification) in South Africa, with employee brand citizenship behaviour as the primary construct. Data was collected through nine semi-structured interviews with employees from the selected NGD and analysed using a thematic approach. The findings reveal a critical need for transformation in the internal branding practices of the public sector's NGD, with challenges such as siloed cultures, ineffective leadership, resource inadequacies, and budget constraints leading to a disconnect between leadership intentions and employee perceptions, highlighting the necessity for strategic reform.

In conclusion, despite the selected NGD plans to foster a positive culture and strong leadership to fulfil its brand promise and the Department of Public Service Administration's (2006) initiatives to enhance employee commitment by ensuring sufficient resources, empowering employees, and creating a culture of ownership, the NGD has not succeeded in aligning operations with its brand promise. This shortfall underscores the need to strengthen the role of employee brand citizenship behaviour in internal branding to improve service delivery outcomes within the public sector's NGD.

KEYWORDS

Employee brand citizenship behaviour, Internal branding, Brand values, Brand promise alignment, brand-centric human resource management, leader-member exchange, employee performance

Table of Contents

Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Abstract	iv
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	ix
Acronyms.....	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Research Background.....	2
1.3 Problem Statement	4
1.4 Research Aim.....	6
1.5 Preliminary Literature Review.....	6
1.5.1 Theoretical grounding	6
1.5.1.1 Theory 1: Social Exchange Theory.....	7
1.5.1.2 Theory 2: Organisational commitment theory.....	7
1.5.1.3 Theory 3: Social identity theory.....	8
1.6 Internal branding.....	8
1.7 Brand-centred HRM	10
1.7.1 Employee performance.....	10
1.8 Delimitations, Limitations and Assumptions of the Research	11
1.9 Research Methodology	11
1.9.1 Research Paradigm	12
1.9.2 Research Approach	13
1.9.3 Research Strategy	13
1.9.4 Type of Research.....	14
1.9.5 Population and Sampling	14
1.9.6 Techniques and procedures	15
1.10 Ethical Considerations.....	15
1.11 Anticipated Contributions of the Research	16

1.12 Proposed Chapter Outline	17
1.13 Conclusion.....	18
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	19
2.1 Introduction	19
2.2 Conceptual framework of the literature	19
2.3 A brief overview of the domains of the study.....	21
2.3.1 Strategic brand management.....	21
2.3.2 Human resource management	21
2.4 Theories grounding the study	22
2.4.1 Social Exchange Theory	22
2.4.2 Organisational Commitment Theory	23
2.4.3 Social identity theory	25
2.5 Key constructs in the study.....	26
2.5.1 Employee Brand Citizenship Behaviour	26
2.5.2 Internal branding	26
2.5.3 Brand values	26
2.5.4 Brand promise alignment	27
2.5.5 Brand-centric human resource management	28
2.5.6 Leader-member exchange	29
2.5.7 Employee performance	30
2.6 Conclusion.....	31
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	33
3.1 Introduction	33
3.2 Research Philosophy	33
3.3 Research Approach.....	34
3.4 Research method	36
3.5 Research setting and sampling.....	37
3.6 Time horizon.....	40
3.7 Data Collection Method.....	40
3.8 Data analysis procedure	42
3.9 Ethical considerations	43
3.10 Trustworthiness	45

3.11 Conclusion.....	45
CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS	47
4.1 Introduction	47
4.2 Description of participants and interview.....	47
4.2 Data analysis: Initial coding with Atlas.ti.....	49
4.3 Results: Research Question One	52
4.4 Results: Research Question Two.....	54
4.5 Results: Research Question Three	56
4.6 Results: Research Question Four	58
4.7 Results: Research Question Five.....	60
4.8 Perception of internal communication effectiveness	61
4.9 Summary.....	62
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	64
5.1 Introduction	64
5.2 Findings in relation to the research questions	64
5.3 Recommendation based on the findings.....	67
5.3.1 Recommendation 1: Finding 2.1.	67
5.3.2 Recommendation 2: Finding 2.2	68
5.3.3 Recommendation 3: Finding 2.3	68
5.3.4 Recommendation 4: Finding 2.4	68
5.3.5 Recommendation 5: Finding 2.5	69
5.4 Limitations and suggestions for future research.....	69
5.5 Conclusions.....	69
List of References.....	71
Annexure 1: Ethical Clearance.....	100
Annexure 2: Interview Participant Consent Form.....	101
Annexure 3: Interview Guide	104
Annexure 4: List of Codes – Atlas. Ti	107
Annexure 5: Iteration Table	110
Annexure 6: Non-Disclosure Agreement.....	127

Annexure 7: Gatekeeper Approval Letter	129
Annexure 8: Editor Confirmation	130

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework	20
Figure 4.1: Number of codes generated through ATLAS.ti	50
Figure 4.2 Thematic Map	51

List of Tables

Table 1.1: An overview of the study's research methodology	12
Table 1.2: Demarcates this study's different chapters and briefly describes the content covered in the related chapters.	17
Table 3.1: Summary of sampling plan example	37
Table 3.2: The application of trustworthiness principles in this study	45
Table 4.1. Profiles of Research Participants.....	48

ACRONYMS

DMRE	Department of Mineral Resources & Energy
NGD	National Government Department
DPSA	Department of Public Services Administration
APP	Annual Performance Plan
BCB	Brand Citizenship Behaviour
SET	Social Exchange Theory
OCT	Organisational Commitment Theory
SIT	Social Identity Theory
LMX	Leader Member Exchange
HRM	Human Resource Management

"People do not follow uncommitted leaders"

Stephen Gregg

"It takes a deep commitment to change and an even deeper commitment to grow"

Ralph Ellison.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction and background to the study to argue the problem statement, research aim, and research questions. A preliminary literature review introduces the theoretical underpinnings and concepts central to the study. An overview of the methodological choices is provided, followed by the ethical considerations and anticipated research contributions.

This study explores the role of internal branding in fostering employee brand citizenship behaviour within a selected South African National Government Department (NGD). Internal branding is a strategic approach that aligns employees with organisational values, shaping their behaviour and commitment to delivering on the institution's brand promises. While extensive research has examined service delivery challenges in the public sector, a gap exists in understanding how internal branding influences employee engagement, motivation, and performance in government institutions. This study addresses this gap by examining how internal branding efforts within the NGD contribute to shaping a cohesive organisational culture and enhancing employee brand-related behaviours.

The Annual Performance Plan (2023/2024) of the selected NGD underscores the importance of fostering a capable, ethical, and development-driven workforce. To achieve this, the department must cultivate a transformative organisational culture, empower employees through leadership development initiatives, and strengthen internal processes to enhance service delivery (DMRE, 2023:34). Given that the NGD operates in a critical economic sector, the performance and engagement of its employees directly impact South Africa's economic development and job creation (DMRE, 2023:12).

Despite the public sector's mandate to improve societal welfare through service delivery (Linna, Pekkola, Ukko & Melkas, 2010:480), systemic challenges persist, including inefficient leadership, fragmented communication, poor human resource management, and lack of accountability (Thusi, Mtyana & Jili, 2023:137). These factors often lead to misalignment between leadership's intended branding efforts and employees' perceptions of the organisation's values. Prior research (Fourie & Poggenpoel, 2017:171) highlights the failure of government institutions to provide services effectively, further reinforcing the need for an employee-centred approach to internal branding in the public sector.

While private-sector studies have extensively explored internal branding's effects on employee behaviour, limited research has investigated its impact on public-sector organisations. Understanding how internal branding shapes employee engagement and commitment in government institutions is essential for enhancing leadership effectiveness, organisational alignment, and public service performance.

This study adopts a qualitative approach to explore how internal branding supports employee brand citizenship behaviour in the NGD. By examining employees' lived experiences, perceptions, and motivations, this research provides insights into how internal branding strategies can be leveraged to cultivate a committed workforce and drive institutional transformation. Through this contextual exploration, the findings contribute to broader discussions on strengthening public sector performance through employee-centric organisational strategies.

1.2 Research Background

Brand-centric human resource practices are gaining scholarly prominence, particularly in service-based organisations (Dahle & Urstad, 2022:3737). It is in these service-based contexts that internal branding has gained increased attention (Chhibber, Chahal & Kaurav, 2024:4). Alshuaibia and Shamsudinb (2016:558) argue that by involving employees in the organisation's mission through implementing proficient brand-centric human resource management, employees will better understand the importance of embodying the brand's attributes to external stakeholders by facilitating internal branding. Binu Raj (2022:285) agrees that internal branding emphasises cultivating and reinforcing brand values during employee engagements, while Taku, Saini and Abratt (2022:166) confirm that internal branding impacts employee behaviour. Service organisations must ensure that all employees deliver on the brand's promises. Barros and Cali's (2021:136) conceptualisation of internal branding through a systematic literature review defines internal branding as "... an internal orientation of brand management, and its objective is to promote the brand internally to ensure that employees are willing to deliver the brand promise to external stakeholders...".

Conversely, Du Preez, Bendixen and Abratt (2017) and Ngo, Nguyen, Huynh, Gregory, and Cuong (2019:275) confirm that internal branding has the potential to support brand commitment and identification and brand citizenship behaviours. Burmann and Zeplin (2005:284) introduced the term "brand citizenship behaviour", which describes how employees of an organisation align their identity and attitudes with the corporate identity of the company they work for, leading to better brand service delivery. While public and

private organisations have different priorities, BCB remains relevant. In public service organisations, it manifests as a commitment to public values, ethical behaviour, and citizen-focused service rather than direct brand advocacy as seen in private companies. Similarly, Adamu, Ghani and Rahman (2020:99) define internal branding as the process by which businesses educate their staff about the brand, help them understand it, and help them match their actions with the business values. Adamu *et al.* (2019:99) suggest that when employees' needs are met through exchange relationships, they engage in brand citizenship behaviour to achieve brand goals. Employee brand behaviour is portrayed in branding literature as either "in-role" or "extra-role" brand behaviour (Nirmali, Ab Yajid, Khathibi, Azam & Sudasinghe, 2017:269). "In role" brand behaviour denotes a worker's capacity to uphold the company-defined brand standard according to the job function of a brand representative.

On the other hand, the "extra-role" reflects an employee's willingness to demonstrate or participate in brand-supporting responsibilities that go above and beyond the job description provided by the organisation, and it improves the corporate brand performance of the organisation (Nirmali *et al.*, 2017:269). Adamu *et al.* (2019:99) argue that through internal branding practices such as brand leadership and brand training, organisations align and empower employees to behave consistently to deliver the brand promise made to customers. Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) have also argued that providing brand promises to customers requires employees to exhibit brand-consistent behaviour. Staff members who demonstrate high brand citizenship behaviour spirit are known to provide their very best efforts towards achieving their job goals and improving their job satisfaction levels by enhanced positive performance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; Porricelli, Yurova, Abratt & Bendixen, 2014).

Previous research has indicated that to fill in empirical gaps and address practice-related importance, such as service, brand citizenship behaviour's impact must be further explored (Dissanayake, 2015). Moreover, according to Thokoa, Naidoo and Herbst (2022:2), internal branding is one of the most comprehensive strategies for enhancing employee performance because it allows management to align staff members with the goals and values of the company. According to Kim, Tavitiyaman and Kim (2009:369), leadership commitment to service quality enhances employee customer service behaviour, and employee perceptions of this commitment positively impact service performance (Babakus, Yavas, Karatepe & Avci, 2003; Iriadi & Susanty, 2018; Piaralal, Bhatti, Piaralal & Juhari, 2016).

Additionally, top management must comprehend, support, and consistently commit to the internal branding process for internal branding to effectively communicate the corporate brand (Ozcelik & Findikli, 2014; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2006). Experts in human resources management (HRM) and services marketing have stressed the need to train service staff properly. According to studies by Castro-Casal, Vila-Vázquez and Pardo-Gayoso (2019), Grönroos (2000), and Salanova, Agut and Peiro (2005), educating service staff members in both job-related and interpersonal skills might improve their ability to handle customer-related issues and requests and offer consumers helpful services. Consequently, employee views of training support are influenced by the attitudes and behaviours of leaders in service businesses (Hoang, Ho, & Nguyen, 2022). According to Hogg, Carter, and Dunne (1998), organisations must convey their fundamental values and corporate identity to their workforce to foster a sense of belonging and involvement. The corporate identity of a public sector department encompasses its mission, values, visual identity, communication strategies, and internal branding, aiming to foster public trust, transparency, and accountability while aligning employees with service-oriented goals rather than market competitiveness. To promote brand-supportive behaviour in employees, it is also necessary to execute the service brand, measure employee performance based on service delivery, and inspire employees to contribute to the corporate identity through their feedback and culture (Tilley, 1999).

1.3 Problem Statement

This is a public sector case study centred around the role of internal branding in employee brand citizenship behaviour in a selected NGD. The intent is to explore and describe the function of internal branding in promoting employee brand citizenship behaviour. In internal branding literature, private companies have received the majority of the attention within a variety of contexts, such as banking (King & Grace, 2008; Du Preez & Benedixen, 2015; Adileh & Cengel, 2019), and hospitality (Yang, Wan & Wu, 2015; Wang, Yang & Yang, 2019; Xiong, 2023). Although insights into the employee-brand relationship nexus of internal branding have been scarce in the public sector, scholars such as Suomi, Saraniemi, Vähätalo, Kallio & Tevameri (2021), Leijerholt (2021) call for a reflective scrutinising of conventional internal branding principles to the public sector. Thokoa *et al.* (2022:2) have equally raised concerns about public sector research needing to include the importance of internal branding strategy. Hoang *et al.* (2022:370) also highlighted a key problem in their study, namely the lack of

research explored regarding the impact of leadership commitment to service quality on employees' brand-related outcomes, specifically their behaviour towards brand citizenship (Hoang *et al.*, 2022:370). As Mr Gwede Mantashe (Gwede Mantashe, a former trade unionist and South African politician who previously served as the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy and is now serving as a Minister for Mineral & Petroleum Resources) mentioned, "We must change from a state level to improve on a political level" (Mantashe, 2022), Emphasising the need to transform operational approaches at the state level, suggesting that redefining internal processes and organisational culture within public institutions can enhance external perceptions and trust, thereby fostering more substantial alignment between internal branding (employee engagement and values) and external branding (public confidence and institutional credibility).

According to the DMRE annual performance plan for the 2023/2024 financial year (DMRE, 2023:34), creating a positive culture and strong leadership (with a focus on the control environment to ensure effective governance and accountability) are critical components in ensuring that the department lives up to its brand promise. Since employees carry out this service delivery function, there is a need to explore employee brand citizenship behaviour (Masango & Naidoo, 2019). While internal branding is offered as a technique to accomplish brand citizenship behaviour, it is an understudied part of branding inquiries, particularly in the South African public sector context (Leijerholt, Biedenbach & Hulten, 2019:127).

The significance of this study is twofold. First, existing literature tends to overemphasize surface-level recommendations rather than addressing the root causes of misalignment between employee brand citizenship behaviour and internal branding (Piehler, 2018). This gap is significant given that Allada and Rajyalakshmi (2012) argue internal branding is one of the most effective methods for aligning employees with an organisation's mission and values, ultimately improving performance (Nirmali *et al.*, 2017). Second, while most studies on employee citizenship behaviour focus on its impact on organisational performance, this study shifts the focus to understanding internal branding from the employee brand citizenship perspective and its direct influence on employee performance, an area that remains underexplored (Mihaiu, Opreana & Cristescu, 2010:138). The problem identified in the study is the *misalignment between employee brand citizenship behaviour and internal branding*, which hinders the effectiveness of internal branding strategies in improving employee performance.

1.4 Research Aim

Against this background, this study's overall research aim is to explore and describe the role of internal branding in promoting employee brand citizenship behaviour within a selected NGD in South Africa.

1.4.1 Research Questions

As Priya (2021) suggested, this study adopts research questions tailored for a case study design to address its overarching aim. Consequently, the following research questions are posed:

- RQ1 How is internal branding practised and implemented by the selected South African NGD to foster employee brand citizenship behaviour?
- RQ2 How does the leadership of the selected South African NGD actively encourage employees to fulfil the brand promise?
- RQ3 What approaches does the selected South African NGD employ in utilising brand-centric human resources management to align employee performance with the selected South African brand values?
- RQ4 What are the primary barriers and challenges the selected South African NGD employees face in aligning their performance with the selected South African NGD brand promise?
- RQ5 How and why do employees in the selected South African NGD perceive the effectiveness of internal communication in enhancing employee brand citizenship behaviour within the organisation?

Chapter 1 continues with a preliminary literature review comprising the theoretical foundations and related concepts. The methodology is detailed, including the research paradigm, the research design, the study population and sample, and the data collection and analysis. This chapter concludes with the demarcation of the proposed chapters.

1.5 Preliminary Literature Review

This component of Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of the study's theoretical grounding and related concepts as part of the preliminary literature review. Chapter 2 presents a more detailed discussion of the supporting literature.

1.5.1 Theoretical grounding

Three theories ground the study: Emerson's (1976) social exchange theory, Allen and Meyer's (1990) organisational commitment theory, and Tajfel and Turner's (1979) social identity theory. Then, the study's central concepts are briefly discussed.

1.5.1.1 Theory 1: Social Exchange Theory

This study is firstly grounded in social exchange theory (SET), as it is recognised as the most influential framework for explaining the behaviour of employees in the workplace (Adamu *et al.*, 2020). According to Blau (1964), social exchange is a person's voluntary acts driven by returns they want to get and typically receive from others. Put differently, Anwar, Widodo and Suprihanto (2023) explain that social exchange theory acknowledges the communication between leaders and employees in an organisation and, more importantly, that individuals join specific organisations to receive some benefit.

According to SET, employment involves an exchange of employees' efforts and loyalty for the organisation's provision of material and socioemotional benefits (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). Therefore, at the core of SET lies reciprocity (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005), where mutual fulfilments are exchanged between employer and employee, primarily focusing on intrinsic benefits rather than economic ones (Dahle & Urstad, 2022). Employees who perceive respect, supportive communication, and recognition of their contributions from their employers tend to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviours, including organisational citizenship behaviour (Meira & Hancer, 2021). This establishes a mutual commitment between the organisation and its employees, where the organisation fulfils employees' needs, and employees demonstrate commitment to organisational goals.

1.5.1.2 Theory 2: Organisational commitment theory

In everyday life, individuals make commitments (Bar-Haim, 2019:37), thus creating a commitment towards an organisational goal that which an employee works for is no different, as stated by Miller (2003:73), who links organisational commitment to an employee's willingness to maintain membership in the organisation, due to interest and association with organisational goals and values. The concept of organisational commitment has been viewed from two aspects. Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974:604) view it from an attitudinal perspective, describing organisational commitment as "an attachment to the organisation, characterised by an intention to remain in it; therefore, identifying with the organisation's values and goals". Conversely, Becker (1960) approaches it from an exchange-based viewpoint, arguing that people remain loyal to the organisation for as long as they keep their jobs, regardless of the demanding circumstances they face; however, they are prepared to leave the company if alternative benefits are given. For employees to demonstrate commitment towards the organisational goals, there needs to be an element of job satisfaction and fairness to

display brand citizenship behaviour (Bar-Haim, 2019:18).

1.5.1.3 Theory 3: Social identity theory

The third theory supporting this study is the social identity theory. According to Tajfel and Turner (1979), social identity theory posits that people get a sense of who they are from belonging to certain social groups. Social identity, from an organisational perspective, has been defined as the “perception of oneness with, or belonging to the organisation” (Simbula, Margheritti & Avanzi, 2023:3). Social identity has also been seen through the prism of fostering more cooperation among coworkers to maximise organisational performance, even within local governments. Social identity theory holds that local governments are made up of social groups that interact with one another and, as a result, develop a collective identity that serves as the foundation for their motivation (Kruger & Johnson, 2013). Within those social groups, favouritism can happen with or without "strong leadership" or member interdependence, interaction, or cohesiveness (Ashforth & Mael, 1989:24). Peters (2010) and Scott and Bardach (2018) suggest that overcoming fragmentation in the public sector is crucial for successful transformation, rather than excessive collaboration.

It's important to note that aligning SIT and internal branding is crucial. Internal branding involves the deliberate effort by the organisation to leverage SIT. As a result, the fulfilment of the employee brand promise and performance relies on the social cues established by the work environment (Nguyen, Lu, Hil & Conduit, 2019). This allows employees to improve their comprehension and skills to exhibit behaviours that align with the brand through internal branding initiatives (Kashyap & Kang, 20242).

1.6 Internal branding

Internal branding is a powerful tool for corporate brand development, enabling organisations to align internal processes and culture and ensuring committed employees consistently fulfil the brand promise; from a public sector perspective, employees are expected to exhibit *brand citizenship behaviour* by aligning with the department's core values and mission organisations must convey their fundamental values and corporate identity to their workforce to foster a sense of belonging and involvement (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007:60). Ngo, Nguyen, Huynh, Gregory and Cuong (2018:1) expand on the internal brand concept by not only centring it around alignment between employees and the organisation but also looks at how it improves employee performance in the services industry. This is further supported by Dean, Arroyo-Gamez, Punjaisri and Pich (2016), who postulate that it is critical to recognise the distinctive qualities of the public sector,

which can impact internal brand management outcomes and generate favourable or unfavourable opinions of an organisation's brand across a variety of stakeholders (Leijerholt *et al.*, 2022:444). Since internal branding has been found to affect culture, performance, and citizenship behaviour, internal branding custodians (marketing, HR administration) within any government department that is tasked with improving internal branding must essentially combine efforts (Nirmali *et al.*, 2017:267) in internal branding, which can have a positive impact on employee brand citizenship behaviour and ultimately producing positive outcomes for the organisation.

1.6.1 Brand promise alignment

The alignment of brand promises is viewed from both employee and brand or organisation perspectives. Rozin (2012:247) highlights that humans are the best archetype for brand promise, as they consistently make and maintain promises, intentionally or unintentionally. Both actions may shape a stakeholder's experience with the brand and its powerful perceptions. From an employee perspective, it is the delivery of service as promised by the brand (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007:57). Departments are better positioned to align staff, procedures, and behaviours to support the fulfilment of the promise across time and location when they evaluate their responsibilities in service delivery in light of commitments made to the public (Carrithers, 2023). Inversely, the ramifications of the inability to live up to the brand promise result in a lack of credibility and trust (Portal, Abratt & Bendixen, 2019).

1.6.2 The role of leadership in enabling brand promise fulfilment

Leaders must constantly and frequently communicate the organisation's brand identity to staff members, demonstrating their commitment to upholding its promise. They play a central role in translating the brand promise into action if they are to see the fulfilment of the promise because they are the ones who essentially have to translate the promise into action (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2006:772). As a result, leaders are central in fulfilling the brand promise since they catalyse internal brand development. This suggests that senior management plays a significant role in communicating the goals and values of an organisation.

A company's brand promise should align with its values to create a cohesive identity. This harmony fosters trust and loyalty, as customers can expect the brand to uphold its promises. Employees who understand and embrace brand values are likelier to embody the promise, strengthening the brand's reputation.

1.6.3 Brand values

Brand values may be defined as the basic tenets that a company adheres to. Golik and Izvekov (2018:94) discuss the "ideals" that guide the brand's operations, such as freedom, the environment, equality, and human dignity. The core of a brand's identity is its brand values, which give the organisation's activities and existence meaning and should always represent its top goals (Paul, 2022).

Brand-centred HR management, incorporating brand values into recruitment, onboarding, training, and performance management, enhances employee engagement, retention, and overall performance, fostering a unified brand representation.

1.7 Brand-centred HRM

Chiang, Chang, Han and McConville (2013) state that brand-centred human resource management is a strategy combined to boost brand value, fostering an atmosphere that inspires employees to engage in brand-related activities and actively achieve brand-related goals. As previously stated, Nirmali *et al.* (2017:267) postulate that internal brand custodians such as human resource administration and marketing in an organisation need to combine efforts to improve internal branding, which means that recruitment and selection procedures should focus on people whose values, attitudes, and actions align with those of the brand (Chiang, Han & McConville, 2018:940). The benefits include employees identifying with the brand and being committed to the brand, which is an example of a positive brand attitude and behaviour that leads to brand citizenship (Ravens, 2014).

In emphasising brand-centred human resource management, government departments can create a cohesive and consistent employee experience that supports the brand and ultimately improves employee performance.

1.7.1 Employee performance

This study will explore performance from the perspective of employees having the necessary combination of specialised knowledge, abilities, and work ethic to complete an output (DMRE, 2023). The selected South African performance management system policy defines competency as the necessary skills and work ethic for achieving a specific output (DMRE, 2023). In the public sector, employee performance denotes a link between objectives and outputs; therefore, employee performance is the outcome of simultaneously pursuing efficiency, effectiveness, and a matching budget (Mihaiu *et al.*, 2010:1380). The public sector has been universally defined as ineffective (Hamlin &

Whiteford, 2020), indicating that challenges hinder performance output and that leadership is instrumental in employee performance. Feng, Patel and Sivakumar (2020) found that a leader's style significantly impacts team performance, particularly employee citizenship behaviour, as employee willingness to exceed duties and organisational experience significantly affects performance levels.

1.8 Delimitations, Limitations and Assumptions of the Research

The scope of this study is limited to a single case study research strategy, focusing on one selected in South Africa. The study aims not to explore external stakeholders' perceptions or experiences of the selected NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) service aspects in terms of employee brand-centred behaviour. Using a single case study research design could be considered a study limitation, with some authors (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Hoorani, Nir & Gibbert, 2019) strongly advocating using a multi-case study design. However, using multiple case studies was not viable for this study due to time and resource limitations.

1.9 Research Methodology

Interpretivism is selected for this study to uncover the description and meaning-making process of the role of internal branding in employees' brand citizenship behaviour in a selected South African NGD. This selection aligns with the perspective put forth by Seimiene and Kamarauskaite (2014), who advocate for qualitative methods in brand research, particularly when exploring participants' emotions, perceptions, motivations, and cognitive processes. Table 1 provides an overview of the study's research methodology.

Table 1.1: An overview of the study's research methodology

Methodological consideration	Methodological choice	Brief overview
Research Philosophy	Interpretivism	Ontology - Reality is subjective, may change, is socially constructed and consists of multiple realities (Holden & Lynch, 2004). Epistemology - It assumes that subjective meanings are central. - It emphasises understanding a situation's specific details, underlying reality, personal meanings and actions that inspire them (Wahyuni, 2012). Axiology - The research is intertwined with values, as the researcher is integral to the research approach (an emic perspective). - The researcher cannot be detached from what is being studied, thereby introducing subjectivity (Holden & Lynch, 2004).
Research approach	Inductive reasoning	Based on Morse and Mitcham's (2002) inductive reasoning strategies: - Deconstruction - techniques of concept analysis - Focusing - development of a skeletal framework - Towards verification - using a scaffold
Research strategy	Case study	Descriptive single case study
Type of Research	Mono-method	Qualitative
Time horizon	Cross-sectional design	
Exploratory/Explanatory	Exploratory	
Population and sample	Population	South African NGD
	Purposive sampling	A selected South African NGD employees from junior, middle and senior management
Techniques and procedures	Data collection	Semi-structured interviews
	Data analysis	Thematic analysis (Byrne, 2022)

Source: Author's conceptualisation

The following sections will briefly discuss the methodological considerations and choices indicated in Table 1.1 above.

1.9.1 Research Paradigm

Researchers' chosen framework serves as the foundation of the research and influences what aspects are encompassed or omitted from a study (Omodan, 2022). Firstly, Marsh Ercan and Furlong (2017) argue that ontology demarcates a perspective on the world, delineating what is deemed authentic, natural, and the perception of social reality; essentially, it serves as a theory of existence (Takahashi & Araujo, 2020). This study's core ontological assumption strongly leans towards the subjectivist approach (interpretivism) of social science, where the core ontological assumption is that reality is socially constructed, may change and may have multiple perspectives (Holden & Lynch, 2004). In other words, the socially constructed realities of employees in the selected South African NGD (including the researcher) influence their meaning-making of internal

brand and brand citizenship behaviour.

Secondly, epistemology pertains to beliefs regarding how knowledge is generated, comprehended, and used in acceptable and valid ways (Omodan, 2022). Based on the interpretive paradigm, this study's epistemological view emphasises understanding the meanings and interpretations of participants and highlights that participants socially construct meanings within a specific context. According to Wahyuni (2012), it focuses on the situation's details, the reality contained inside them, their subjective interpretations, and the driving forces behind these realities are the main points of emphasis.

Thirdly, concerning axiology, interpretive researchers adopt the emic or insider perspective (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020), aiming to explore social reality from the viewpoint of the individuals involved (Wahyuni, 2012). In this approach, participants and researchers' experiences and values significantly shape the data collection and analysis processes (Omodan, 2022).

1.9.2 Research Approach

Weiskopf (2008: 16) points out that it is vital to acknowledge that findings from empirical research, regardless of whether they are regarded as inductively or deductively reasoned, inherently involve theory. In other words, these theories are either explicitly stated or implicitly understood as relevant to the research question and used to guide the research process. In line with interpretivism, this study is based on inductive reasoning and uses Morse and Mitcham's (2002) three inductive reasoning strategies: deconstruction, focusing and scaffolding.

1.9.3 Research Strategy

This study uses a case study research strategy as it provides an opportunity to gain a deep, holistic view of a research problem (Yin 2009). De Vries (2020) states that a qualitative case study methodology enables researchers to analyse intricate phenomena within their contextual frameworks. As Yin (2009) stated, a case study is more than just a technique for gathering data; it is a research strategy or plan for investigating a phenomenon in its real-life context. According to Yin (2009), a case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions; (b) you cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study; (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study; or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context. For this study, a qualitative case study design is selected, as Alam (2021) argues that

using such a design can also answer "what" questions, in addition to "why" and "how" inquiries, thus providing the option to employ exploratory, descriptive or explanatory research methods.

Furthermore, based on Bonoma's (1984:384) view, a qualitative case study research strategy is beneficial, precisely "sticky, practice-based problems where the actors' experiences are important, and the context of action is critical". Furthermore, Yin (2009) identified three types of case study research: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. As this study focuses on the selected South African as a case, it is necessary to delineate the type of case study proposed by Yin (1990), namely an exploratory, descriptive case study approach.

As this is a single descriptive case study, it follows a cross-sectional design in terms of the time horizon of the study.

1.9.4 Type of Research

Against this background and within an interpretive through an inductive approach, as is the case in this study, this qualitative study perceives the world as constructed and experienced by individuals through their interactions and more comprehensive social systems (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative studies emphasise context, meaning, and understanding using inductive reasoning, unlike quantitative research, which emphasises results, generalisation, prediction, and cause-and-effect interactions using deductive reasoning (Yilmaz, 2013). The goal is to capture and communicate participant experiences in their own words to represent and understand the phenomena being studied (Hayes, Heit & Swendsen, 2010). This is a mono-method qualitative study.

1.9.5 Population and Sampling

This study's target population was selected from a National Government Department. Convenience sampling was chosen for the study, limiting the sample to particular categories of individuals who can supply the desired information (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019:233). When considering the department from the perspectives of leadership, performance and brand promise, obstacles, and employee brand-citizenship behaviour, the selected South African employees were considered best suited to give first-hand information as department employees. Quota sampling was further employed to ensure the voices and experiences of employees from junior managers (referred to as assistant directors), middle managers (referred to as deputy directors) and senior managers (referred to as directors). Three key participants were selected from these quotas using

convenience sampling. Data saturation should be explained by Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, and McKibbin (2015:1781) as reaching a point of informational redundancy, where additional data collections contribute little to nothing new to the study. Although various authors criticise defining the sample size in qualitative studies beforehand (Collaizi, 1978; Merriam, 1998), Gentles *et al.* (2015) recognise the pragmatic need to provide sample size estimates in qualitative research. The following section provides a brief overview of the techniques and procedures used in this study.

1.9.6 Techniques and procedures

1.9.6.1 Research instrument

The semi-structured interview is a widely used research method in social sciences (Magaldi & Berler, 2020). Hyman, Cobb, Feldman, Hart and Stember (1955) and Magaldi and Berler (2020) define semi-structured interviews as exploratory methods in social sciences, allowing researchers to go deep for discovery despite topical trajectories. Anthropology literature primarily involves interviews exploring a person's life story or group. Good interviews balance main questions, follow-ups, and probes, as suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2005:171). An interview guide is recommended for interviewers to explore specific topics in advance. This guide allows researchers to focus on topics without constraints and tailor their questions to the interview context and participants, as Lindlof and Taylor (2002) suggested.

1.9.6.2 Data analysis

The three-step data analysis approach developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) will be applied in this study, as described by Bougie and Sekaran (2019): data reduction—selecting, coding, and categorising the data; data display—the way that the data is presented, like quotations from critical participants and graphic illustrations; and thirdly, concluding.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

Although “there are no fixed rules determining the extent to which the investigation of a research problem or research issue is ethically acceptable or unacceptable” (Du Plooy, 2009:53), the researcher has to ensure that the research study is ethically acceptable. Some of the ways to ensure that the research is ethically acceptable is through the protection of the research participant's right to privacy by the researcher (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:65). The identities of individual participants, particularly those who will be interviewed, will not be revealed to any third party, ensuring their dignity and privacy are respected and maintained. The confidentiality of participants within the government

department will be crucial. Ethics in research involve good faith, attention to results, surrendering ego, and pursuing organisational interests over self-interests (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019:11). Ethical conduct should be evident in the conduct of the researcher, the data provided by the participants, and the analysis of the results (Giorgini, Mecca Gibson, Medeiros, Mumford, Connelly & Devenport, 2015). Ethical conduct should also be reflected in the behaviour of the researcher conducting the investigation, the participants providing the data, and the analysts delivering the results (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019:12).

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with employees to maintain confidentiality and encourage open participation. Their responses will be kept private, with no individual or department-specific information being disclosed within the study. While the final study, which will be anonymised under the pseudonym NGD, may be shared with the sector, the specific department name will not be revealed. Participation in the study will be entirely voluntary, and no employee will be coerced into taking part. It's important to highlight that the researcher conducting the study understands the department and is mindful of the potential for personal biases to influence the qualitative data (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019).

1.11 Anticipated Contributions of the Research

The selected South African NGD states that fostering a supportive environment and having capable leadership - emphasising the control environment to guarantee efficient governance and accountability - is essential to ensure the department fulfils its brand promise. Stressing employee brand citizenship behaviour is necessary since employees perform this role (Masango & Naidoo, 2019). Although internal branding is recommended to achieve brand citizenship behaviour, it has not received enough attention, especially in the South African public sector. As stated in the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (2024:34), the department acknowledges the importance of brand citizenship behaviour.

For this reason, this study aims to explore and describe the role of internal branding in promoting employee brand citizenship behaviour within a selected South African NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study). This is critical since there is a dearth of research on employee brand citizenship and internal branding, particularly in the public sector (Thokoa *et al.*, 2022:2). This study is further significant because the findings and insights can support positive leadership and culture by emphasising internal branding and brand citizenship behaviour. The recommendations and insights can help public

sector departments optimise brand-centric HRM to ensure improved brand citizenship behaviour of public sector employees.

1.12 Proposed Chapter Outline

Table 1.2: Demarcates this study's different chapters and briefly describes the content covered in the related chapters.

CHAPTER	CONTENT OF THE CHAPTER
Chapter 1: Introduction	This chapter provides an introduction and background to the study to argue the problem statement, research aim, and research questions. A preliminary literature review introduces the theoretical underpinnings and concepts central to the study. An overview of the methodological choices is provided, followed by the ethical considerations and anticipated research contributions.
Chapter 2: Literature Review	The chapter begins with an introductory section and elucidates the conceptual framework. It subsequently furnishes an overview of the research objectives, underpinning theories, domains, sub-domains, and principal constructs, culminating in a conclusion.
Chapter 3: Research Methodology	This chapter starts with an introduction and covers the research philosophy, approach, method, setting, sampling, time horizon, data collection, analysis procedure, ethical considerations, and trustworthiness, concluding with a summary.
Chapter 4: Data analysis	This chapter begins with an introduction and then delves into the description of participants and interviews. It provides an outline of the theme and an overview, concluding with the data collection results.
Chapter 5: Findings, recommendations and conclusions	This chapter begins with a discussion of results, followed by an exploration of findings related to the research question. It then provides recommendations based on the findings, conclusions, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

Source: Author's conceptualisation

1.13 Conclusion

Chapter 1 made a case for the problem's significance, contextualised the study, and offered an introduction to the essential components of the study. The theoretical underpinnings of the study, namely, the social exchange theory, the organisational commitment theory, and the social identity theory, laid the foundation for a brief introduction to the fundamental concepts. The research methodology was introduced, followed by the ethical considerations when conducting the data collection and analysis, concluding with the anticipated contributions and a breakdown of the chapters to follow.

Chapter 2 situates this study's literature within the framework of existing research and academic literature related to the topic. It offers a critical synthesis of empirical studies organised according to pertinent themes of the study's related concepts. It explains how the study contributes to the literature and describes the theoretical grounding guiding it.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

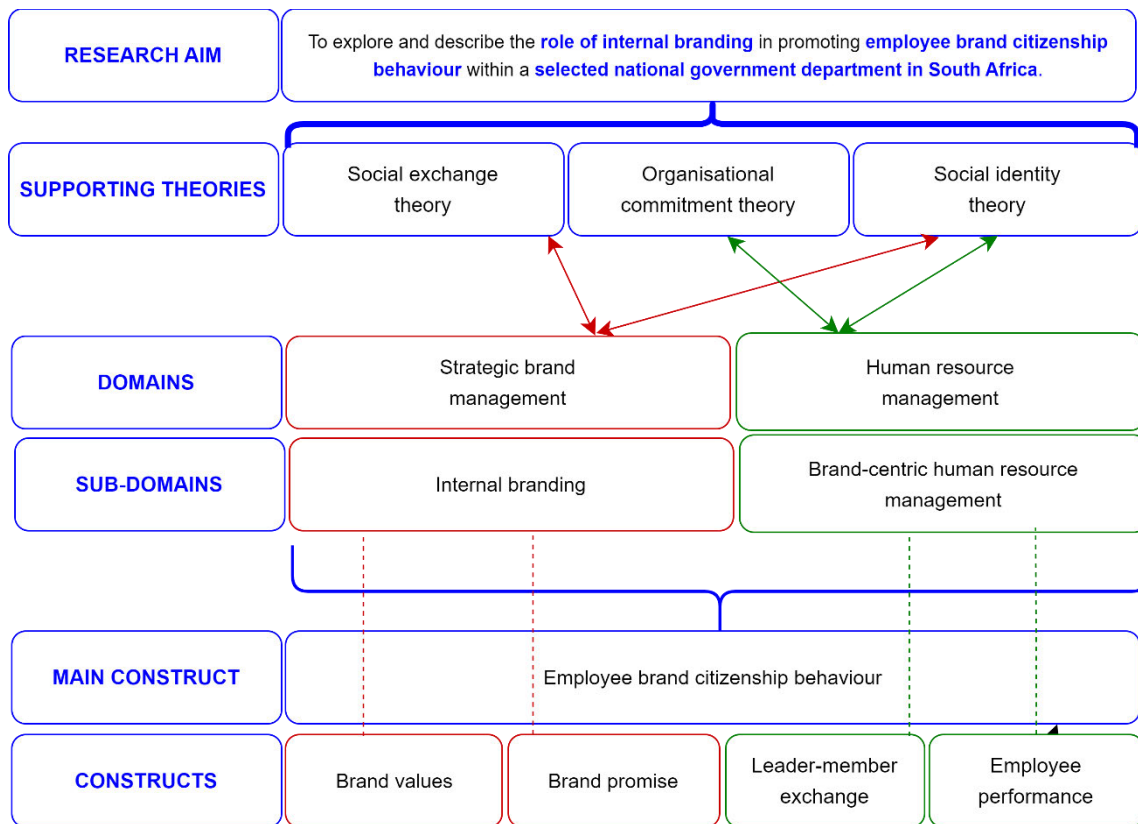
Branding, once confined to organisations and corporations only, has now permeated the public sector (Bustos, 2021). South African public sector organisations continuously encounter new challenges and pressures, and their existence sometimes comes under scrutiny (Nel & Masilela, 2020). Sataøen and Wæraas (2013) argue that branding can enhance these entities' legitimacy and build trust. Yet, many organisations, when considering branding, focus only on the customer or end-user, where another stakeholder group is similarly essential, namely employees. According to Iyer, Davari and Paswan (2018), employees are valuable resources due to their skills and knowledge. Therefore, Ngo, Nguyen, Huynh, Gregory and Cuong (2020) contend that organisations can leverage this potential and create a sustainable competitive advantage by understanding and utilising the role of internal branding, ultimately enhancing brand performance.

This chapter situates the study within the broader context of prior research and scholarly discourse on the influence of internal branding on employee citizenship behaviour. It commences by elucidating the conceptual framework employed to structure the literature. Subsequently, it comprehensively examines the sub-domains and their constituent elements (such as brand values, brand promise, leader-member exchange, and employee performance). The chapter concludes with a concise synthesis of the literature review and sets the stage for the methodology chapter.

2.2 Conceptual framework of the literature

A significant academic discourse surrounds using theoretical versus conceptual frameworks in qualitative research (Passey, 2020; Garvey & Jones, 2021). For this study, a conceptual framework is not just adopted, but the decision to use it is underlined, drawing on the works of scholars such as Miles and Huberman (1994) and Ravitch and Riggan (2017). These scholars define a conceptual framework as a visual representation of a study's main ideas or concepts. The decision to use a conceptual framework in this study is also influenced by Miles and Huberman's (1994) description of a conceptual framework as an intellectual sorting process, which is then visually depicted. This approach allows researchers to map out sets of relationships for exploration and understanding, ensuring the audience understands the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of the research approach (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). The conceptual framework of this study is depicted in Figure 1 and explained afterwards.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework



Source: Author's conceptualisation

Building upon the research questions raised in Chapter 1, Section 1.3.1, the above conceptual framework is proposed to provide an articulated point of reference for meaning-making during the dynamic nature of the research process. Firstly, this conceptual framework includes the overall aim of the study, which is to serve as a roadmap for the research journey, as well as for the conceptualisation of the relevant theories and related constructs that underlie the study. Secondly, guided by the study's aim, the conceptual framework identified two key domains: strategic brand and human resource management. These domains are interlinked to play a central role in fostering employee brand citizenship behaviour – the study's primary construct – to create a synergistic environment where employees internalise the brand values and actively promote and protect the brand, going beyond their regular job duties (Afshardoost, Eshaghi & Bowen, 2021:983).

According to Van der Waldt (2020), a clear understanding of a construct is impossible without a clear theoretical grounding. Therefore, three foundational theories, including

social exchange theory, organisational commitment theory, and social identity theory, were identified in relation to the study's primary construct. Given the study's focus, the exploration delved into two key sub-domains: internal branding, representing the strategic brand management domain, and brand-centric HR management, offering the human resource management domain's lens. Each of these sub-domains consists of supporting constructs directly related to the aim of this study. The rest of this chapter reviews relevant literature on each component of the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 2.1.

2.3 A brief overview of the domains of the study

2.3.1 Strategic brand management

A brand embodies positive experiences with an organisation's products, communication, and people. Still, it requires managing these points of contact in an integrated and focused way, including product or service management, channel management, advertising, and ethics (Kapferer, 2012:2). Strategic Brand Management remains at the forefront of strategic brand thinking (Kapferer, 2012:1). Strategic brand management is crucial for businesses as it creates a unique identity for products and services, fostering customer loyalty and emotional connection (SimpliLearn, 2024). Understanding these aspects is essential for a successful brand strategy.

2.3.2 Human resource management

Human resource management is the process of recruiting, hiring, and managing employees within an organisation. HRM's purpose is to manage people within a workplace to achieve the organisation's mission and reinforce corporate culture, enabling the recruitment of new employees with the necessary skills (Department of Government Communication and Information System, 2024).

HRM is often called human resources (HR) (Barney, Chai & Sutner, 2023). In the public sector, HR must provide strategic leadership, manage administrative services, recruitment and selection processes, and promote ethics and integrity (Department of Government Communication and Information System, 2024). HR managers play a crucial role in motivating employees to endorse their organisation's brand through internal branding (Dahle & Urstad, 2022:3736) by exhibiting employee brand citizenship behaviour through employees becoming brand champions, brand citizens or brand ambassadors (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001; Leijerholt *et al.*, 2019). HRM must understand internal branding to foster brand support behaviour (Vallaster & De Chernatony, 2005:182). Anchoring brand values in employees' minds and hearts encourages

commitment to the desired brand (Dahle & Urstad, 2022:3737). This aligns with commitment-oriented HRM, which shapes desired employee behaviours by forging psychological links between organisational and employee goals (Arthur, 1994:672).

Drawing from the discussion of strategic brand management and human resource management as the two domains of this study, the following section explores the theoretical foundations underpinning the study. Specifically, social exchange theory, organisational commitment theory, and social identity theory provide a grounding towards addressing the overall aim of this study.

2.4 Theories grounding the study

2.4.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory, developed by George Homans in 1958, combines behaviourism and economics, introducing the concept of “social behaviour as exchange” in literature, with subsequent studies by Thibault and Kelley (1959) and Blau (1964) expanding on its fundamental concepts. Blau (1964) emphasised the theory's economic orientation, while Homans (1958) focused on psychological behaviour. Blau's 1964 contribution defines social exchange as actions based on rewarding reactions from others, while exchange behaviour refers to voluntary actions motivated by expected returns. Blau (1964) further introduced the concept of "exchange and power," focusing on the economic orientation of social exchange and instrumental behaviour. This theory emphasises voluntary actions motivated by rewards from others, limiting the social exchange to rewarding reactions. Homans (1969) expanded on SET, incorporating sociology and behavioural psychology concepts. Anderson, Berger, Zelditch and Cohen (1969) emphasised its economic implications. Goode (1973) suggested SET's convergence with role and exchange theories. Emerson (1976:335) suggested that SET is a framework for various theories, including commitment, organisational citizenship behaviours, and justice. Social exchange theory is based on core assumptions about human nature and relationships. It suggests that humans seek rewards, aim for maximum profit with minimal cost, calculate profit and cost before engaging, and understand that the "payoff" varies between individuals and over time (Tulane University, 2018:online). People evaluate the benefits and risks of their social relationships, and if the risks outweigh the benefits, they may terminate or abandon the relationship (Cherry, 2023). Reciprocity is the central concept in social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mithcell, 2005), emphasising the mutual exchange of fulfilment between employers and employees (Dahle & Urstad, 2022), which can be material or non-material (Homans,1958). According to Anwar *et al.* (2022: 95), social exchange theory is applied to organisations with an exchange between the leader

and the employee. This differs slightly from earlier research in that the concept has evolved from a broad definition of an employer-employee exchange to a more focused definition that includes the leader and the employee. When applying SET to a service industry such as the public sector, it is predicted that employees feel obliged to reciprocate the support that they receive from the organisation, leaders, or colleagues (Xu, Wang & Ma, 2022:2685). Exchange interactions can lead to unpleasant affective conditions due to conflict, often triggered by injustice (Anwar *et al.*, 2022:95). Injustice can cause aggrieved parties to respond by reducing input and output quality, which eventually leads to decreased performance (Lim & Tai, 2014:3).

Corporate and similar public sector relationships are becoming more complex (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). With that level of complexity, just as in maintaining healthy brand criteria, for a brand to flourish, it needs to live up to its brand promise, core, and essence (Tybout, 2019:128). At the core of SET lies reciprocity (Cropanzano & Mithcell, 2005), where mutual fulfilments are exchanged between employer and employee, primarily focusing on intrinsic benefits rather than economic ones (Dahle & Urstad, 2022). There is a need to not only streamline the notion of SET between employees and leaders but also to focus on the relationship between employees, leaders, and employers to understand the substance of the relationship that links them, which will require dedication from all parties involved. According to Ahmad, Nawaz, Ishaq, Khan, and Ashraf (2023:6), successful exchanges are built on mutual commitment. According to Roese and Gardner (2019:133-139), for a brand to be successful, it must connect with its customers on a psychological level, tapping into the consumers' core motives, which will influence their behaviour and, eventually, purchase decisions. The customer is the employee in the service industry, and alignment is crucial. Organisations should consider how their brand's purpose captures shared values and motivates employees. This understanding is essential for the selected to use brand-centric human resources management to align employee performance, as evidence suggests that Human Resource Management (HRM) can significantly enhance organisational performance (Combs, Liu, Hall & Ketchen, 2006; Jiang, Lepak, Hu & Baer, 2021).

2.4.2 Organisational Commitment Theory

Organisational commitment is a psychological state or force that binds individuals to an organisation, becoming a crucial concept in organisational behaviour (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer, Becker, & Van Dick, 2006). Baba and Jamal (1979) on Becker's theory suggests that employee-organisation relationships are based on economic gains, fostering commitment due to the difficulty of disengagement (Karmakar, 2020:25). Porter

et al. (1974:604) shifted focus from tangible side bets to intangible psychological involvement, resulting in the affective commitment dimension. The multi-dimensional approach to organisational commitment, proposed by Meyer and Allen (1984) and O'Reilly and Chatman (1986), combines affective and continuance commitments. Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional connection with the organisation, while continuance commitment relates to the costs of quitting. Normative commitment is based on a sense of moral obligation, obligation, which includes a sense of debt owed to a superior, a co-worker or the company (Karmakar, 2020:25). Miller (2003:73) links organisational commitment to an employee's willingness to maintain membership in the organisation, due to interest and association with organisational goals and values. For employees to demonstrate commitment towards the organisational objectives, there needs to be an element of job satisfaction and fairness so that they can exert brand citizenship behaviour (Bar-Haim, 2019:18). Fairness is the fundamental principle that individuals use to evaluate the relationship between social institution and its members (Kim, Shin & Koo, 2018:2605). In the absence of fairness, Bar-Haim (2019:18) states that employees can leave the organisation when alternative benefits are given.

The public sector can foster 'brand commitment' by demonstrating similar values and an overt willingness to form deeper emotional connections with employees, guaranteeing that the brand is always the best option and that the relationship is symbiotic and mutually beneficial. Porter *et al.* (1974:604) see the organisational commitment from an attitudinal perspective, describing it as "an attachment" to the organisation, typified by an intention to remain in it and so identifying with the organisation's values and aims". Employee retention is influenced by motivation and preferences (DPSA, 2006). The Department of Public Service Administration in South Africa (DPSA, 2006) reported initiatives that staff need to focus on creating better employee commitment within the organisation:

- Making sure there are enough resources to meet the demands of the job (DPSA, 2006:13)
- Empower employees (training and skills development) to meet job standards (DPSA, 2006:13) and ensure sufficient opportunities for growth and development.
- Creating a culture of ownership – where workers feel like they are part of the organisation (DPSA, 2006:13)
- Providing opportunities for both individual and teamwork (DPSA, 2006:13)
- Rewarding good work properly (DPSA, 2006:13)

- Ensuring proper communication with feedback to workers (DPSA, 2006:13)

It is therefore critical to understand what internal branding techniques the NGD uses to encourage employee brand-citizenship behaviour, which, according to Burmann, Jost-Benz and Riley (2009:395), has two benefits, which are the willingness to help and further develop the brand and brand enthusiasm, which ultimately places commitment from an attitudinal exchange-based viewpoint. In that case, the employer must be committed to fair business practices, and the employees must embody the organisation's values and fulfil the employee-employer agreement regarding performance agreement. According to Kouzes and Posner (2020), the most significant part of leadership that applies to regular people is the notion of leadership being about influencing change and progress. Behaviours and actions convert values into actions and vision into rewards (Benimira & Agboola, 2021). It is about demonstrating leadership that creates an atmosphere where people may collaborate to transform ambiguous challenges and complexities into extraordinary achievements (Schad & Smith, 2019).

2.4.3 Social identity theory

Two distinct branches of social identity theory exist: Tajfel's (1981) social identity theory and Tajfel and Turner's (1979) self-categorisation theory, both acknowledging the origins of social identity in cognitive and motivational factors (Huddy, 2001:132). Social identity, from an organisational perspective, has been defined as the "perception of oneness with, or belonging to the organisation" (Simbula *et al.*, 2023:3). Social identity theory holds that local governments are made up of social groups that interact with one another and, as a result, develop a collective identity that serves as the foundation for their motivation (Kruger & Johnson, 2013). Interestingly, within those social groups, favouritism can happen with or without "strong leadership" or member interdependence, interaction, or cohesiveness (Ashforth & Mael, 1989:24). Peters (2010) and Scott and Bardach (2018) emphasise the importance of overcoming fragmentation in the public sector for successful transformation, rather than excessive collaboration. Therefore, the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) needs to understand the primary barriers and challenges faced by NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) employees in aligning their performance with the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) brand promise. If possibly perceived or formed, social organisation identity exists as a barrier or an enabler to performance output.

The study's theoretical foundations are explored through primary constructs and subdomains, providing context for addressing them and explaining the relationship between them and their constructs.

2.5 Key constructs in the study

2.5.1 Employee Brand Citizenship Behaviour

Brand citizenship behaviour can unlock intrinsic motivation (Ghaleb & Ordun, 2021). Brand citizenship behaviour refers to employees living and exhibiting altruistic brand behaviour, contributing to the brand's strength (Chang *et al.*, 2012; King & Grace, 2010). Employees with a brand altruistic spirit and personal values align with the brand, enhancing brand strength and promoting brand citizenship behaviour outside contractual expectations (Chiang *et al.*, 2018). The organisation can employ supportive brand practices like brand leadership and communication to interact with internal stakeholders (Chiang, 2023:5). The goal is to create an internal culture that promotes positive behaviour within and outside the brand. To this end, the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) should seek insights into how the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) implements internal branding practices to foster employee brand-citizenship behaviour.

2.5.2 Internal branding

Internal branding refers to how employees perceive and understand an organisation's brand and their role in delivering its promise to current and potential customers (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky & Wilson, 2009:210). A common aspect of internal branding is bringing employees and brand values closer together (Morhart, Herzog, & Tomczak, 2009; Punjaisri *et al.*, 2009). Some definitions suggest delivering the brand promise to customers as the starting point of internal branding. In contrast, others focus on internal culture and employees as active co-creators of brand value (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016:50).

“The essence of internal branding is to unlock employees’ intrinsic motivation to co-create brand value.” Sita de Kruijf – (2022:31)

2.5.3 Brand values

Brands embody values and essential beliefs guiding their development (Conejo, 2021: 159). Values influence individuals' interests, behaviours, and product/brand preferences. Consumers express their social selves through brands, and brands with similar values are more influenced, increasing the likelihood of targeted results. Brand values may be defined as the basic tenets that a company adheres to (Nadanyiova & Kliestikova, 2017). Nadanyiova and Kliestikova (2017) discuss the "ideals" that guide the brand's operations, such as freedom, the environment, equality, and human dignity. The core of a brand's identity is its brand values, which give the organisation's activities and existence meaning

and should always represent its top goals (Paul, 2022). Values and attitudes are essential in shaping people's thoughts and behaviours but differ in focus and stability. Values are broad, enduring beliefs, while attitudes are focused on specific situations development (Conejo, 2021:162). Consistency is crucial for attracting value-seeking customers. Defining brand promise and highlighting it in marketing, advertising, and product offerings is critical to becoming a household name and creating a differentiator (Kruijf, 2022:22). Promoting ethical values in a workplace involves creating a positive environment, engaging staff, and fostering organisational commitment, especially in the public sector (Masenya, Mokoele & Makalela, 2018)

Transforming the public sector into an entity capable of fulfilling its role in bringing about the new South Africa depends on many things. Still, it depends on the commitment and effectiveness of its employees, which in turn depends on how those employees are managed (Masenya *et al.*, 2018:107). Although branding in the public sector is an understudied strategy, it is essential for influencing public perceptions of places, organisations, policies, and politicians (Bennett & Savani, 2003; Needham, 2006; Saleem & Iglesias, 2016; Barros-Arrieta & García-Cali, 2021, cited in Kruijf, 2022:22) postulate that 'Brand promise and company's external message should align internally, leading to increased employee wellbeing and job satisfaction.

2.5.4 Brand promise alignment

This concept is related to the organisational commitment theory in that it requires commitment from employees to support the brand values and be able and willing to behave in ways that suit the brand promise (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016; Beverland & Cankurtaran, 2022:17) and employers to building internal support for the brand that increase employees' brand knowledge of values in exhibiting BCB in wanting to support the brand values and promise (Steger, Dik & Duffy, 2012). The alignment of brand promises is viewed from both employee and brand or organisation perspectives. Rozin (2012:247) highlights that humans are the best archetype for brand promise, as they consistently make and maintain promises, intentionally or unintentionally. Both actions may shape a stakeholder's experience with the brand and its powerful perceptions. From an employee perspective, it is the delivery of service as promised by the brand (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007:57). Departments are better positioned to align staff, procedures, and behaviours to support the fulfilment of the promise across time and location when they evaluate their responsibilities in service delivery in light of commitments made to the public (Carrithers, 2023). Inversely, the ramifications of the inability to live up to the brand promise result in a lack of credibility and trust (Carrithers, 2023). Consistency and the

ability of the public sector to identify brand promise in marketing and advertising creates stakeholder trust and is a vital marketing asset (LaManna, 2019:42). The public sector can enhance services by understanding customer needs, adopting new delivery models, fostering a connected government, improving efficiency, quality, and reducing costs (Oosterom, 2007:3). Embedding integrity into a brand takes time and effort. Still, it can be a lasting legacy (LaManna, 2019:43). To this end, the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) should seek insights into how the leadership of NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) actively encourage employees to fulfil the brand promise.

'Integrity is a key element in your brand promise and is something you can bring to the negotiating table.' - Rock LaManna (2019).

2.5.5 Brand-centric human resource management

Brand-centric Human resource Management treats people as valuable assets, unique, irreplaceable, and inimitable (Aziz, Najafi, Shuaibi & Shamsudin, 2016:157). Chiang *et al.* (2013) state that brand-centred human resource management is a strategy fused to boost brand value that entails fostering an atmosphere that inspires employees to engage in brand-related activities and achieve brand-related goals. Brand-centred HRM must be implemented to assist employees in effectively achieving the brand promise (Aziz *et al.*, 2016: 155). Brand-centred HRM refers to HR-related procedures such as hiring, training and development, performance appraisal, and remuneration, which are adapted to encourage employees to exhibit favourable attitudes and behaviours toward the firm's brands (Chiang *et al.*, 2012). Employees who can act as good brand ambassadors for external customers will likely have a better brand experience, leading to customer brand loyalty (Aziz *et al.*, 2016). Brand-centred HRM is critical to achieving brand success and survival in the marketplace since external and internal branding strategies are complementary.

During the Nedbank Conference 2023, Luca Garalelli, the Group CEO of TBWA SA, delivered a thought-provoking speech on cultural trends and the environment. He emphasised the importance of chaos, stating, "Chaos is necessary and welcomed." Garalelli (2023) cautioned against excessively disrupting our systems through engineering, especially when striving to create meaningful and imaginative work. Garalelli (2023) postulates that organisational creativity goals signal to employees that creativity is an aspect of their job performance that needs to be emphasised. It makes creative leadership redundant because it is factored into the business' creative goals, ethos,

values, performance structures and systems (Jausssi & Randel, 2019). As previously stated, Nirmali *et al.* (2017:267) postulate that internal brand custodians such as human resource administration and marketing in an organisation need to combine efforts to improve internal branding, which means that recruitment and selection procedures should focus on people whose values, attitudes, and actions align with those of the brand (Chang, Chiang & Han, 2012:940). The benefits include employees identifying with the brand and being committed to the brand, which is an example of a positive brand attitude and behaviour that leads to brand citizenship (Ravens, 2014).

Current research suggests that successful human resource management practices are associated with favourable work-related results, such as job satisfaction, commitment, and organisational citizenship behaviour (Gould-Williams, 2003; Wright, Gardner & Moynihan, 2003). As a result, fostering a leader-member exchange relationship and synergy is crucial for steering the organisation towards positive work outcomes.

2.5.6 Leader-member exchange

Leader-member exchange (LMX) is a social exchange between leaders and followers, fostering a rational relationship and strengthening the leader-follower relationship through high-quality interactions (Dai, Zhuang, Ko & Okumus, 2020; Dhar, 2016; Kim, Phillips, Park & Gully, 2021; Luo, Song, Marnburg & Øgaard, 2014). High-quality leadership styles involve an in-group relationship between a leader and followers (Pellegrini, 2015), fostering increased access to resources and mutual trust. On the other hand, low-quality leadership styles involve an out-group relationship, focusing on the job description and financial relationship (Fein, Benea, Idzadikhah & Tziner, 2020). Transformational leadership empowers followers, while transactional leadership relies on rewards and compensations (Thompson, Buch & Glasø, 2018). Both styles contribute to an organisation's vision and encourage intellectual growth. Employee advocacy fosters positive attitudes towards work and the organisation by valuing their contributions and demonstrating a caring approach toward their interests (Yeh, 2014). Leaders must constantly and frequently communicate the organisation's brand identity to staff members, demonstrating their commitment to upholding its promise (Kouzes & Posner, 2020). They play a central role in translating the brand promise into action if they are to see the fulfilment of the promise because they are the ones who essentially have to translate the promise into action (Vallaster & De Chernatony, 2006:772). As a result, leaders are central in fulfilling the brand promise since they catalyse internal brand development. This suggests that senior management plays a significant role in communicating the goals and values of an organisation. Leadership is a complicated

concept in its construct since there are multiple methods to define and characterise excellent leadership, as well as many measuring variables for leadership success and, as a result, different components are discovered for various forms of leadership success (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). According to Kouzes and Posner (2021), the most significant part of leadership that applies to regular people is the notion of leadership being about influencing change and progress. Behaviours and actions convert values into actions and vision into rewards (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). It is about demonstrating leadership that creates an atmosphere where people may collaborate to transform ambiguous challenges and complexities into extraordinary achievements (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). By breaking down the five leadership practices into four categories—modelling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, empowering others to act, and encouraging the heart—Kouzes and Posner (2011:16) define leadership as more than just theory; instead, they offer an operating system for what it means to practice leadership and making a difference. Leaders who genuinely live up to their companies' purpose, vision, and values develop a reliable and credible personal brand. Consequently, connections and relationships are created between individuals with common ground and personal values that align with the brand and business ethos. Kouzes and Posner (2021:5) argue that leadership is a dynamic relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who follow, whether one-to-one or one-to-many.

2.5.7 Employee performance

The Batho Pele White Paper on Service Delivery, published in 1997, lays out a well-defined implementation strategy for organisational change by the Batho Pele Principles (DPSA, 2015). The white paper outlines the processes that should be followed and the mechanisms that should be employed to promote continuous service delivery in the public sector (DPSA, 2015). The underlying principle of putting people first is not only expressed in the White Paper on Service Delivery. Still, it has also been incorporated into the legislative procedures followed by many ministries within the public sector (DPSA, 2015). The key obstacle in achieving this vision continues to be the government systems and methods for providing excellent services to all people in a timely, efficient, streamlined, and seamless way (DPSA, 2015). At the heart of these challenges is a lack of leadership and skilled managerial workers placed in leadership roles.

The public sector in developing countries often lacks public trust in delivering services aligned with citizen preferences (Masenya *et al.*, 2018:107) due to politicians' interest in rent-seeking activities rather than delivering desired services (Hartle, 1995). Employee performance significantly impacts the company's success and growth (Saepudin,

Mulyanti & Aviyanti, 2023: 167). To improve employee performance, it's crucial to analyse competence and motivation (Saepudin *et al.*, 2023: 167). Competencies refer to an employee's abilities, knowledge, and skills for efficient job execution (Wahyuni *et al.*, 2020, cited in Saepudin *et al.*, 2023:167). Motivation, both internal and external, is the drive that motivates employees to perform well, resulting in increased energy and focus. Furthermore, leadership significantly influences employee competence and motivation, with supportive, clear direction and constructive feedback leading to improved performance (Damayanti, 2021; Nguyen, Felfe & Fookien, 2013; Nguyen, 2020). The White Paper on Human Resource Management (DPSA, 1997) emphasises the importance of employee efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery. Performance management is a crucial part of effective HR strategies, involving results orientation, training, performance rewards, and openness, fairness, and objectivity (DPSA, 1997:42). Talented employees may leave a company if management stifles advancement, lacks people focus, and fails to provide accurate performance assessments and discover development opportunities (DPSA, 2006:12).

The selected national department's performance management system policy defines competency as necessary skills and work ethic for achieving specific outputs (DMRE, 2023). Masenya *et al.* (2018:112) postulate that performance management enhances institutional performance through effective communication, task overview, identifying improvement areas, creating a culture of continuous improvement, identifying training needs, and conveying value to employees. Employee performance in the public sector is linked to efficiency, effectiveness, and budget matching (Mihaiu *et al.*, 2010:1380). Leadership plays a crucial role in employee performance, with employees' willingness to exceed duties and organisational experience affecting performance levels (Jiatong, Wang, Alam, Murad, Gul & Gill, 2022). To this end, the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) should seek insights into the primary barriers and challenges that NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) employees face in aligning their performance with the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) brand promise.

2.6 Conclusion

The study explores internal branding, brand citizenship behaviour, brand promise alignment, leadership roles, brand values, brand-centered HRM, and employee performance. This chapter emphasises the importance of internal branding and employee brand citizenship behaviour as the golden thread. Organisational commitment requires job satisfaction and fairness for employees to demonstrate commitment (Bar-

Haim, 2019:18). Social identity theory suggests that BCB unlocks intrinsic motivation for employees to identify and engage with the brand (Piha & Avlonitis, 2018). Internal branding and employee performance require BCB's commitment to supporting brand values (Saleem & Iglesias, 2016; Beverland & Cankurtaran, 2022:17). These have provided a grounding in addressing the overall aim of this study.

In Chapter 3, the research methodology aligns with Singh's (2015) and the approach to research inquiry presented by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

After conducting a literature review in the previous chapter, this chapter delves into the methodological framework underpinning this study. It articulates the rationale for the methodological choices and outlines the research setting, sample selection, and data collection and analysis methods. It also provides a transparent account of the methodological journey by describing the study's design and procedures.

Significant differences exist in explaining the specific 'parts' of the research process and related decisions, so this study follows Singh's (2015) guidance to structure and delineate the different parts of its methodological choices. As indicated in Chapter 1, this qualitative study explores the role of internal branding on employees' brand citizenship behaviour within a selected South African NGD (Pseudonym used), explicitly focusing on perceptions, motivations, and cognitive processes. Navigating the research landscape requires understanding a specific set of terms that describe its various stages. As Singh (2015) indicates, the lack of a unified and integrated approach to research necessitates a distinction between philosophy, methodology and method issues. Therefore, this study uses the Saunders *et al.* (2019) approach to research inquiry. This model outlines distinct layers or stages that must be addressed to develop a practical methodology. By working through these layers, researchers can ensure a comprehensive and well-defined approach to their research. Therefore, this chapter starts by discussing the study's philosophical framework for research. This is followed by the research design, which includes the research approach, research method, research strategy, the research setting and sample, the time horizon, the data collection method and the proposed data analysis procedure. The ethical considerations are then alluded to, and measures to ensure rigour according to the principles of trustworthiness and how it was applied in the study are explained.

3.2 Research Philosophy

According to Bahari (2010), the research philosophical framework is a guiding framework for understanding how knowledge is created and the fundamental nature of the social world. It lays down essential assumptions about how researchers perceive and interact with the world. These assumptions are deeply rooted in epistemology (the study of knowledge) and ontology (the study of being), each offering distinct perspectives that shape a researcher's approach to the research process and the methods they employ (Carter & Little, 2007). A research paradigm is a worldview, a set of core assumptions and beliefs about the world's operations (Wahyuni, 2012). This empirical research

employs an interpretive approach, drawing on Ryan's (2018) concept that "truth and knowledge are subjective". The interpretive approach, explained by Berryman (2019:273), recognises that "social construction, language, shared consciousness, and other social interactions" play a central role in understanding reality. These elements serve as tools through which perceptions are collectively created of what is considered "fact".

Tuli (2010) states that the interpretive philosophical framework is a common foundation for qualitative research. It views reality as a product of individual and collective interpretation and experience. This paradigm emphasises that people actively construct their understanding of the world through interactions with each other and broader social systems (Maxwell, 2022). Within this framework, research is inherently interpretive, aiming to understand a specific phenomenon rather than making broad generalisations about a population (Farzanfar, 2005). Researchers adopt a naturalistic approach, observing real-world situations as they occur organically (Redcay & Moraczewski, 2019). They refrain from manipulating or controlling the environment, allowing for a more authentic and unobtrusive exploration of the phenomenon under study.

Against this background, this study leans strongly towards subjectivism in Saunders *et al.*'s (2019:10) explanation of the "philosophical assumptions as a multidimensional set of continua," where the ontological reality is nominal, socially constructed, and relies on multiple realities. Furthermore, this study's epistemology adopts context-specific assumptions and attributes, reflecting a subjectivist philosophical perspective. Against this background, the next section, therefore, briefly outlines the study's research approach.

3.3 Research Approach

This study aims to provide a rich description and a deeper understanding of employees' experiences and actions regarding the role of internal branding in employee brand citizenship behaviour within their subjective or contextual meaning through their "emic" perspective, as explained by Gaus (2017). Because the intent is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings others have about this context, Creswell and Creswell's (2014) advice is followed by, rather than starting with a theory (as in post positivism), the inquirer aims to generate or inductively develop a pattern of meaning. Therefore, this study employs an inductive methodology, incorporating a case study, to develop an understanding of theoretical concepts based on empirical data. Maxwell (2022) argues that once the philosophical framework and research approach align with the research purpose, they form the basis for designing the qualitative research methodology.

According to Gaus (2017), case studies provide a comprehensive understanding of a contemporary event or situation (the "case") within its natural environment. According to Yin (2009), the case and its context are indistinguishably linked, with the context acting as a lens to analyse the case profoundly, and a single case study approach is a suitable option. Furthermore, by observing these interconnected elements in their natural setting, case studies aim to produce rich insights and a nuanced appreciation of the case (Creswell & Creswell, 2014). Understanding the context is, therefore, central, but the case's complexity also involves other interwoven factors that contribute to a thorough analysis.

The case study has long been a cornerstone of social science investigation, offering researchers a unique opportunity to delve deep into the complexities of real-world phenomena and gain a nuanced understanding of the underlying dynamics at play. This methodology is particularly valuable when the research questions focus on the "how" and "why" aspects of a contemporary issue and when the investigator has limited control over the events being studied. These questions provided a descriptive and exploratory interpretation of the phenomena through social interactions, experiences, and actions of employees in the selected and how they gave meaning to their brand citizenship behaviour. To this extent, it required paying close attention to the context in which internal branding occurred concerning employee brand citizenship behaviour. From an interpretivist perspective, Gaus (2017) argues that a range of methodologies can be employed to study human experiences. Among these, the case study approach is deemed to be suitable to guide to establish techniques and procedures to proceed with this research study because the study of the toll of internal branding, specifically in a public sector department, poses a contemporary phenomenon and cannot be separated from its context (Yin, 2009:18). Additionally, the design of a case study can provide detailed descriptions of specific and rare cases, allowing researchers to apply various methodologies and draw upon diverse sources of information (Kekeya, 2021). However, the trade-off is that a single or small number of cases may offer little basis for establishing reliability or generalising the findings to a broader population (Ebneyamini & Moghadam, 2018). To conduct effective case study research, careful methodological considerations must underpin this approach. Unlike other qualitative or quantitative research strategies, case study research has no specific guiding requirements. This flexibility can be both a strength and a weakness, as it allows for tailoring the design and data collection procedures to the research questions but can also lead to poor case studies that are open to criticism (Sibbald, Paciocco, Fournie, Van Asseldonk & Scurr, 2021).

To address this challenge, this study considers a descriptive single-case study methodology (Sibbald *et al.*, 2021). This case study involves a detailed and intensive analysis of a single case, such as a specific community (Jokhio, Raza, Younus, & Soomro, 2022). This research adopts this approach to provide a rich description of the phenomenon within its context (Pawestri & Kurniati, 2021). In other words, the detailed exploration of the role of internal branding in employee brand citizenship behaviour (the phenomena) within one NGD in South Africa. Machalicek and Horner. (2018) argues, however, that single-case research designs have played a pivotal role in developing evidence-based practices. Similarly, Chomos, Evans, Bolan, Meritt, Meyers & Novins (2018) postulate that a single case allows for evaluative rigour in small samples and immediate participation, which has been the case in this study's selected NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study). Odell (2001) and Stephen, Bell, Khan, Love, Macintosh, Martin, Moran, Price, Whitehead & Elliott (2021) add that qualitative single-case studies offer several advantages compared to statistical methods, such as allowing for greater value in theory-building interpretations.

3.4 Research method

Qualitative research is widely recognised as a valuable approach for gaining in-depth insights into the impact of internal branding on employees' brand citizenship behaviour (Nguyen *et al.*, 2019). While prior studies have primarily employed quantitative methods to examine this relationship (Lee & Kim, 2013), a qualitative inquiry provides a rich, employee-centred perspective, offering a deeper understanding of employees' lived experiences and perceptions of internal branding (Nguyen *et al.*, 2019).

This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore and describe the role of internal branding in fostering employee brand citizenship behaviour within a selected NGD in South Africa. By focusing on employees' experiences, the research aims to uncover how internal branding strategies—particularly brand values and brand promise—shape employee engagement and behaviour. Additionally, the study examines the relationship between internal branding, leader-member exchange, and employee performance to provide a more comprehensive understanding of brand-centric human resource management in the public sector.

A qualitative methodology is well-suited to this study, as it explores employees' emotions, perceptions, motivations, and cognitive processes related to internal branding (Rehman, Tufail, Ullah & Altaf, 2018). To study this in its real-world organisational context, the research employs a case study method, which enables an in-depth investigation of

internal branding practices within NGD. Through direct immersion in the setting, interviews with employees, and analysis of organisational communication practices, the study captures employees' perspectives and experiences (Vergara et al., 2023). Using this approach, the research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of internal branding communication strategies and their role in enhancing employee brand citizenship behaviour in the organisation.

3.5 Research setting and sampling

The research setting and sampling are crucial for the validity and reliability of the findings (Bolarinwa, 2020). Choosing the right sampling plan accurately represents the target population and effectively addresses research questions (Sarfo, Debrah, Gbordoze, Afful & Obeng, 2021). Table 3 outlines the data source, target population, sampling method, sample elements, and sample size, guiding the selection process.

Table 3.1: Summary of sampling plan example

	Description	Justification
Data source (or case)	The NGD final staff	Convenience sampling was selected for the study, limiting the sample to particular categories of individuals who can supply the desired information (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019:233).
Target population	Junior, Middle and Senior level management at the NGD	When considering the department from the perspectives of leadership, performance and brand promise, obstacles, and employee brand-citizenship behaviour, the selected South African employees were considered best suited to give first-hand information as department employees.
Sampling method	Non-probability sampling through a two-stage sampling process including 1) Quota sampling and 2) convenience sampling.	Quota sampling is employed to ensure the voices and experiences of employees from junior managers (referred to as assistant directors), middle managers (referred to as deputy directors) and senior managers (referred to as directors). Three key participants were selected

		from these quotas using convenience sampling.
Sampling elements (Research participants)	Quota 1 Directors	To gain a more comprehensive understanding of the overall talent landscape within the Department.
	Quota 2 Deputy Directors	To provide valuable insights when assessing challenges faced by employees within the department.
	Quota 3 Assistant Directors	To provide valuable insights when assessing the department's operational and perceived effectiveness of internal nuances.
Sample size	9	Although various authors criticise defining the sample size in qualitative studies beforehand (Colaizzi, 1978; Merriam, 2022), Gentles <i>et al.</i> (2015) recognise the pragmatic need to provide sample size estimates in qualitative research.

Source: Author's conceptualisation

Massis and Kotlar (2014) propose that the sampling plan for qualitative case study research needs to be structured to provide deep insights into complex phenomena within real-world contexts. When designing such a study, selecting appropriate sampling techniques is crucial to ensure the validity of the findings.

The rationale for convenience sampling is grounded in methodological considerations. Quota sampling is utilised to select participants based on specific characteristics, ensuring that they represent certain attributes in proportion to their prevalence within the population (Simkus, 2023). This approach is particularly relevant for capturing the perspectives of three distinct groups—Assistant Directors, Deputy Directors, and Directors—who operate at functional, operational, and corporate strategic levels within the department. By obtaining insights from these groups, the study aims to provide a comprehensive view encompassing both high-level strategic perspectives and functional aspects at the ground level.

Convenience sampling is a strategic decision, given the tight time constraints associated with the report. This method allows the researcher to explore the constructs in depth while minimizing the logistical challenges of scheduling interviews with participants across various locations. Consequently, the study relies more on face-to-face interactions, which aligns with the study's inductive methodology. According to Gaus (2017), an inductive approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of contemporary events or situations within their natural environments.

The DMRE (2024) is established per the Public Service Regulation (PSR) of 2016 and the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) Determination and Directive on Performance Management and Development System (2006). The decision to use three quotas aligns with the DMRE (2024) policy, which provides a comprehensive framework for performance management following PSR 2016 and the DPSA's Determination and Directive on Performance Management and Development System.

The strategy behind using the three quotas is to target the key participants in the first quota, the directors, who, according to the DMRE (2024), are responsible for resource allocation, overseeing employee performance, and managing the Directorate. The goal is to interview directors over ten years of tenure to capture institutional knowledge and comprehend the historical processes. Gathering insights from senior-level managers (Directors) can offer valuable perspectives on an organisation's talent management practices and hurdles. As per Byham and Wellins (2015), managers play a direct role in the hiring and selection process, and their viewpoints can illuminate the efficacy of current practices. Interviewing senior-level management will give the study crucial insights from a senior leadership standpoint, particularly in decision-making. By grasping the strategies and obstacles in talent management at the executive level, researchers can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the overall talent landscape within departments (Chambers *et al.*, 2001).

The rationale for utilising the key participants in the second quota, who, according to DMRE (2024), are responsible for managing and supervising the operations of the sub-directorates (DMRE, 2024). Interviewing middle-level managers (Deputy Directors) can offer valuable insights into understanding the department's internal operations and the challenges faced by its employees. According to Inamdar, Osland and Wells (2010), middle managers can also provide valuable insights into an organisation's dynamics and decision-making processes. The significance of middle managers in this study is paramount, as it can potentially offer more insights into questions regarding the primary

barriers and challenges faced by NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) employees in aligning their performance with the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) brand promise. Existing literature suggests that middle managers play a crucial role in bridging the gap between senior leadership and front-line employees, and their perspectives can illuminate the implementation of strategic initiatives and the effective management of day-to-day operations (Llave & Genon, 2022).

The rationale for engaging key participants in the third quota, according to DPSA Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) (2017), is to ensure their performance aligns with the outputs and targets outlined in the signed performance agreement as per DPSA PMDS (2017) and the Performance Management Policy. Junior managers play a vital role in departments, linking upper management and frontline employees and translating strategic objectives into practical realities (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1997). Gathering insights from interviews with junior-level management can offer a more accurate understanding of employees' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of NGD's internal communication in promoting brand citizenship behaviour within the departments. The target audience for these interviews would primarily be millennials and employees who have been with the department for less than five years.

3.6 Time horizon

A cross-sectional study is an observational research design that allows researchers to collect data on a population at a specific time, providing a snapshot of that population's characteristics, behaviours, and outcomes (Shapiro, Weinblatt & Densen, 1966). One of the primary advantages of using a cross-sectional study is its efficiency in terms of time and resources. Compared to longitudinal studies, which require repeated measurements over an extended period, cross-sectional studies can be conducted relatively quickly and at a lower cost (Bauer, 2004). Additionally, cross-sectional studies are well-suited for assessing the prevalence of a particular phenomenon, such as the prevalence of the attitudes and knowledge of a target population (Kesmodel, 2018). Therefore, this study's time horizon is cross-sectional.

3.7 Data Collection Method

Compared to formal interviews with set questions, semi-structured interviews offer a more flexible and conversational format, allowing researchers to explore specific themes in-depth (Adams, 2015). This approach can provide valuable insights that the researcher may not have anticipated (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). One of the primary advantages of this approach is the ability to explore participants' motivations, attitudes,

and beliefs in a conversational style, often uncovering valuable information that the researcher did not anticipate (Tang, 2022). Compared to structured interviews, which follow a rigid format of pre-determined questions, semi-structured interviews focus on specific themes but allow the conversation to unfold organically. This flexibility enables researchers to delve deeper into areas of interest, prompting participants to share their unique experiences and perspectives (Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson & Kangasniemi, 2016). Another key advantage of semi-structured interviews is their utility in investigating complex behaviours, opinions, and emotions and collecting information on diverse experiences (Longhurst, 2022). This depth of exploration is particularly valuable in development research, where it is crucial to understand the nuances of people's choices, behaviours, and the impacts of policies or events on their lives (Adams, 2015).

The semi-structured interview approach has drawbacks (Tang, 2022). The interview process can be time-consuming, as the conversational nature of the interviews may lead to more extended discussions and the need to analyse more in-depth, qualitative data (Kakilla, 2021). Additionally, the flexibility of the semi-structured format can sometimes make it challenging to maintain consistency across interviews, potentially complicating the data analysis process (Carey, 1995). Despite these potential drawbacks, the advantages of semi-structured interviews, such as their ability to uncover rich, nuanced insights and their suitability for exploring complex topics, make them a valuable tool in the qualitative research arsenal.

The Interview protocol (questions asked in the actual interviews) will be structured so that the same questions will be asked at different management levels. Understanding how managers at various department levels respond to the same question is crucial to effective communication and decision-making. Managers at the bottom, middle, and top of the organisational hierarchy often have distinct perspectives and responsibilities, influencing their approaches to addressing various challenges. This study explores the nuances of how the managerial level impacts the nature of responses to a given question.

According to Skripak, Cortes and Walz (2018), senior managers concentrate on high-level planning and decision-making to establish strategic objectives, while junior managers handle day-to-day operations. Senior managers take a holistic, long-term view, while first-line managers provide practical, short-term solutions. Middle management plays a crucial role in mediating between senior leadership and junior managers, reinterpreting top executives' objectives and potentially altering strategies, highlighting their unique perspective in bridging the gap between an organisation's vision and

operations (Harrison & Shortell, 2020). This approach allows for comprehensive insights from high-level and on-the-ground perspectives, leading to in-depth recommendations in Chapter Five (5).

In summary, exploring how the management level affects responses to a given question can provide valuable insights into the selected NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study) decision-making and communication dynamics. By understanding these level-specific differences, departments can better leverage their managers' diverse perspectives to enhance strategic planning, internal branding, brand citizenship behaviour, and overall performance.

3.8 Data analysis procedure

Data analysis in a case study is a complex process that involves a methodical approach to extract meaningful insights (Shenton, 2004). It consists of creating detailed interview transcripts, identifying emerging patterns, and coding and classifying the data (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019:307). The process includes both formative and summative elements, with the formative aspect scrutinising the data to identify themes and the summative analysis examining the entire dataset to generate typologies, models, and theories to describe, explain, or predict the phenomenon under study (Fàbregues & Feters, 2019). Braun and Clark's six-phase analytical process is utilised for this study (Bryne, 2022:2).

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data

The process typically begins with immersion in the data, during which the researcher closely reviews the collected information to understand it comprehensively (Moskovicz, 2019).

Phase 2: Generating initial codes

The data is coded and categorized to identify emerging themes and patterns using inductive, data-driven, or deductive approaches (Fàbregues & Feters, 2019). Tracking the process in a spreadsheet with data items documented in the first column and iterations of codes in each successive iteration is recommended (Bryne, 2022).

Phase 3: Generating themes

Once the key themes and subthemes have been identified, the researcher engages in a summative analysis, where relationships between variables are explored, differences are highlighted, and potential outcomes are forecasted. At the end of this process, the researcher should be able to produce a thematic map (Bryne, 2022).

Phase 4: Reviewing potential themes

The researcher is required to conduct a recursive review of the candidates' themes in relation to the coded data items and the entire dataset (Bryne, 2022).

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

The researcher must present a comprehensive analysis of the thematic framework, expressing each theme and sub-theme in relation to the dataset and research questions (Bryne, 2022).

Phase 6: Producing the report

The final step involves presenting the research findings coherently and meaningfully, often through narratives, descriptions, and contextual discussions (Moskovicz, 2019).

Addressing factors such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability throughout the analysis will ensure the trustworthiness of the findings (Bradley, Curry, & Devers, 2007), which forms part of the ethical considerations of the study.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Conducting academic research requires a deep consideration of the ethical implications of the work, as the pursuit of knowledge and understanding carries a moral obligation to ensure that the research process and its outcomes do not cause harm or infringe upon the rights and well-being of participants or the broader community (Sudheesh, Duggappa, & Nethra, 2016). Researchers must ensure that participants are fully informed of the nature and risks of the study and provide genuine, voluntary consent to participate (Struminskaya & Sakshaug, 2023). Obtaining informed consent is a cornerstone of research ethics, as it empowers individuals to make autonomous decisions about their involvement and safeguards against exploitation (Zimmer, 2018). In addition to informed consent, researchers must also consider the broader social impact of their work and strive to ensure that the potential benefits of the research outweigh any risks or burdens placed on participants (Grady, 2007). Research methodology, participant selection, and potential applications must be carefully analysed, with researchers aware of their biases and limitations and maintaining scholarly integrity through appropriate design, data analysis, and peer review (Page & Nyeboer, 2017).

In the study context, participants will be required to sign a consent form before participating in the interview. They will receive a copy of the form, and the researcher will

read it aloud. Participants will be assured that their involvement in the study is voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw from the interview or decline to answer specific questions without any repercussions. It will be communicated that participants are expected to provide their perspectives on the research topic honestly and reliably. Ensuring the confidentiality of the participants and safeguarding their identities is crucial, especially because the public sector is highly regulated. Any personal and identifiable information pertaining to the participants will not be included in any analysis or reporting. All details will be disguised using pseudonyms, such as “Participant 1”, to guarantee participants' anonymity and confidentiality. In the final report, a table in Chapter 4 will depict participants' profiles; however, no names will be used. They will be identified as P1DD (Participant 1 Deputy Director). The participants will seek permission to record the interview to aid in data quality and transcription.

Both the researcher and supervisor will have access to these recordings. No one at the selected South African NGD will have access to identifiable interview information. Data will be anonymised, and pseudonyms will be used to report the data. In Chapter 4, data analysis will involve using quotes from the interview transcripts. However, no identifiable information that can be linked to the participants will be included. The data will be securely stored in a password-protected recordings folder on the researcher's personal device and desktop, with exclusive access granted to the researcher. Both the researcher and the supervisor will have access to these recordings. Access will be granted if required by the institution where the research is being conducted for credibility purposes, and a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) will be co-signed by the institution navigator and student upon submission of the recordings. The interview recordings and transcripts will be handled with the utmost confidentiality throughout the data collection process. After submission, the data will be archived, stored, and promptly disposed of. The researcher will draft a memo to the Director General to address the potential power dynamic between the researcher and participants, particularly given the participants' varying management positions. This memo will seek permission to conduct the research, outline its aim and purpose, and emphasize its potential industry contribution. Before the interviews, the researcher will also apprise the participants of the memo and discuss the research's objectives. This will reassure the participants that the Director General endorsed the research, potentially minimizing any discomfort or hesitancy to participate. Additionally, it will be crucial to communicate to the participants that they can terminate the interview if they feel uneasy without facing any repercussions. Finally, obtaining the participants' verbal consent before the interview will be imperative.

Ultimately, the ethical conduct of academic research is a shared responsibility between researchers, institutions, and the broader community (Grady, 2007). By upholding the highest standards of ethical practice, researchers can contribute to advancing knowledge in a manner that respects the autonomy and well-being of all those involved (Sudheesh *et al.*, 2016).

The credibility of qualitative studies relies on internal validity, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Internal validity ensures suitable and relevant data, while transferability refers to the applicability of findings. Dependability is about the reliability of the study, and confirmability involves addressing personal biases in the write-up (Applied Doctoral Centre, 2024).

3.10 Trustworthiness

Table 3.2: The application of trustworthiness principles in this study

Trustworthiness principle	Application of the trustworthiness principle in this study
Credibility	Participation validation- Participants provided verbal consent for the interview, and the form was completed. Member checking and peer evaluation (doing a pilot study with the interview schedule).
Dependability	Using dense descriptions of research methods and how they were applied. Source triangulation was done by interviewing three levels of employees in the NGD.
Transferability	Detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, and settings were provided.
Confirmability	Inter-coding reliability Atlas.ti AI coding function was used to identify the initial codes of the participants' interview transcriptions, and the researcher then manually conducted a thematic analysis.

Source: Author's conceptualisation

3.11 Conclusion

In Chapter 3, the study adopted a qualitative research paradigm to explore the role of internal branding on employees' brand citizenship behaviour within an NGD, allowing a deeper understanding of perceptions, motivations, and cognitive processes. Chapter 4 will, therefore, extract meaningful insights from the data collected. The data collection

process will involve conducting one-on-one interviews with the participants from the NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study). The findings will be transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis (Joseph *et al.*, 2021). This analytical approach will identify recurring themes and patterns within the data, providing insights into the factors influencing employees' brand citizenship behaviour (Nguyen *et al.*, 2019). The study's findings highlight the crucial role of internal branding in shaping employees' brand citizenship behaviour (Punjaisri *et al.*, 2009).

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the study results obtained through one-on-one semi-structured interviews conducted in person and online to enable interviews to be conducted outside of work hours. The data was analysed using the method described in Chapter 3, incorporating Braun and Clarke's six-phase analytical process (Bryne, 2022:8). The themes that emerged from the manual data analysis were organised according to the research questions outlined in Chapter One. The data analysis is based on Braun and Clarke's six-phase analytical process, with the addition of the Atlas.ti AI coding was used, with the aim of leveraging both approaches complementarily—manual coding for deep interpretive work and Atlas.ti for systematic documentation and reliability assessment—without suggesting one approach is superior to the other. Verbal quotes and statements from the participants were used to support these themes. This chapter starts with a brief overview of the participants and the interview process. Subsequently, it delves into data coding, creating a thematic map, presenting findings pertaining to the research questions, and recapitulating the research question results.

4.2 Description of participants and interview

On 27 August 2024, the pre-testing of the interview guide took place. Following the pre-testing of the instrument, adjustments were made to the interview guide to eliminate the repetition of questions and improve the clarity of some of the questions where jargon was used. Additionally, definitions for internal branding, brand citizenship behaviour, and brand promise were included to facilitate a better understanding and more in-depth responses.

Nine interviews were conducted as part of the study, gathering data from three tiers of management: junior (Assistant Directors), middle (Deputies and Directors), and senior (Chief Directors) staff from the selected South African NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study). The interviews took place over two weeks, from 4 September 2024 to 20 September 2024, with five semi-structured interviews conducted in person at the NGD and four conducted online via Microsoft Teams or Zoom because some participants were not available after hours for in-person interviews. The Director General granted permission for the research to be undertaken at the NGD, and all interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. The recordings were stored securely and shared only with the supervisor, and each participant provided signed consent (Annexure H).

Three females and six males were among the participants. This distribution was not intentional but rather a matter of convenience.

Table 4 below summarises the key participants' profiles, including their years at the specific NGD (Pseudonym used for the company under study), their current level in the department, and their levels of responsibility.

Table 4.1. Profiles of Research Participants

Participant	Gender	No. of years in the public sector	The period in current NGD	Levels of responsibility
Participant1 P1DD	Male	10 years' of experience	10 years	Deputy Director
Participant 2 P2ASD	Male	20years of experience	15 years	Assistant Director
Participant 3 P3D	Male	15 years of experience	3 years	Director
Participant 4 P4ASD	Male	19 years years of experience	12 years	Assistant Director
Participant 5 P5DD	Female	16 years' of experience	13 years	Deputy Director
Participant 6 P6ASD	Female	6 years' of experience	2 years	Assistant Director
Participant 7 P7DD	Female	4 years' of experience	1 year	Deputy Director
Participant 8 P8D	Male	6 years of experience	6 months	Director
Participant 9 P9CD	Male	27 years of experience	2 years	Chief Director

Source: Author's conceptualisation

The researcher then conducted interviews and transcribed the data manually, paying attention to inflexions, pauses, and breaks between the interviewer and participant (Byrne, 2022). After each interview, reflections on the discussion were provided with a summary. The researcher ensured that the participant was involved throughout the process, even after giving the summary, by asking the participants to confirm if the summary accurately captured their key points.

4.2 Data analysis: Initial coding with Atlas.ti

The interview transcripts were first analysed using Atlas.ti software and then underwent manual thematic analysis to ensure validity and quality. The interview transcripts were analysed using a two-step approach that combined computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) and manual thematic analysis to enhance the validity, reliability, and depth of insights derived from the data.

Step 1: Initial Coding with Atlas.ti

To ensure a systematic and comprehensive approach to data analysis, Atlas.ti software was first used to facilitate the identification of patterns, themes, and relationships within the data. Atlas.ti is a widely used qualitative data analysis tool that helps to organise, categorise, and code large amounts of textual data efficiently. The software enabled the research team to generate 300 initial codes across the nine interview transcripts, offering a structured way to detect emerging patterns and key themes in the responses.

Step 2: Manual Thematic Analysis

Following the software-assisted coding, a manual thematic analysis was conducted to refine and validate the findings. This secondary analysis was influenced by Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework, particularly Phase 2—Generating Initial Codes. While Atlas.ti provided a helpful structure for organising data, it was found to be less user-friendly in reviewing and refining codes compared to Microsoft Word's comments function. The manual approach allowed greater flexibility and a more intuitive iterative engagement with the text, ensuring a deeper understanding of the data.

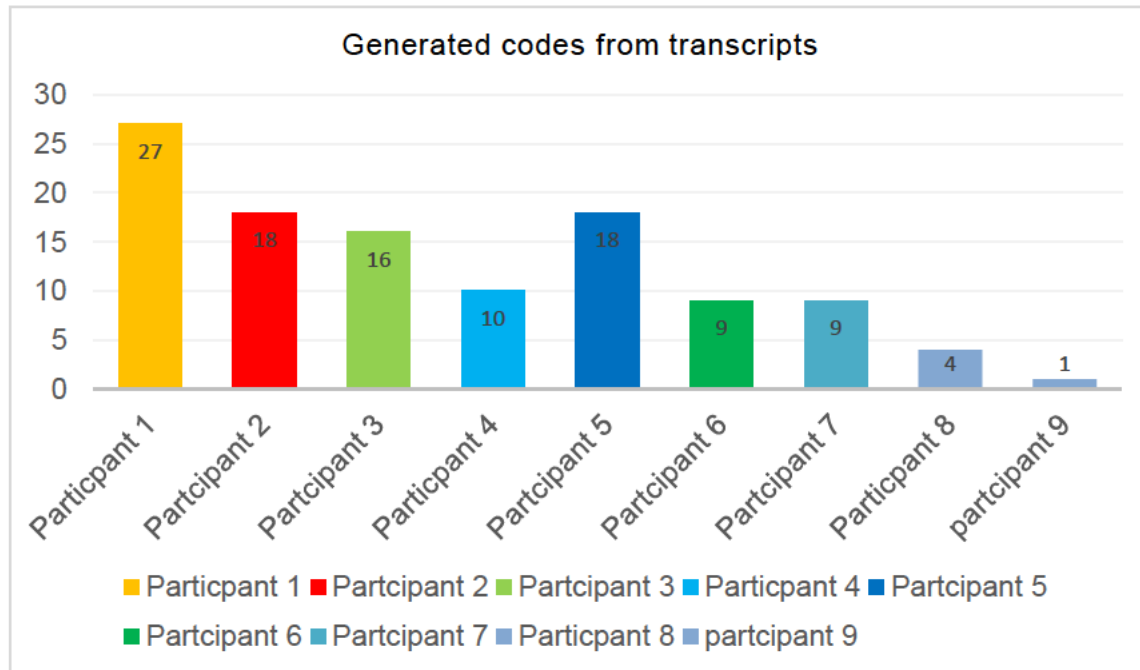
Through the manual coding process, the 300 initial codes were systematically reviewed, consolidated, and refined into 112 final codes. This process involved:

- Merging overlapping codes to eliminate redundancies,
- Aligning codes with research objectives for relevance,
- Ensuring accuracy by cross-checking excerpts with emerging themes.

By combining Atlas.ti's computational power with manual thematic refinement, this two-step analytical approach maximised the findings' rigour, depth, and trustworthiness. The justification for integrating a manual phase is based on the flexibility and interpretive depth a human-led review provides, ensuring that the themes remain contextually grounded and reflective of participant narratives.

The graph below illustrates the distribution of the codes across the interview transcripts and indicates the saturation point. (Definition given in chapter 3)

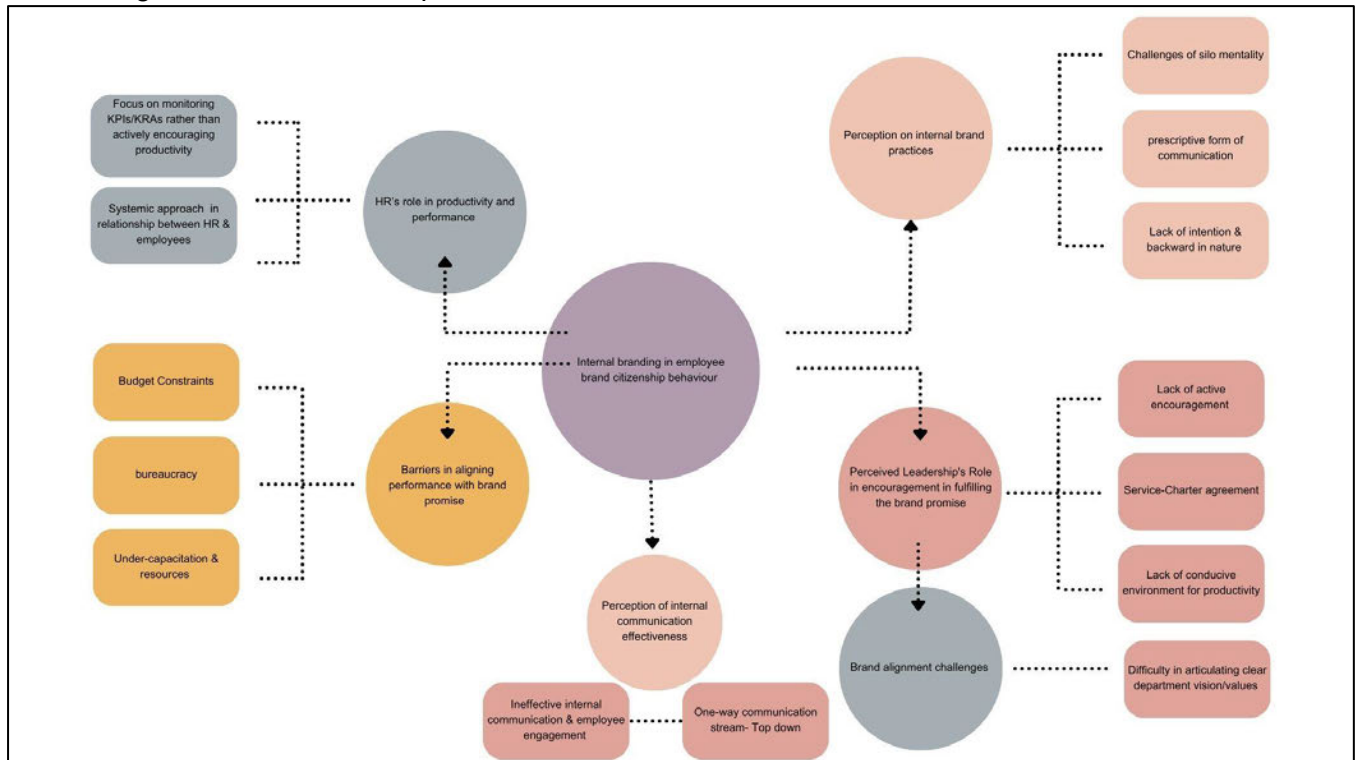
Figure 4.1: Number of codes generated through ATLAS.ti



Source: Researcher's own work

This thematic map (Figure 4.2) illustrated the themes derived from the manually developed iteration table tracking code changes. The process aligns with phases three, four, and five of Braun and Clarke's 6-phase analytical process, which involves generating themes, reviewing potential themes, and defining and naming themes (Bryne, 2022:1403). Table 6 depicts the thematic map derived from the semi-structured interview transcripts.

Figure 4.2 Thematic Map



Source: Author's conceptualisation

The thematic map highlights themes, sub-themes, and their interrelationships. For research question one ("What internal brand practices are implemented by the NGD to foster employee brand citizenship behaviour?"), the central theme is the Perception of Internal Brand Practice, which includes three sub-themes: Challenges of Silo Mentality, Prescriptive Form of Communication, and Lack of Intention (backwards in nature). For research question two ("How does the NGD actively encourage employees to fulfil the brand promise?"), the central theme is Perceived Leadership's Role in encouragement in fulfilling the brand promise, and Brand alignment challenges encompass four sub-themes: lack of active encouragement, service charter agreement, lack of conducive environment for productivity, and difficulty in articulating clear department vision/values. For research question three ("What approaches does NGD employ in utilizing brand-centric human resource management to align employee performance with NGD brand values?"), the central theme is HR's role in productivity and performance, which includes two sub-themes: Focus on monitoring/KRAs rather than actively encouraging productivity challenges and a systemic approach in the relationship between HR and employees. For research question four ("What are the primary barriers and challenges the NGD employees face in aligning their performance with the NGD brand promise?"). The central theme is barriers to aligning performance with brand promise, which are three sub-themes: budget constraints, bureaucracy, undercapacitation, and resources. Finally, for research question five ("How do employees perceive the effectiveness of NGD internal

communication in enhancing employee brand citizenship behaviour within the organisation?"), the main theme is the Perception of internal communication effectiveness with two sub-themes: Ineffective internal communication & employee engagement and one-way communication stream- Top down Ineffective.

According to Durdella (2019), the study's results and findings should be connected to the research problem, questions, and methodological design. They should be presented clearly and engagingly, with detailed descriptions and direct quotes from participants (key participants) to provide a deep understanding of the topic. Furthermore, Sandelowski and Leeman (2012) suggest that this section should be organised around key themes or research questions to improve readability and usefulness. This study's findings are presented according to the research questions in Chapter 1.

The study results are now presented after completing the data collection and analysis processes.

4.3 Results: Research Question One

1.1 Research question one sought to understand participants' perception of internal brand practices implemented by the NGD to foster employee brand citizenship behaviour

In the interview guide (attached as an annexure) the research question had preambles in the form of sub-questions. These sub-questions aimed to understand the participants' experience and understanding of internal branding, how they obtained information on the selected NGD values, how key participants described the department's internal culture, and how the NGD vision and values were alluded to. Ultimately, these sub-questions would provide an understanding of the practices implemented by the NGD to promote employee brand citizenship behaviour.

1.2 Main theme for research question one: Perception of internal brand practice

Most key participants negatively perceive internal brand practices, particularly concerning the internal brand culture. This negative perception often contrasts with their understanding of what internal branding entails (empowerment of employees in terms of organisational culture, team members pulling in the same direction, employees being brand ambassadors and having of the department activities). Participants have observed

that the department's culture is somewhat siloed, leading to a lack of cohesion. They have highlighted the need for improvement in internal brand practices, noting that many of them are backward and traditional. Additionally, they feel that internal branding in government is not approached with intention.

"I don't think Internal branding in government is done intentionally, that is my first response and I'm saying this because in government, how people behave and all of that is regulated, it's a kind of code of conduct. It's a regulated environment, right? But that doesn't mean there isn't space for inculcating internal branding. Just saying it's not as easy it is with private sector because of the nature of, of how government operates" **(P9CD).**

"My experience of internal branding at this company is that it doesn't really exist. There is no personality, there is no character. Apart from the logo that is there. Apart from the name. And the corporate colours. That's how I view it. Because I don't feel like, um, there is a culture that I can relate to. That I can coin into being part of the internal branch" **(P7DD).**

"It's a good and bad culture. The good culture is that the employees of this organisation have the right mind and the right cycle of "we will do it, and it gets done." So, they have a get-done mentality, but at the same time, they also have a very silo mentality whereby there is no cohesive or integrated ways of doing things, so, the culture is not integrated to multiples. You find that maybe one unit has a cohesive culture whereas the other would have like a silo culture" **(P1DD).**

"Internal communications, is a little slow, it's a little backward" **(P6ASD)**

"Often internal communication is reduced to a conveyor belt, make announcements. A certain division wants to announce something, just forward it, just send it. There's more to it than just forwarding those announcements. And there's more to it than just announcing that today is employee wellness day, so people must submit their documents to HR by this or that date. There's more to it. And as it stands, it's more of a prescriptive form of communication and not a platform to, you know, galvanise, support, motivate the team, encourage the team, and build loyalty with the team. But a way to say, we told you. If you missed it, you missed it. But we told you. Definitely can be done differently and in a much better way" **(P3D).**

4.4 Results: Research Question Two

1.3 The research question sought to understand how the NGD's leadership encourages employees to fulfil the brand promise.

As per the interview guide, the research question had sub-questions aimed at understanding the participants' perception of the leadership's role in encouraging employees to fulfil the brand promise and whether the leadership creates an environment conducive to productivity. The responses to these sub-questions provided insight into how the NGD actively encourages employees to fulfil the brand promise.

1.4 Theme under research question two: Perceived challenges and opportunities in Leadership's Role in encouragement in fulfilling the brand promise

The participants perceive a lack of active encouragement from leadership for employees to fulfil the brand promise, noting limited accessibility for input on internal communication within their department. They observe that junior management plays a minimal role in decision-making related to internal branding and has restricted access to information. However, the participant acknowledges that leadership has improved in providing opportunities for employee engagement in decision-making over time. An example cited is a recent service charter agreement that underscores leadership's commitment to customer service and communication, reinforcing the brand promise. The participant describes leadership efforts to encourage brand promise fulfilment through job descriptions, information dissemination about branch objectives, and resources like organograms. They believe leadership reinforces the brand promise by utilising reporting systems and enforcing accountability via audit reports. They also cited efforts made to upskill and empower employees through internal bursaries. Despite these efforts, the participant criticises the department for not creating a conducive environment for productivity, citing bureaucratic processes and weak leadership as obstacles. They emphasise the importance of brand visibility and sensitivity, aiming to represent their department's brand accurately. The participant feels that leadership's attempts to encourage brand promise fulfilment are ineffective due to a lack of clear communication about the brand promise itself. They suggest that more regular meetings at various departmental levels are necessary to enhance internal cohesion and alignment with the brand promise.

*“Leadership instilled, what we call, a **Service Charter Agreement**, and it was just recent,*

when there was a promise that this one, two, three, can be done, this is how we going to do it. I will be specific to the section that I'm working with, PMDS (Performance management and development goals). One of the things you must ensure is communication with your clients, there must be constant communication with that client, and there are turnaround times, and because of that, they have incorporated some of the things that they put in the service charter in, I can say, an AOP (Annual Performance Plan). It is something that we have to report on, on a monthly or quarterly basis, to show that this is truly a discipline. So, by them doing that, I think they are ensuring that this indeed is a discipline, so that we do what we have promised at the end of the day" (P4ASD).

"There's this thing they're running, internal bursaries for employees to further their studies and also to ensure that they acquire skills that maybe are scarce in the department. I think that then helps them, not only them, but helps the department to achieve its desired goals. Because once you empower your employees in that fashion or manner, then they are able to then help you as a department achieve your desired goals" (P8D)

"To encourage employees to live the brand promise of the department, we are not doing enough, and I believe we could do better, you know. But I think I've seen recently that there is a resurgence and there is a recognition that we need to do more as a leadership. Through, for example, decision by DG (Director-General) that we need to have regular meetings at the branch and at the Chief Directorate and at the directorate level. But even so, even if we have to have those meetings, I don't think it is within. There was conversation in inculcating internal branding, you know, and that's not the focal point, but it, it will happen by default if these meetings are done regularly because isn't it that when we start working and doing our work and monitoring and holding each other accountable for the things that we need to do I think by default then the internal branding and whatever that we aspire to, will kick in" (P9CD)

"Let me take it from the initial part first where I'm being led right, truthfully, I've not had that kind of encouragement, I've not had that kind of a reminder of the brand values of the brand image of anything that's good with brand internally that says remember you're doing this for the organisation, and this is what this organisation stands for. I've not had that. I suppose that has been left to myself to figure out and remind myself that it's not about me it's about organisation" (P3D)

1.5 Theme under research question two: Brand alignment challenges

The participants had different ideas about the NGD values and vision, making it difficult to articulate the department's vision and values. They feel that there is a disconnect between the stated values and actions. There seems to be a gap between the values and brand promise communicated by leadership and what is demonstrated and reinforced through behaviours. One participant stated, "People do not do what you say, unfortunately, but what you do."

"I promise you, if you speak to five people, you won't get the same answer. We'll definitely not get the same answer because I don't think we share the same values. I don't think we share the same sort of culture". (P7DD)

"There are team members who sort of don't even recognise or realise the vision of the organisation but there are other team members who are actually actively working hard to get to the realisation of that vision as a virtual satellite and this ties back to the values of the organisation. If we're talking performance, you need to perform and perform exceptionally well so that you can ultimately realise the vision. So, the values and the vision are intertwined, and they seem to be going to the same direction. If you were to live the values, you would ultimately realise the vision. That's how I see them linking together". (P3D)

I think the vision is a forward-looking vision. But I don't think it's inspiring. For me it's the vision as it is. Expressed in ways and written, I don't, it's inspiring for me. It's words that are too academic for me that do not inspire anything. (P9CD)

4.5 Results: Research Question Three

1.6 The research question sought to understand the approaches the NGD employs in utilising brand-centric human resource management to align employee performance with NGD brand values.

The research question was introduced with sub-questions to understand how HR influences productivity and performance concerning the informants' KPIs and KRAs. Additionally, the sub-questions aimed to explore what would motivate the participants to

go above and beyond in their work. The insights and strategies gathered from these sub-questions will be discussed in Chapter 5 under recommendations, focusing on the participants' demonstration of brand citizenship behaviour.

1.7 Theme under research question three: HR's role in productivity and performance.

The participants mentioned that the HR department focuses on monitoring KPIs/KRAs through the performance management and development system and policies and structures (in which they are highly effective) but needs to encourage productivity actively. They feel that HR takes a systemic approach to fostering a relationship between HR and employees, primarily through performance development, management, and monitoring systems. However, they think the department is merely ticking boxes, and their disadvantage is that they find the communication space challenging to navigate. They believe the HR department needs more support to better support the employees. Additionally, they feel unsupported by the HR department and desire more effective support as they think productivity encouragement is left to employees to navigate. Overall, they perceive the HR department as lacking effectiveness and consistent support beyond PMDS, monitoring and systems put in place.

“Okay, that I'm going to give them a 10 out of 10 because they are very clear in terms of their KPIs. You are advised, you are assisted, they support. You know exactly what your key performance indicators are, key performance areas are, how to manage your scoring, how to put down your work plan, how to put together a portfolio of evidence in terms of what you have done, what you have, um, achieved over a period in review. So, the support is there, and I feel like they are quite knowledgeable. The HR division in that regard, so your performance, honestly, is measured the best way that they can. It's just that from a division point of view, it doesn't inspire confidence” (P7DD)

‘Well, the HR here is not the type of HR that would encourage productivity and performance in relation to work because they leave that to you, because you are the sector specialist. So, they have your word for it. However, where I'd say they do is ensuring that there's proper monitoring in what you say you're going to do in terms of your KRAs and your KPIs. So, they do that, and their strength is a generic... what do they call this thing? Performance development or performance management systems. So, they do that through that. That's their strong point” (P1DD)

“HR really puts policies, put structures, put templates. And yeah, that's how they do, they

give the templates. But I think HR has got more responsibilities in terms of guiding, especially with contracting at the start of the financial year, to make sure that your KPIs, your output is aligned and properly weighed so that come time for assessments, there should be no surprises. HR must play an active role in guiding. They should not leave the guidance to the templates. They should actively have meetings with teams and guide them, put together their contracts right at the start of the year. So, in the middle of the year, the first six months of the year, during the first assessment, they can be able to check and test and make sure that all is done according to what was agreed for versus what has been achieved, and areas of improvement if they're detected, or accolades if there is excellent achievement. So, the role of HR is really, really important, and it must be very active. It must be done; it must be something that is done frequently and not be left to the time of contracting" (P3D)

"If I should put my honest foot in it, um, you know what? Um, I feel personally that HR is just ticking boxes. Um, they are doing what they know to do" (P6ASD)

4.6 Results: Research Question Four

The research question sought to uncover the primary barriers and challenges the NGD employees face in aligning their performance with the NGD brand promise.

The research question in the semi-structured interview had sub-questions aiming to understand how long informants have experienced these challenges or obstacles while working at the department and whether they have reported them. The study also sought to identify the resolutions or promises made. Interestingly, most participants indicated they had faced these challenges since joining the department. Table 1 shows that some participants have been with the department for 10, 12, 13, and 15 years, and most of them reported that no efforts had been made to resolve the issues.

1.8 Theme under research question four: Barriers to aligning performance with the brand promise

The participant highlighted the influence of budget constraints and lack of accessible information on employees' ability to fulfil the brand promise. They believe that the department's budget is a significant constraint to productivity and that prioritization also plays a role. The participant feels the department should prioritize branding, requiring sufficient financial resources. They also identified the lack of consistent feedback as a significant challenge, noting that it's often provided only when something goes wrong.

They advocate for regular, constructive feedback to promote growth and improvement. The participant also mentioned the impact of personal well-being, a challenging work environment, and insufficient remuneration as potential barriers to productivity. Under-capacitation was identified as a significant barrier, highlighting its impact on their ability to fulfil promises and meet deadlines. The participant described instances where management interference or a "my way or the highway" approach hinders their productivity. They also noted that consistent feedback is often only given when something goes wrong, creating a demotivating environment. The participant expressed concerns about the department's failure to create a climate conducive to productivity and identified bureaucratic processes and lack of strong leadership as significant barriers. They also identified several other barriers to productivity, including a lack of clear procedures, a lack of product knowledge, and a lack of confidence in the company's direction.

"There are always constraints of budgets to give to officials that need to do the work. And budget is very critical here because at times you don't have tools to do what you have to do. So, you end up doing minimal or below the bar or below the par work because you don't have budget to do at the scale that you need to do it at. So, as much as there's a will to say, let's go out there and enforce, amplify our offering and products, but when there's a lack of budgets, sometimes you can never reach the productivity that is enabled"

(P1DD)

"Budget constraint is one of the keys that is affecting us a big time that we need to work on it at the moment. We reported those challenges, but it's always a budget. Budget is always a challenge, and we need to deal with this for now"

(P2ASD)

"The one biggest challenge for us is that we have been under-capacitated. We cannot do anything, and that has been reported on each and every report that we write. It is always there. We always report on that matter. So, it's this issue of finding that we're not getting anything"

(P4ASD)

"Being part of a department, you know, sometimes you are under-resourced. You don't get the correct equipment. You know, processes make it difficult for you to even get proper equipment. You know, the procurement process of the department is so tedious. It's hectic. So, equipment, you don't get enough support regarding equipment, you know, so we make do with what we have, and usually that's not much"

(P6ASD)

"You can't have somebody who doesn't even have a code, a C1 driver's licence to be

driving it. That's as simple as that. Allocation of resources, the right people at the right position will be able to drive. And as I see it now, we are still having a challenge. That is why the skills audit, we're still having a challenge of people who are sitting in the wrong positions with the specific qualifications. So, once we can get that onto the right, the ship will move fast. It's going directionally right, but it is not moving in the right place because of misallocation of resources **(P4ASD)**

4.7 Results: Research Question Five

1.9 How do employees perceive the effectiveness of NGD internal communication in enhancing employee brand citizenship behaviour within the organisation?

This question had sub-questions that sought to understand examples of internal branding-building campaigns that participants had seen within the department or remembered. Campaigns that have a substantial impact are hard to forget, and the ability to recognise them shows their effectiveness. This question also had sub-questions that directly addressed leadership, asking whether participants thought department leaders effectively communicate and steer the department in the right direction.

1.10 Perception of internal communication effectiveness

The participants mentioned that communication is often one-way and instructive rather than two-way. They emphasized the need for clear and effective communication, especially in a politically charged environment, to enable employees to understand the organisation's vision and values. The participant discussed the department's internal brand-building campaigns, noting that there have been fewer internal projects in recent years due to budget constraints imposed by the national government. They also highlighted the department's past efforts with Women's Month celebrations and Employee wellness campaigns. The participant concluded that the department needs to improve communication, particularly in planning events such as Women's Month and Heritage Day. They believe that leadership should communicate about events well in advance, allowing employees to plan and prepare accordingly. The participants expressed that leadership is not communicating effectively, but there is potential for improvement. The participants believe the department is more focused on paid campaigns than on informal efforts to build a stronger brand image, and they highlighted the importance of recognizing employee contributions on special occasions. They expressed dissatisfaction with how leadership communicates with employees, citing

internal politics and a lack of accountability. They believe training can help improve communication but emphasise the need for consequence management. They concluded that there is a need for more consistent leadership and a more robust culture of accountability.

4.8 Perception of internal communication effectiveness

“We are communicating, but not 100%. We still have to learn because some of the things you learn in the last minutes, last hour, you've been told, this is what is happening within the organisation. Things that should be communicated two weeks, three weeks down the line, you find yourself doing things that you're supposed to do. Preparation for a long time ago is the communication, the advanced communication is what I'm talking about. There's no proper communication in a lot of things, especially in internal communications within the organisation. We should improve in that area” (P2ASD)

“Communication, yeah, it's something else. (23:37) Leaders, communication is, it can be improved. For me, it can be improved” (P4ASD)

“The structures of internal, our internal communications are not structured well. For example, we have different floors. I think we have nine and during a time. I'll take for example Valentine's Day. You get the 5th floor who have decorated their offices, um, greatly and beautifully and they are all in the month of love. But as soon as you get into the other floor, it's like, where's Valentine, you know? So, I feel like, um, internal comms also has a great responsibility of uniting, um, Um, the employees, um, but there's greater challenges in there. And also, I think as internal comms, we have, I feel we still need to go back to the drawing board to see how we can be effective to our fellow employees or colleagues” (P6ASD)

“There's too much interference. There's too much backstabbing and hypocrisy going on that affects the leadership style altogether. Completely. I wish people could just play the ball and not the person. I wish people could just understand that they are not in leadership positions to bully people or to sort of, um, make you envy them or worship them. I wish people could understand that being a leader, you are there to shape someone, to mentor someone, to create, um, a path for someone that's going to lead after you, you know, I wish there was sort of a succession plan that people were aware of and they were really nurturing it. So, I feel like people are just self-focusing. They don't care about who's coming next. What am I teaching this person? They leave to go to other companies.

Maybe they get promoted. They look back and say, this is what I've learned from my manager. This is what I learned from that manager. I don't think people are thinking that way. People are thinking for now, the self-enriching in what thinking, looking at themselves, they really don't want to impart skills. They really don't want to be democratic. They don't want to be listening to other people. It's all about me, me, me, me, me. Autocratic leaders is what I'm seeing through and through (P7DD)

“There's a lot of animosity between the leaders themselves. So, it's very difficult to steer a ship if there's a pilot and the first captain. In order for the airplane to go into the right direction, the first captain must take what the other captain is saying. I'm going to do this, and then you do that. They work together. That's why the airline is called a co-pilot” (P5DD)

“Communication from the top going down is more of an instructive communication and not some kind of the communication that is two-way. It is to say, do this by this time at this level and give it back to me. And that definitely contributes to the productivity of the team or lack thereof. But if you communicate with the team in a manner that is respectful, in a manner that shows that you recognise their role and their significance and the contribution they make on the role, you communicate with confidence and confirm and show that you know what you're talking about, you know what you need, you know how you need it and the quality you expect. You might get better result as well. But if you communicate with authority, instructive and all of that, you could get despondent team” (P3D)

4.9 Summary

The Summary below concludes that data analysis

Questions

Q1: Experience of internal branding

Q2: Leadership encouragement for the brand promise

Q3: HR's role in productivity and performance

Q4: Barriers to aligning performance with the brand promise

Q5: Perception of internal communication effectiveness

Responses:

R1: Experience in internal branding is negative, primarily in relation to culture

R2: Leadership encourages fulfilling the brand promise through service charter agreement; however, participants feel failed by leadership

R3: HR monitors KPIs and KRAs through performance management systems (PMDS) but leaves productivity encouragement to employees.

R4: Budget constraints are a primary barrier to productivity.

R5: Internal communication is seen as needing improvement. It needs advanced planning and communication, better information, better information flow, and feedback mechanisms.

There is a lack of affective and organisational commitment from the employees' perspective, as discussed in Chapter 2, section 4.2 under the Organisational Commitment Theory (OCT). Miller (2003:73) associates organisational commitment with an employee's willingness to remain a part of the organisation due to their interest and alignment with the organisational goals and values. In this case, participants lack affective commitment, as they do not feel that the NGD (organisation's name) has a culture they can identify with or feel a part of. Porter *et al.* (1974:604) define affective commitment as an employee's emotional attachment to the organisation. Furthermore, there is a negative gap between the NGD employees' perception of culture. The DPSA in South Africa (2006) reported initiatives and goals mentioned in Chapter 2, which emphasizes the need for staff to focus on fostering better employee commitment within the organisation, which involves creating a culture of ownership where employees feel that they are integral parts of the organisation (DPSA, 2006:13) and in this case, the NGD has failed to do so. The participants express a sense of disappointment with the leadership of the NGD, highlighting concerns such as the lack of support and a conducive work environment for productivity. They believe that the focus on productivity and performance is primarily driven by HR monitoring KPIs and KRAs through performance management systems (PMDS), with insufficient emphasis on encouraging employee productivity. Additionally, participants feel that budget constraints pose a significant obstacle to productivity, and they perceive that internal communication could be enhanced through improved planning and communication, better information flow, and more effective feedback mechanisms. See Figure 4.2 for a thematic map.

Chapter 5 will analyse the results by connecting them to the relevant theory. After that, we will provide recommendations and a conclusion. The recommendations are a joint effort between the researcher and the participants. Throughout the study, valuable insights were captured as participants made suggestions and recommendations after providing their answers. Although this was not pre-planned, it has proven to offer useful insights for the way forward.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study aimed to explore and describe the role of internal branding in promoting employee brand citizenship behaviour within a selected NGD in South Africa. While traditional internal branding principles have been widely studied in private companies, this study focuses on the public sector, exploring the impact of leadership commitment to service quality on employees' brand-related outcomes, specifically their behaviour towards brand citizenship. The NGD annual performance plan emphasises creating a positive culture and strong leadership to uphold its brand promise. However, internal branding is an understudied part of branding inquiries, particularly in the South African public sector context. Allada and Rajyalakshmi (2012) postulate that internal branding is one of the most comprehensive ways to improve employee performance, as it offers a way for management to align employees with the organisation's mission and values (Nirmali *et al.*, 2017). The study highlights the importance of internal brand alignment in achieving brand citizenship.

5.2 Findings in relation to the research questions

5.2.1 Internal branding practices to foster employee brand-citizenship behaviour

A critical insight from the participants is that internal branding practices within the public sector are perceived negatively due to a siloed organisational culture and a lack of intentionality. This contrasts with their understanding of effective internal branding, which should empower employees, foster teamwork, and encourage brand ambassadorship. The current practices are seen as outdated and not strategically aligned with modern organisational needs, highlighting the need for a more cohesive and intentional approach to internal branding.

This suggests that the existing culture is fragmented, with departments and employees operating in isolation rather than as a cohesive unit. This silo mentality hinders effective communication and collaboration, which are essential for a strong internal brand and overall department performance. In Chapter 2, section 5.3.2, paragraph 4, Masenya *et al.* (2018:112) postulates that performance management enhances institutional performance through effective communication, creating a culture of continuous improvement and conveying value to employees. In Chapter 2, section 2.1.3, paragraph

1, Peters (2010) and Scott and Bardach (2018) suggest that overcoming fragmentation in the public sector is crucial for successful transformation. Therefore, the insights underscore the need for a strategic overhaul of internal branding efforts to better align with modern organisational needs, which can consequently align with what is mentioned in Chapter 1, section 1.2, which states that the DMRE Annual Performance Plan (APP) for the 2023/2024 financial year (2023:34), suggests that creating a positive culture and strong leadership (with a focus on the control environment to ensure effective governance and accountability) are critical components in ensuring that the department lives up to its brand promise. This can also align with the Department of Public Service Administration in South Africa (2006) reported initiatives that “staff needs to focus on creating better employee commitment by departments creating a culture of ownership – where workers feel like they are part of the organisation (DPSA, 2006:13).

5.2.2 Leadership encouragement and employees’ fulfilment of the brand promise

The department's internal branding and fulfilment of its brand promise are critically undermined by a disconnect between leadership's stated intentions and employees' perceptions and experiences. This misalignment contradicts Gould and Williams' (2003) assertion in Chapter 2, Section 5.2.2, that fostering leader-member exchange relationships and synergy is essential for guiding an organisation toward positive work outcomes. Addressing this gap is imperative to realign the issues and enhance the department's effectiveness in actively encouraging employees to fulfil the brand promise. Despite structured efforts to engage employees and reinforce the brand promise, these initiatives are ineffective due to poor communication, lack of feedback, limited involvement of junior management, and a lack of alignment between stated values and leadership behaviours. This misalignment creates confusion and hinders employees' ability to articulate and commit to the department's core values and vision.

Interestingly, all nine participants had different ideas of what the department's vision and values are and as stated by Masenga *et al.* (2018) in Chapter 2, section 5.2.1 paragraph one, promoting values in the workplace involves creating a positive environment, engaging staff and fostering departmental organisational commitment, especially in the public sector. The findings additionally show that in the NGD, bureaucratic obstacles and weak leadership contribute to an unproductive environment, further exacerbating the disconnect and undermining the brand promise. Chapter 1, section 1.3, paragraph three highlights the annual performance plan for the 2023/2024 financial year (DMRE, 2023:34) for creating strong leadership as a critical component in ensuring that the department

lives up to its brand promise; however, despite its APP, there is a disconnect between leaderships stated intention and the perceptions and experiences of employees, who feel failed by the leadership, which is concerning in that paragraph 2 of Chapter 2 section 5.1 Masenya *et al.* (2018:107) state that in transforming the public sector into an entity capable of fulfilling its role in bringing about the new South Africa depends on commitment and effectiveness of its employees, which in turn depend on how those employees are being managed and lead.

5.2.3 Utilising brand-centric HRM to align employee performance to the brand values

The Human Resources (HR) department is perceived as proficient in monitoring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Result Areas (KRAs) through performance management systems. However, it is criticised for lacking active encouragement for productivity and consistent employee support. Participants expressed that HR's approach is overly systemic and focused on procedural compliance, complicating communication. There is a call for more proactive and supportive engagement from HR to enhance productivity, as current efforts are deemed inadequate, leaving employees to manage productivity independently. The prevailing perception is that HR is more concerned with monitoring systems than fostering a human-centric, emotive relationship with employees. This systemic approach aligns with the Department of Government and Information System's (2024) view of HR's role in the public sector as providing strategic leadership and managing administrative systems. However, there is a disconnect between this systemic approach and the perspective of Dahl and Ursad (2022:3736), who argue that HR managers are crucial in motivating employees to endorse their organisation's brand through internal branding. This involves encouraging employees to exhibit brand citizenship behaviour and become brand champions, citizens, or ambassadors.

2.4 Barriers hampering employees to align performance with the brand promise

The participants have identified several systemic barriers that impede employees' fulfilment of the brand promise. Budget constraints, a lack of accessible information, and insufficient prioritisation of marketing efforts primarily drive these barriers. These challenges are further exacerbated by under-capacitation and a lack of resources. This situation is particularly concerning, as Mihaiu *et al.* (2010:1380) assert in Chapter 2, Section 5.3.2, paragraph four, that employee performance in the public sector is intrinsically linked to efficiency, effectiveness, and budget alignment. Consequently,

inadequate budgeting adversely affects service delivery.

Furthermore, Fourie and Poggenpoel (2016:171) highlight in Chapter 1, Section 1, paragraph 2 that the South African government department is often criticised for failing to provide adequate services to its citizens. This underscores the necessity for leadership to adopt high-quality leadership styles. As defined in Chapter 2, Section 5.3.1, Pellegrini (2015) describes such leadership as fostering in-group relationships between leaders and followers, which enhances access to resources and builds mutual trust.

In light of these insights, it becomes evident that addressing these systemic barriers requires a multifaceted approach. Leadership must prioritise resource allocation and information accessibility while fostering a supportive environment that encourages effective communication and collaboration. By doing so, organisations can better align their operations with the brand promise and improve service delivery outcomes.

2.5 Internal communication and employee brand citizenship behaviour

The department's communication is predominantly one-way and lacks the clarity and effectiveness needed to engage employees and align them with the organisation's vision and values, especially in a politically charged environment. Budget constraints have limited internal brand-building initiatives, reducing the frequency of projects like Women's Month and wellness campaigns. Participants emphasised the need for leadership to improve communication by planning events well in advance and recognising employee contributions, which can foster a stronger brand image. Focusing on paid campaigns over informal brand-building efforts is seen as a missed opportunity.

5.3 Recommendation based on the findings

5.3.1 Recommendation 1: Finding 2.1.

Foster a Cohesive Culture: Implement initiatives that break down silos and promote cross-departmental collaboration. This could include inter-departmental projects, regular cross-functional meetings, and team-building activities encouraging a unified departmental culture. The department can also **Develop a Strategic Internal Branding Plan:** to create a comprehensive internal branding strategy that aligns with the company's overall mission and values. This plan should focus on empowering employees over and above training and skills development, enhancing communication and fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. This approach could enhance internal cohesion, align employee actions with the brand promise, and ultimately improve the department's brand

representation and effectiveness in internal branding, fostering employee brand citizenship behaviour.

5.3.2 Recommendation 2: Finding 2.2

To address these issues, the department needs to enhance communication, involve all management levels in decision-making, and ensure leadership behaviours consistently reflect the department's values because, according to Damayanti (2021), leadership significantly influences employee competence and motivation, with supportive, clear direction and constructive feedback leading to improved performance, it is therefore recommended that there are turnaround times when it comes to leader-employee feedback. The sentiment that "people do not do what you say, but what you do" as stated by one of the participants in a verbatim quote at 4.3, indicates the need for leadership to embody and reinforce the departments' values through consistent actions, thereby fostering a more cohesive understanding and commitment to the brand promise among employees. The NGD needs to Invest in leadership development programs to enhance the skills and capabilities of our leaders. The NGD also needs to develop effective scoring cards. Strong leadership is crucial for driving change and fostering a positive organisational culture.

5.3.3 Recommendation 3: Finding 2.3

HRM must understand internal branding to foster brand-supporting behaviour (Vallaster & De Chernatony, 2005:182). There is a need for HR to enhance its role beyond monitoring systems to include more direct and supportive interactions with employees. HR should implement strategies beyond monitoring systems to engage with employees actively. This could consist of regular feedback sessions, open forums for communication, and personalised support to address individual employee needs. There is a need to implement robust feedback mechanisms to gather employee insights about HR practices. This feedback should be used to continuously refine HR strategies and ensure they align with employee expectations and organisational goals. Ultimately, HR must strive to balance systemic processes and emotive engagement. While maintaining efficient administrative systems is essential, equal emphasis should be placed on fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture, ultimately fostering brand citizenship behaviour by aligning employee performance with NGD brand values.

5.3.4 Recommendation 4: Finding 2.4

To enhance productivity and brand promise fulfilment, the department needs to address these barriers by addressing under-capacitation by optimizing resource allocation. This

includes conducting regular assessments of resource needs, reallocating resources where necessary, and investing in capacity-building initiatives to ensure that employees are well-equipped to meet organisational demands and advocate for increased budget allocation to ensure sufficient resources are available to support marketing initiatives and service delivery. This includes lobbying for financial support from the Treasury.

5.3.5 Recommendation 5: Finding 2.5

To address the issue of ineffective communication, the department should enhance two-way communication, implement training to improve communication skills and establish a culture of accountability through consistent leadership and consequence management.

5.4 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Limitation 1: This study is limited due to its narrow focus on a single South African government department, not encompassing the broader national government framework.

Limitation 2: The study's focus on employee brand citizenship behaviour in internal branding may not fully capture the complexity of brand concepts within department settings.

Suggestion 1: Future studies should include multiple South African government departments to better understand internal branding dynamics and employee brand citizenship behaviour within the public sector.

Suggestion 2:

Future research should explore brand concepts beyond employee citizenship behaviour, including external branding strategies, brand identity, and equity, to provide a holistic view of organisational branding.

5.5 Conclusions

The insights gathered from the participants highlight a critical need for transformation within the public sector's internal branding practices. The current siloed culture and lack of intentionality in branding efforts are outdated and misaligned with modern organisational needs that emphasise empowerment, teamwork, and brand ambassadorship. This disconnect between leadership's intentions and employees' perceptions underscores the need for a strategic overhaul.

To bridge this gap, it is imperative to foster a cohesive culture that breaks down silos and promotes cross-departmental collaboration. Leadership must embody the organisation's values through consistent actions, facilitating a unified understanding and commitment to the brand promise. Additionally, HR should evolve from a systemic monitoring role to one that actively engages and supports employees, aligning their performance with brand values.

Addressing systemic barriers such as budget constraints and resource allocation is crucial for enhancing productivity and fulfilling the brand promise. The department can better support marketing initiatives and service delivery by prioritising resource optimization and advocating for increased budget *allocation*.

Effective internal communication and leadership development are vital to transforming the public sector into an entity capable of fulfilling its societal role. By implementing these recommendations, the department can create a positive culture, strong leadership, and a supportive environment that encourages employees to become brand ambassadors, thereby aligning operations with the brand promise and improving service delivery outcomes, thereby strengthening the role of employee brand citizenship behaviour in internal branding within the public sector.

List of Reference

- Adams, C. W. 2015. Conducting semi-structured interviews. *Online Library*, 1(1):492-505. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119171386.ch19> [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Adamu, L., Ghani, N.H.A. and Rahman, M.A. 2020. The internal branding practices and employee brand citizenship behaviour: The mediating effect of employee brand fit. *Journal of Environmental Treatment Techniques*, 8(1):99-106.
- Adileh, N. and Çengel, Ö. 2019. Internal branding and brand commitment: The role of years of experience & monthly income. *Journal of Commerce and Finance*, 5(1):79-91. [Online]. Available at: <http://ijcf.ticaret.edu.tr/index.php/ijcf/article/view/111> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Afshardoost, M., Eshaghi, M., and Bowden, J. 2021. Internal brand management, brand understanding, employee brand commitment, and brand citizenship behaviour: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 31(5): 983-1011. [Online]. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2021.2016896> [Accessed 8 October 2024].
- Ahmad R, Nawaz MR, Ishaq MI, Khan MM and Ashraf HA. 2023. Social exchange theory: Systematic review and future directions. *Journal of Frontiers in Psychology*, 13(1):1-13. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1015921> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Alam, M.K. 2021. A systematic qualitative case study: questions, data collection, NVivo analysis and saturation. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, 16(1):1-31. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/QROM-09-2019-1825> [Accessed 18 April 2024].
- Allada, V.K. and Rajyalakshmi, N. 2012. Role of internal marketing in job satisfaction of employees in commercial bank. *Journal of Research Banking and Finance*, 2(7):16–33. [Online]. Available at: <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:168723793> [Accessed 17 April 2024].
- Allen, N.J. and Meyer, J.P. 1990. The Measurement and Antecedents of Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment to the Organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63(1):1-18. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Alshuaibia, A.S.I. and Shamsudinb, F.M. 2016. The role of human resource management practices in enhancing internal branding. In *International Soft Science*

- Conference, 14 (1):599-605. [Online]. Available at: <https://stec.univ-ovidius.ro/html/anale/RO/2022-issue2/Section%204/12.pdf> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Anderson, B., Berger, J., Zelditch, M.Jr., and Cohen, B. P. 1969. Reactions to inequity. *Nordic Sociological Associations*, 12(1):1–12. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/000169936901200101> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Anwar, M., M., Widodo, W. and Suprihanto, J. 2023. Consequence of psychological distress on performance achievement: A social exchange theory perspective. *Journal of Intangible Capital*, 19(2):93-109. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3926/ic.2128> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Applied Doctoral Centre. 2024. Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data, 19 April 2024. [Online]. Available at: <https://resources.nu.edu/c.php?g=1013606&p=8394398> [Accessed 9 October 2024].
- Arthur, J. B. 1994. Effects of human resource systems on manufacturing performance and turnover. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37(3):670–687. [Online]. Available at: <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.2307/256705> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Aselage, J. and Eisenberger, R. 2003. Perceived organizational support and psychological contracts: A theoretical integration. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 24(5):491–509. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.211> [Accessed 10 April 2024].
- Ashforth, B.E and Mael, B.1989. Social identity theory and the organisation. *Journal of Academy of Management Review*, 14(1):20-39. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4278999> [Accessed 10 April 2024].
- Aziz, N. A., Najafi, B., Al-Shuaibi, A. S., and Shamsudin, F. M. 2016. Developing brand ambassadors: The Role of brand-centred human resource management. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 6(7):155-161. [Online]. Available at: <https://doaj-org.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/article/67dbd6ec933849239f9608594c9348ff> [Accessed 3 June 2024].
- Babakus, E., Yavas, U. Karatepe, O.M., and Avci, T. 2003. The effect of management commitment to service quality on employees' affective and performance outcomes. *Academy of Marketing Science Journal*, 31(3):272–286. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0092070303031003005> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Baba, V. V., and Jamal, M. 1979. On Becker's Theory of Commitment: An Empirical Verification Among Blue-Collar Workers. *Industrial Relations*, 34(1), 123–139. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23071177> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

- Bahari, S. F. 2010. Qualitative versus quantitative research strategies: contrasting epistemological and ontological assumptions. *Jurnal Teknologi*, 52(1):17-28. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.11113/jt.v52.134> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Bar-Haim, A. 2019. Organisational commitment: A case of unrewarded behavior. New Jersey: World Scientific Publishing. [eBook]. Available on EBSCOhost at: <https://eds-p-ebSCOhostcom.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/eds/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzlxMjQyNzBfX0FOO?sid=9a85080e-efc3-4e74-94c3-edf6ea33da6b@redis&vid=5&format=EB&rid=4#> [Accessed 10 April 2024].
- Barney, N., Chai, W., and Sutner., S. 2023. Human resource management, 17 October 2023. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.techtarget.com/searchhrsoftware/definition/human-resource-management-HRM> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Barros, A. D. and Cali, E.G. 2021. Internal branding: conceptualization from a literature review and opportunities for future research. *Journal of Brand Management*, 28(2):133-151. [Online]. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41262-020-00219-1> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Bartlett, C A., and Ghoshal, S. 1997. The Myth of the Generic Manager: New Personal Competencies for New Management Roles. *Sage Journals*, 40(1): 92-116. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/41165924> [Accessed 5 July 2024].
- Bauer, K. W. 2003. Conducting longitudinal studies. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2004(121): 75-90. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.102> [Accessed 5 July 2024].
- Baxter, P., and Jack, S. 2008. Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4):544-559. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2008.1573> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Becker, H.S. 1960. Notes on the concept of commitment. *American Journal of Society*, 66(1):32-42. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/222820> [Accessed 10 April 2024].
- Benmira, S. and Agboola, M. 2021. Evolution of leadership theory. *BMJ Leader*. 5(1):3-5. [Online]. Available at: <https://bmjleader.bmj.com/content/5/1/3> [Accessed 3 June 2024].
- Berryman, D. R. 2019. Ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods: Information for librarian researchers. *Medical Reference Services Quarterly*, 38(3):271-279. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02763869.2019.1623614> [Accessed 24 July 2024].

- Beverland, M., and Cankurtaran, P. 2022. Closing corporate branding gaps through authentic internal brand strategies. In: Iglesias, O., Ind, N., & Schultz, M. (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Corporate Branding*. Taylor and Francis. 17. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003035749> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Binu Raj, A. 2022. Internal branding, employees' brand commitment and moderation role of transformational leadership: an empirical study in Indian telecommunication context. *Journal of Business Administration*, 14(3):285-308. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/internal-branding-employees-brand-commitment/docview/2684883015/se-2> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Blau, P. M. 1964. *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New York: John Wiley.
- Bolarinwa, O A. 2020. Sample size estimation for health and social science researchers: The principles and considerations for different study designs. *National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria*, 27(2): 67-67. [Online]. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4103/npmj.npmj_19_20 [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Bonoma, T.V.1984. *Managing marketing: text, cases, and readings*. Simon and Schuster.
- Bougie, R. and Sekaran, U. 2019. *Research Methods for Business*. 8th ed. Croydon: Wiley & Sons.
- Bradley, H, E., Curry, L. and Devers, J, K. 2007. Qualitative Data Analysis for Health Services Research: Developing Taxonomy, Themes, and Theory. *Health Services Research*, 42(4): 1758-1772. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6773.2006.00684.x>. [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Bravo, R., Buil, I. de Chernatony, L. and Martínez, E. 2017. Managing brand identity: Effects on the employees. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 35(1):2-23. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJBM-10-2015-0148> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Burmann, C. and Zeplin, S. 2005. Building brand commitment: A behavioural approach to internal brand management. *Journal of Brand Management*, 12(4):279-300. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540223> [Accessed 21 March 2024].
- Burmann, C., Jost-Benz, M. and Riley, N. 2009. Towards an identity-based brand equity model, *Journal of Business Research*, 62(3):390-397. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2008.06.009> [Accessed June 2, 2024].

- Bustos, E. O. 2021. Organizational reputation in the public administration: A systematic literature review. *Public Administration Review*, 81(4):731-751. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13363> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Byham, M. T. and Wellins., S.R. 2015. Hiring and selecting the best: Behaviour Predicts Behaviour. Wiley. [eBook]. Available on Online Library at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781119153849.ch10> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Byrne, D. 2022. A worked example of Braun and Clarke's approach to reflexive thematic analysis. *Quality & Quantity*. 56(1):1-22. [Online]. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y> [Accessed 26 October 2024].
- Carrithers, D. 2023. The crucial importance of brand alignment in today's business landscape. [LinkedIn]. September 28, 2023. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/crucial-importance-brand-alignment-todays-business-david-carrithers/> [Accessed 14 April 2024].
- Carey M.A. 1995. Concerns in the Analysis of Focus Group Data. *Qualitative Health Research*. 1995;5(4):487-495. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973239500500409> [Accessed 27 October 2027].
- Carter, S. M., and Little, M. 2007. Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: Epistemologies, methodologies, and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 17(10):1316-1328. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1049732307306927> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Castro-Casal, C., Vila-Vázquez, G. and Pardo-Gayoso, Á. 2019. Sustaining affective commitment and extra-role service among hospitality employees: Interactive effect of empowerment and service training. *Journal of Sustainability*, 11(15):1-16. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11154092> [Accessed 5 April 2024].
- Chambers, R. and Pettit. J. 2004. Shifting Power to Make a Difference. Inclusive Aid: Changing Power and Relationships in International Development. In. L. Groves and R. Hinton. eds., *Inclusive aid: Changing power and relationships in international development*. Routledge. London, Earthscan.
- Chang, A., Chiang, H.H. and Han, T.S. 2012, A multilevel investigation of relationships among Brand-centered HRM, Brand psychological ownership, Brand citizenship behaviours, and customer satisfaction, *European Journal of Marketing*, 46 (5):626-662.

Chernyak-Hai L, and Rabenu E. 2018. The New Era Workplace Relationships: Is Social Exchange Theory Still Relevant? *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 11(3):456-481. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/iop.2018.5> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Cherry, K. 2023. Understanding Social Exchange Theory in Psychology, 08 May 2023. [Blog]. Available at: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-social-exchange-theory-2795882> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Chhibber, P., Chahal, H. and Kaurav, R.P.S. 2024. Is brand commitment the missing link in the internal branding and brand citizenship behaviours relationship in services sector: a meta-analysis. *Management Review Quarterly Journal*, 52(1):1-52. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi-org.pxz.iubh.de/8443/10.1007/s11301-024-00408-1> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

Chiang, H.H. .2023. The relationship between brand communication and brand citizenship behaviour: Mediating role of brand self-efficacy in multilevel models, *Journal of Business Administration* 48(1): 1025-9627. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53106/102596272023030481001> [Accessed 3 June 2024].

Chiang, H.H. Chang, A. Han, T.S. and McConville, D. 2013. Corporate branding, brand psychological ownership, and brand citizenship behaviour: multilevel analysis and managerial implications. *Journal of General Management*, 39 (1):55-80. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2016-0103> [Accessed 15 April 2024].

Chiang, H.H. Chang, A. Han, T.S. and McConville, D. 2018. The attitudinal and behavioural impact of brand-cantered human resource management: Employee and customer effects. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(2), 939-960. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2016-0103> 5 [Accessed 15 April 2024].

Chomos, J. C., Evans, W. P., Bolan, M., Merritt, L., Meyer, A., and Novins, D. K. 2018. Using single-case designs to evaluate components of tribal home-visitation programs. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 39(3), 335-346. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/imhj.21712> [Accessed 8 October 2024].

Clark, P., Chapleo, C. and Suomi, K. 2020. Branding higher education: an exploration of the role of internal branding on middle management in a university rebrand. *Tertiary*

- Education and Management Journal*, 26(2):131-149. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11233-019-09054-9> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Colaizzi, P. F. 1978. Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In: R. Vaile and King, M. (Eds.) 1978, *Existential phenomenological alternatives for psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press, Chapter 1: 48-71.
- Combs, J., Liu, Y., Hall, A., and Ketchen, D. 2006. How much do high- performing work practice matter? A meta-analysis of their effects of their effects on organizational performance. *Personnel Psychology*, 59(3):501-528. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2006.00045.x> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Conejo, F.J. 2021. Towards a better application of brand values. *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 10(2):158–170. [Online] Available at: <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=bsu&AN=153376154&site=eds-live&scope=site> [Accessed: 3 June 2024].
- Creswell, J. W., and Creswell, J. D. 2014. The selection of a research approach. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 2014: 3-24. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n5p40> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Cropanzano, R. and Mitchell, M. S. 2005. Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6):874–900. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602> [Accessed 10 April 2024].
- Currstine, T. 2005. Government performance: Lessons and challenges. *OECD Journal on Budgeting*, 5(1):127–151. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/budget-v5-art6-en> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Dahle, D.Y. and Urstad, S.S. 2022. Mind anchors and heart grips: the role of HRM and LMX in internal branding. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(18):3736-3764. [Online]. DOI: <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1080/09585192.2021.1931407> [Accessed 10 April 2024].
- Dai, Y.D., Zhuang, W.L., Ko, A. and Okumus, F. 2020. The ‘if-then’ rules matter more? The roles of regulatory focus and leader-member exchange, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 90(1):1-17. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102602> [Accessed 6 July 2024].
- Damayanti, R., Hartono, B., and Wijaya, A. 2021. Complexity, Leadership, and Megaproject Performance: A Configuration Analysis. *Journal of Industrial Engineering*

and Management, 17(2):1-34. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3926/jiem.3476> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Dean, D., R. E. Arroyo-Gamez, K. Punjaisri, and C. Pich. 2016. Internal brand co-creation: The experiential brand meaning cycle in higher education. *Journal of Business Research*, 69 (8):3041–3048. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.01.019> [Accessed 12 April 2024].

DeJonckheere, M., and Vaughn, L. 2019. Semistructured interviewing in primary care research: a balance of relationship and rigour. *Family Medicine and Community Health*, 7(2): 1-8. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2018-000057> [Accessed 9 October 2024].

de Kruijf, S. 2022. Living the brand: Manifesting Internal Brand Alignment at WeTransfer. Industrial Design Engineering. Delft University of Technology. [Online]. Available at: <http://resolver.tudelft.nl/uuid:b05b0db7-ed02-40c7-b31e-2cfd3179ec1e> [Accessed 12 October 2024].

Department of Government Communications and Information Systems. 2024. Human capital and corporate support. Pretoria: Department of Communications and Information System. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gcis.gov.za/content/about-us/chief-directorates/hr> [Accessed 15 December 2024].

Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. 2022. Mining, minerals, and energy policy development. Northwest Investment Conference. 25-26 January 2022. Northwest: Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. Date. Policy Development. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.dmre.gov.za/mining-minerals-energy-policy-development/overview> [Accessed date 15 December 2024].

Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. 2023. Annual report for 2022/2023 financial year: Vote 34. Pretoria. Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. [Online]. Available at: [https://nationalgovernment.co.za/departament_annual/494/2023-department-of-mineral-resources-and-energy-\(dmre\)-annual-report.pdf](https://nationalgovernment.co.za/departament_annual/494/2023-department-of-mineral-resources-and-energy-(dmre)-annual-report.pdf) [Accessed 9 October 2024].

Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. 2024. Final Annual Performance Plan for Financial Year 2024/2025. Pretoria. Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. [Online]. Available at: https://static.pmg.org.za/2024-25_DMRE_APP_Approved_26March24.pdf [Accessed 9 October 2024].

Department of Public Service Administration (DPSA). 2006. Managing staff retention: An information guide for government departments. Pretoria: Department of Public

Service Administration. [Online]. Available at: https://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/ep/2007/retention_guide.pdf [Accessed 2 October 2024].

Department of Public Service Administration. 1997. White Paper on Human Resource Management. Pretoria: Department of Public Service Administration. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/acts®ulations/frameworks/white-papers/pservicedec.pdf> [Accessed 9 October 2024].

Department of Public Service Administration. 2006. Managing staff retention: An information guide for government departments. Pretoria: Department of Public Service Administration. [Online]. Available at: https://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/ep/2007/retention_guide.pdf [Accessed 2 October 2024].

Department of Public Service Administration. 1997. White Paper on Human Resource Management. Pretoria: Department of Public Service Administration. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/acts®ulations/frameworks/white-papers/pservicedec.pdf> [Accessed 2 October 2024].

Department of Public Service Administration. 2017. Determination and directive on the performance management and development system of employees other than members of the senior management service for implementation with effect from 1 April 2018. Pretoria. [Online]. Available at: https://www.dpsa.gov.za/dpsa2g/documents/ep/2017/14_4_1_p_15_09_2017%20directive.pdf [Accessed 9 October 2024].

De Vries, K. 2020. Case study methodology Critical qualitative health research. In: Aranda, K. eds. 2020. *Critical Qualitative Health Research: Exploring Philosophies, Politics and Practices*. London: Routledge. Chapter: 5. 41-52. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429432774>

Dhar, R.L. 2016, Ethical leadership and its impact on service innovative behaviour: the role of LMX and job autonomy, *Tourism Management*, 57(1):139-148. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.05.011> [Accessed 6 July 2024].

Dissanayake, D.M.R. 2015. Factors determine the customer-celebrity relationship towards perceived celebrity endorsements: Propositions to hypothesize future studies in Sri Lankan services sector. *Sri Lanka Journal of Marketing (SLJM)*, 1(2):1-19. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283299301> [Accessed 21 March 2024].

Du Plooy, GM. 2009. *Communication research: techniques, methods and applications*. 2nd edition. Cape Town: Juta.

Du Preez, R. and Bendixen, M.T. 2015. The impact of internal brand management on employee job satisfaction, brand commitment and intention to stay. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 33(1):78-91. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJBM-02-2014-0031> [Accessed 29 March 2024].

Du Preez, R. M. Bendixen, and R. Abratt. 2017. The behavioural consequences of internal brand management among frontline employees. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 26 (3):251–261. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-09-2016-1325> [Accessed 29 March 2024].

Durdella, N. 2019. Understanding a Dissertation as Qualitative Methodology: A Section-by-Section Approach. In: N. Durdella, *Qualitative Dissertation Methodology: A Guide for Research Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. pp. 33-84 [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506345147> [Accessed 9 Sep 2024].

Ebneyamini, S., and Sadeghi Moghadam, M. R. 2018. Toward Developing a Framework for Conducting Case Study Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1): 1-10. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918817954> [Accessed 4 July 2024].

Emerson, R. M. 1976. Social exchange theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2(1):335-362. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.02.080176.002003> [Accessed 2 June 2024].

Fàbregues, S. and Feters, D. M. 2019. Fundamentals of case study research in family medicine and community health. *BMJ Journals*, 7(2): 74-74. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2018-000074> [Accessed 7 July 2024].

Farzanfar, R. 2005. Using qualitative research methods to evaluate automated health promotion/disease prevention technologies: A procedures' manual. Boston University. *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*. [Online]. Available at: <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=c42aa1e1b4ff593c6d469a046409605b9cd0268f> [Accessed 29 March 2024].

Fein, E., Benea, D., Idzadikhah, Z., and Tziner, A. 2020. The security to lead: a systematic review of leader and follower attachment styles and leader–member exchange. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 29(1):106 - 125. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2019.1696774> [Accessed 8 October 2024].

Feng, C., Patel, P. C. and Sivakumar, K. 2020. Chief global officers, geographical sales dispersion, and firm performance. *Journal of Business Research*, 121 (4):58-72. [Online] DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.08.011> [Accessed 14 April 2024].

Fourie, D. and Poggenpoel, W. 2017. Public sector inefficiencies: Are we addressing the root causes? *South African Journal of Accounting Research*, 31(3):169-180. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10291954.2016.1160197> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

Garalelli, L. 2023. Group CEO TBWA. [Nedbank Conference]. 15 September. 2023. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/868/242022.html> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

Garvey, C. M., and Jones, R. 2021. Is there a place for theoretical frameworks in qualitative research? *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 201-7. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920987959> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Gaus, N. 2017. Selecting research approaches and research designs: A reflective essay. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 17(2): 99-112. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-07-2016-0041> [Accessed 24 July 2024].

Gentles, S. J., Charles, C., Ploeg, J., and McKibbin, K. A. 2015. Sampling in qualitative research: Insights from an overview of the methods literature. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(11):1772-1789. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2015.2373> [Accessed 24 July 2024].

Ghaleb, M., and Ordun, G. 2021. The Mediating Role of Motivation Between Brand Citizenship Behavior and Employee Performance: A Study of Supervisors Perception. *Journal of Business Research – Turk*, 13(2): 1-15. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20491/isarder.2021.1195> [Accessed 8 October 2024].

Giorgini, V., Mecca, J., Gibson, C., Medeiros, K., Mumford, M., Connelly, S., and Devenport, L. 2015. Researcher Perceptions of Ethical Guidelines and Codes of Conduct. *Accountability in Research*, 22(1):123-138. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08989621.2014.955607> [Accessed 7 October 2024].

Golik, N., and Izvekov, A. 2018. Modern Business Philosophy: The Brand as a Phenomenon of Culture. *International Journal of Engineering and Technology*, 7(1):1-94. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14419/IJET.V7I3.5.16138> [Accessed 7 October 2024].

Goode, W. J. 1973. *Explorations in Social Theory* New York: Oxford Theory University Press.

- Gotsi, M., and Wilson, A. 2001. Corporate reputation management: "living the brand". *Management Decision*, 39(2):99–104. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000005415> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Gould-Williams, J. 2003. The importance of HR practices and workplace trust in achieving superior performance: A study of public-sector organizations. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14(1):28-54. [Online]. DOI: [10.1080/09585190210158501](https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190210158501) [Accessed 3 June 2024].
- Grady, C. 2007. Ethical Principles in Clinical Research. *Principles and Practice of Clinical Research (Second Edition)*, 1(1): 15-26. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-012369440-9/50004-9> [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Grönroos, C. 2000. Service management and marketing: Customer management in service competition (3rd ed.). John Wiley & Sons.
- Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. 1994. Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*. London. Sage.
- Hamlin, R.G. and Whitford, S., 2020. Perceived managerial and leadership effectiveness within the Canadian public sector. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 31(4): 423-448. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21406> [Accessed 7 October 2024].
- Harrison, I, M. and Shortell, M, S. 2020. Multi-level analysis of the learning health system: Integrating contributions from research on organizations and implementation. *Learning Health Systems*, 5(2): 1-10. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/lrh2.10226> [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Hartle, F. 1995. *Transforming the Performance Management Process*, London: Kogan Page.
- Hayes, B.K. Heit, E. and Swendsen, H. 2010. Inductive reasoning. *Journal of Cognitive Science*, 1(2):278-292. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcs.44> [Accessed 18 April 2024].
- Hennink, M., Hutter, I. and Bailey, A. 2020. *Qualitative Research Methods*. California: Sage.
- Hoang, H.T. Ho., N.T. and Nguyen, N. 2022. The influence of leadership commitment to service quality on hotel employees' brand citizenship behaviour: a mediation and moderation analysis. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*, 31(30):369-

395. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2021.1970072> [Accessed 5 April 2024].
- Hogg, G., Carter, S. and Dunne, A. 1998. Investing in people: Internal marketing and corporate culture. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 14(8):879-895. [Online]: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1362/026725798784867563> [Accessed 5 April 2024].
- Holden, M.T. and Lynch, P. 2004. Choosing the appropriate methodology: Understanding research philosophy. *The Marketing Review Journal*, 4(4):397-409. [Online]: DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1362/1469347042772428> [Accessed 18 April 2024].
- Homans, G. C. 1958. Social behaviour as exchange. *American Journal of Sociology*, 63(1):597-606. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/222355> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Hoorani, B. H., Nair, L. B. and Gibbert, M. 2019. Designing for impact: The effect of rigour and case study design on citations of qualitative case studies in management. *Scientometrics*, 121:285-306. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11192-019-03178-w> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Huddy, L. 2001. From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory. *Political Psychology*, 22(1):127-156. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00230> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Hyman, H.H, Cobb. W.J, Feldman. J.J., Hart C.W and Stember C.H. 1955. Interviewing in Social Research. *American Political Science Review*, 49(1):273-273. [Online]. Available at: https://ideas.repec.org/a/cup/apsrev/v49y1955i1p273-273_82.html [Accessed 26 October 2024].
- Inamdar, S N., Osland, A., and Wells, P. 2010. Restructuring With the Middle-Management Advantage. *The Health Care Manager*, 29(4): 305-317. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1097/hcm.0b013e3181fa0278> [Accessed 5 July 2024].
- Iriadi, D.R. and Susanty, A.I. 2018. Management commitment and customer service recovery performance: A study of customer service in a broadband operation and maintenance service company in Indonesia. *International Journal of Business*, 23(3):293–300. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkq.64.2.35.18001> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Iyer, P., Davari, A., and Paswan, A. 2018. Determinants of brand performance: The role of internal branding. *Journal of Brand Management*, 25(4):202-216. [Online]. DOI: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41262-018-0097-1> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

- Jaussi, K. S. and Randel, A. E. 2019. Giving Rise to Creative Leadership: Contextual Enablers and Redundancies. *Group and Organisational Management*, 44(2):288-319. [Online]. DOI: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1059601119834089> [Accessed 3 June 2024].
- Jiang, K., Lepak, D.P., Hu, J., and Baer, J.C. 2012. How Does Human Resource Management Influence Organizational Outcomes? A Meta-analytic Investigation of Mediating Mechanisms. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(60):1264-1294. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0088> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Jiatong, W., Wang, Z., Alam, M., Murad, M., Gul, F., and Gill, S. 2022. The Impact of Transformational Leadership on Affective Organizational Commitment and Job Performance: The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13(1):1-12. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.831060> [Accessed 8 October 2024].
- Jokhio, A. A., Raza, S. S., Younus, M., & Soomro, A. H. 2020. Teaching writing skills in university large classes in Pakistan: Issues, challenges and solutions. *JEELS Journal of English Education and Linguistics Studies*, 7(1): 25–47. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30762/jeels.v7i1.1355> [Accessed 4 July 2024].
- Joseph, A. Gupta, S. Wang, Y. and Schoefer, K. 2021. Corporate rebranding: An internal perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 130:709-723. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.04.020> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Kakilla, C. 2021. Strengths and Weaknesses of Semi-Structured Interviews in Qualitative Research: A Critical Essay. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202106.0491.v1>. [Accessed 9 October 2024].
- Kallio, H., Pietilä, A., Johnson, M., and Kangasniemi, M. 2016. Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 72 (12): 2954-2965. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13031> [Accessed 9 October 2024].
- Kapferer, J.N. 2012. The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insights and Strategic Thinking. London. Kogan Page. [eBook]. Available at: <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=429882&site=ehost-live&scope=site> [Accessed: 11 June 2024].

Karmakar, R. 2020. Redefining organizational commitment: Theory and applications in today's organization. *Indian Journals*, 10(2):24-30. [Online]DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5958/2456-7302.2020.00017.8> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Kashyap, S., and Kang, L.S. 2024. Identity-based effect of internal branding on brand performance: the contingent role of co-worker support. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, 1(1):1-24. Online. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/apjba-06-2023-0286> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Kekeya, J. 2021. Qualitative case study research design: The commonalities and differences between collective, intrinsic and instrumental case studies. *Contemporary PNG Studies*, 36(1): 28-37. [Online]. Available at: https://www.dwu.ac.pg/en/images/All_Attachements/Research%20Journals/vol_36/4._J_Lingawa.pdf [Accessed 8 October 2024].

Kesmodel, U S. 2018. Cross-sectional studies – what are they good for? *Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand*, 97(4): 388-393. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/aogs.13331> [Accessed 5 July 2024].

Khoshtaria, T. Datuashvili, D. and Matin, A. 2020. The impact of brand equity dimensions on university reputation: an empirical study of Georgian higher education. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 30(4):239-255. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2020.1725955> [Accessed 29 March 2024].

Kim, M. S., Phillips, J. M., Park, W. W., and Gully, S. M. 2021. When leader-member exchange leads to knowledge sharing: The roles of general self-efficacy, team leader modelling, and LMX differentiation. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 34(7) 1442-1469. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2021.1886150> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Kim, M.S., Shin, D.J. and Koo, D.W. 2018. The influence of perceived service fairness on brand trust, brand experience and brand citizenship behaviour. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(7):2603-2621. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi-org.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2017-0355> [Accessed 2 June 2024].

Kim, H. J. Tavitiyaman, P. and Kim, W. G. 2009. The effect of management commitment to service on employee service behaviours: The mediating role of job satisfaction. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 33(3):369–390. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348009338530> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

- King, C. and Grace, D. 2008. Internal branding: Exploring the employee's perspective. *Journal of Brand Management*, 15(5):358-372. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550136> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. 2020. *Everyday People, Extraordinary Leadership*. 1st ed. New Jersey: Wiley & Sons.
- Kruger, C. and Johnson, R.D. 2013. Knowledge management according to organisational size: A South African perspective. *South African Journal of Information Management*, 15(1):1-11. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajim.v15i1.526> [Accessed 11 April 2024].
- Kruijf, S.D. 2022. Manifesting Internal Brand Alignment at WeTransfer. [Online]. Available at: <https://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=edsai&AN=edsai.on1358879739&site=eds-live&scope=site> [Accessed: 3 June 2024].
- LaManna, R. 2019. Your brand promise: can last a lifetime. *Label & Narrow Web*, 1 July 2019. [Online]. Available at: <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=edsbig&AN=edsbig.A595705701&site=eds-live&scope=site> [Accessed: 3 June 2024].
- Lee, Y.K., Kim, S. and Kim, S. Y. 2013. The Impact of Internal Branding on Employee Engagement and Outcome Variables in the Hotel Industry. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 19(12): 1359–1380. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2013.863790> [Accessed 4 July 2024].
- Leijerholt, U. 2021. What about context in internal brand management? Understanding employee brand commitment in the public sector. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 37(13-14):1243-1266. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2021.1909106> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Leijerholt, U. Biedenbach, G. and Hultén, P. 2022. Internal brand management in the public sector: the effects of internal communication, organizational practices, and PSM on employees' brand perceptions. *Public Management Review*, 24(3):442-465. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2020.1834607> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Leijerholt, U. Biedenbach, G. and Hultén, P. 2019. Branding in the public sector: a systematic literature review and directions for future research. *Journal of Brand Management*, 26(1):126-140. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/S41262-018-0116-2>. [Accessed 10 October 2024].

- Lim, S., and Tai, K. 2014. Family incivility and job performance: A moderated mediation model of psychological distress and core self-evaluation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99(2):351–359. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034486> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Lincoln, Y., and Guba, E. G. 1985. *Naturalistic inquiry*. California: SAGE Publications.
- Lindlof, T. R., and Taylor, B. C. 2002. *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*. India: SAGE Publications.
- Linna, P. Pekkola, S. Ukko, J. and Melkas, H. 2010. Defining and measuring productivity in the public sector: Managerial perceptions. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 23 (5):479–499. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09513551011058493> [Accessed 4 March 2024].
- Llave, C.R. and Genon, C. 2022. Case Study of the Personal Experiences on Instructional Leadership of Middle-Level Leaders during Pandemic. *JPAIR Institutional Research*, 19(1): 152-179. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7719/irj.v19i1.841> [Accessed 5 July 2024].
- Longhurst, R. 2009. Interviews: in-depth, semi-structured. *International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*, 1(1):580-584. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-008044910-4.00458-2> [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Luo., Z., Song, H. Marnburg., E and Øgaard, T. 2014. The impact of relational identity on the relationship between LMX, interpersonal justice, and employees' group commitment. *International Journal of Hospitality and Management*, 41(1):21-27. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.04.008> [Accessed 27 October 2024].
- Machalicek, W., and Horner, R. H. 2018. Special issue on advances in single-case research design and analysis. *Developmental Neurorehabilitation*, 21(4): 209-211. [Online].DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17518423.2018.1468600> [Accessed 8 October 2024].
- Magaldi, D. and Berler, M. 2020. Semi-structured Interviews. In: Zeigler-Hill, V., Shackelford, T.K. eds. *Encyclopaedia of Personality and Individual Differences*. Springer, Cham. [Online]. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-24612-3_857 [Accessed 5 July 2024].
- Mantashe, S.G. 2022. Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy. [Briefing Session]. 6 March 2022. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.za/news/speeches/minister-gwede-mantashe-africa-mining-indaba-09-may-2022> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

- Marsh, D., A. Ercan, S., and Furlong, P. 2017. A skin not a sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science. In V. Lowndes, D. Marsh, & G. Stroker (Eds.), *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (4 ed., pp. 177-198). Palgrave Macmillan. [Online] Available at: https://he.palgrave.com/page/detail/?sf1=barcode&st1=9780230366640&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=google_books&utm_campaign=3_pier05_buy_print&utm_content=en_08082017 [Accessed 19 May 2024].
- Masango, C. and Naidoo, V. 2019. Nation branding strategy for Zimbabwe: Towards an integrated national branding framework, *Journal of Accounting Business and Finance Research*, 6(2):52-54. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20448/2002.62.51.63> [Accessed 18 April 2024].
- Masenya, M.J.N., Mokoele.J. and Makalela, K. I. 2018. Performance management as a mechanism to effective public service delivery in South Africa. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 10(4):107-117. [Online]. DOI: <https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC-134c33f428> [Accessed 3 June 2024].
- Massis, A D., and Kotlar, J. 2014. The case study method in family business research: Guidelines for qualitative scholarship. *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 5(1): 15-29. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfbs.2014.01.007> [Accessed 5 July 2024].
- Maxwell, J. A. 2022. Interactive approaches to qualitative research design. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research Design*, 41-54. Thousand Islands: Sage.
- Meira, J.V.D.S. and Hancer, M. 2021. Using the social exchange theory to explore the employee-organization relationship in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 33(2):670-692. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-06-2020-0538> [Accessed 10 April 2024].
- Merriam, S. B. 1998. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Meyer,J.P, Becker, T.E., and van Dick, R. 2006. Social identities and commitments at work: toward an integrative model. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 27(5):665-683. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.383> [Accessed 27 October 2024].
- Mihaiu, D. M. Opreana, A. and Cristescu, M. P. 2010. Efficiency, effectiveness, and performance of the public sector. *Romanian journal of economic forecasting*, 4(1):132-147. [Online]. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227489762_Efficiency_Effectiveness_and_Performance_of_the_Public_Sector [Accessed 14 April 2024].

- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A. M. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Miller, D. 2003. The people make the process: Commitment to employees, decision making, and performance. *Journal of Management*, 27(2):163-189. [Online]. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063\(00\)00094-5](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(00)00094-5) [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Morhart, F.M. Herzog, W. and Tomczak, T. 2009. Brand-specific leadership: Turning employees into brand champions. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(5):122-142. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkq.73.5.122> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Morse, J.M., and Mitcham, C. 2002. Exploring qualitatively-derived concepts: Inductive—deductive pitfalls. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(4):28-35. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690200100404> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Moskovicz, A. 2019. Financial Qualitative Research: A Comprehensive Guide for Case Study usage. *Financial Markets, Institutions and Risks*, 3(4): 106-116. [Online]. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.21272/fmir.3\(4\).106-116.2019](https://doi.org/10.21272/fmir.3(4).106-116.2019) [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Nadanyiova, M., and Klietkova, J. 2017. Brand Value and the Factors Affecting It. *Advances in Panel Data Analysis in Applied Economic Research*, 3(4):391-401. [Online]. Available at: <https://ideas.repec.org/s/spr/prbchp.html> [Accessed 8 October 2024].
- National Government Department. 2023. Annual report for 2022/2023 financial year: Vote 34. Pretoria. National Government Department. [Online]. Available at: https://nationalgovernment.co.za/departament_annual/488/2023-national-treasury-annual-report.pdf [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Nel, D. and Masilela, L. 2020. Open governance for improved service delivery innovation in South Africa. *International Journal of eBusiness and eGovernment Studies*, 12(1): 33-47. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34111/ijebeq.202012103> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Nengwekhulu, R. H. 2009. Public service delivery challenges facing the South African public service. *Journal of Public Administration*, 44(2):341–363. [Online]. Available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC51708> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Ngo, L. V. Nguyen, N. P. Huynh, K. T. Gregory, G. and Cuong, P. H. 2018. Converting internal brand knowledge into employee performance. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 33(3): 1-15. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-10-2018-2068> [Accessed 12 April 2024].

- Ngo, L. V., Nguyen, N. P., Huynh, K. T., Gregory, G., and Cuong, P. H. 2020. Converting internal brand knowledge into employee performance. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 29(3): 273-287. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-10-2018-2068> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Ngo, L.V. N.P. Nguyen, K.T. Huynh, G. Gregory, and P.H. Cuong. 2019. Converting internal brand knowledge into employee performance. *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 29 (3):273–287. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-10-2018-2068> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Nguyen, T. T. H. 2020. Measuring Financial Inclusion: A Composite FI Index for the Developing Countries. *Journal of Economics and Development*. 23(1):77-91. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JED-03-2020-0027> [Accessed 27 October 2024].
- Nguyen, P., Felfe, J. and Fookien, I. 2013. Antecedents of commitment to a parent company and to a local operation: Empirical evidence from Western employees working for multinational companies in Vietnam. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(7):1346-1375. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2012.706820> [Accessed 27 October 2024].
- Nguyen, V., L. T., Lu, V. N., Hill, S. R., and Conduit, J. 2019. The Mediating Role of Brand Knowledge on Employees' Brand Citizenship Behaviour: Does Organizational Tenure Matter? *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 27(3):169-178. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2019.04.003> [Accessed 4 July 2024].
- Nirmali, A. M.S. Ab Yajid, A. Khathibi, S.M.F. Azam and S.R.S. Sudasinghe. 2017. Brand citizenship behaviours: a review on related concepts and empirical implication. *Research Journal of Business and Management*, 4, (3):267-275. [Online]. Available at: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/374034> [Accessed 14 April 2024].
- Odell, J. 2001. Case Study Methods in International Political Economy. *International Studies Perspectives*, 2(1): 161-176. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1528-3577.00047>. [Accessed 8 October 2024].
- O'Reilly, C.A. and Chatman, J. 1986. Organizational Commitment and Psychological Attachment: The Effects of Compliance, Identification, and Internalization on Prosocial Behaviour. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(1): 492-499. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.71.3.492> [Accessed 2 June 2024].
- Omodan, B.I. 2022. A Model for Selecting Theoretical Framework through Epistemology of Research Paradigms. *African Journal of Inter/Multidisciplinary Studies*, 4(1):275-285. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51415/ajims.v4i1.1022> [Accessed 18 April 2024].

- Oosterom, W. 2007. The road ahead for public service delivery. *Price Water House Coopers*, July 10, 2007. [Online]. Available at: https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/psrc/pdf/the_road_ahead_for_public_service_delivery.pdf
- Ozcelik, G. and Findikli, A. 2014. The Relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behaviour: The mediating role of person-organization fit. *Procedia. Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 150: 1120-1128. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.127> [Accessed 5 April 2024].
- Page, S., and Nyeboer, J. .2017. Improving the process of research ethics review. *Research Integrity and Peer Review*, 2(1): 1-10. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41073-017-0038-7> {Accessed 7 July 2024}.
- Passey, D. 2020. Theories, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, models, and constructs: Limiting research outcomes through misconceptions and misunderstandings. *Studies in Technology Enhanced Learning*, 1(1): 2-9. [Online]. Available at: <https://stel.pubpub.org/pub/01-01-passey-2020/release/1> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Paul, M. 2022. Why are brand values so important - and how to define them, 10 June 2022. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.thebrandingjournal.com/2022/06/brand-values/> [Accessed 14 April 2024].
- Pawestri, N., and Kurniati, E. 2021. The Meaning of Playing among Beggars Who Have Young Children. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 1(1): 260-264. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210322.055> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Pellegrini, E. 2015. Relational leadership through the lens of international LMX research. *Oxford Library of Psychology*, 1(1):1-31. [Online]. Available at: https://books.google.co.za/books?hl=en&lr=&id=n8M9CgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA351&ots=MAAd907t3vP&sig=LyzuCNT4u-QCFSVdjEFcNNLXcvw&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Peters, B. G. 2010. Bureaucracy and democracy. *Public Organization Review*, 10(3):209- 222. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-010-0133-4> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Piaralal, S. K. Bhatti, M. A. Piaralal, N. K. and Juhari, A. S. 2016. Factors affecting service recovery performance and customer service employees. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 65(7):898–924. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-04-2014-0060> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

Piehlér, R. 2018. Employees' brand understanding, brand commitment, and brand citizenship behaviour: a closer look at the relationships among construct dimensions. *Journal of Brand Management*, 25(1):217-234. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41262-018-0099-z> [Accessed 20 March 2024].

Piha., L and Avlonitis, G.J.2018. Internal brand orientation: conceptualisation, scale development and validation. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 34(3):1-25. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2018.1445658> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Podsakoff, P., MacKenzie, S.B., Paine, J.B. and Bachrach, D.G. 2000. Organizational Citizenship Behaviours: A Critical Review of the Theoretical and Empirical Literature and Suggestions for Future Research. *Journal of Management*, 26(3):513-563. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920630002600307> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

Porricelli, M.S., Yurova, Y., Abratt, R. and Bendixen, M. 2014. Antecedents of brand citizenship behaviour in retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 21(5):745-752. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2014.06.002> [Accessed 4 April 2024].

Portal, S., Abratt, R., and Bendixen, M. 2019. The role of brand authenticity in developing brand trust. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 27(1):714 - 729. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0965254X.2018.1466828> [Accessed 10 October 2024].

Porter, L. W. Steers, R. M. Mowday, R. T. and Boulian, P. V. 1974. Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover among psychiatric technicians. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 59(5):603–609. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0037335> [Accessed 10 April 2024].

Priya, A. 2021. Case Study Methodology of Qualitative Research: Key Attributes and Navigating the Conundrums in Its Application. *Sociological Bulletin*, 70(1): 94-110. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038022920970318> [Accessed 4 July 2024].

Punjaisri, K., Evanschitzky, H. and Wilson, A. 2009. Internal branding: an enabler of employees' brand-supporting behaviours. *Journal of Service Management*, 20(2):209-226. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/09564230910952780> [Accessed 21 March 2024].

Punjaisri, K. and Wilson, A. 2007. The role of internal branding in the delivery of employee brand promise. *Journal of Brand Management*, 15(1):57–70. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi-org.pxz.iubh.de/8443/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550110> [Accessed 14 April 2024].

- Ravens, C. 2014. *Brand Citizenship Behavior, Internal Brand Management in an International Context*. Springer Fachmedien: Wiesbaden.
- Ravitch, S. M., and Riggan, M. 2016. *Reason and rigour: How conceptual frameworks guide research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Redcay, E., and Moraczewski, D. 2019. Social cognition in context: A naturalistic imaging approach. *NeuroImage*, 216(1): 1-9. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2019.116392> [Accessed 8 October 2024].
- Rehman, A. U., Tufail, M. S., Ullah, M. I., and Altaf, M. 2018. Recruitment Create Passage towards Brand Citizenship Behaviour: A Conceptual Analysis. *Review of Applied Management and Social Sciences*, 1(1): 21-27. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47067/ramss.v1i1.7> [Accessed 4 July 2024].
- Roese, N.J. and Gardner, W.L. 2019. Building strong connections between brands and the self. In: Tybout, A.M. and Calkins, T. eds. *Kellogg on Branding in a Hyper-Connected World*. New Jersey: Wiley, Chapter 9: 129-142.
- Rozin, R. 2012. Brand promises and a practitioner's unified theory of brand management. *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 1(3):247–253. [Online]. Available at: <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=bsu&AN=85200217&site=eds-live&scope=site> [Accessed: 14 April 2024].
- Rubin, H. J., and Rubin, I. S. 2005. *Qualitative interviewing :The art of hearing data*. SAGE Publications, Inc., [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452226651>
- Ryan, G., 2018. Introduction to positivism, interpretivism and critical theory. *Nurse Researcher*, 25(4):41-49. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7748/nr.2018.e1466> [Accessed 24 July 2024].
- Saepudin, T.H., Mulyanti, R. and Aviyanti, C. 2023. Implementation of Competence and Motivation in Employee Performance, *Dinasti International Journal of Management Science (DIJMS)*, 5(2):167–173. [Online]. Available at: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> [Accessed 3 June 2024].
- Salanova, M., Agut, S. and Peiro, J. M. 2005. Linking organizational resources and work engagement to employee performance and customer loyalty: The mediation of service climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(6):1217–1227. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.90.6.1217> [Accessed 5 April 2024].

- Saleem, F.Z., and Iglesias, O. 2016. Mapping the domain of the fragmented field of internal branding. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 25(1):43-57. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-11-2014-0751> [Accessed 3 June 2024].
- Sandelowski, M., 2015. A matter of taste: evaluating the quality of qualitative research. *Nursing Inquiry*, 22(2): 86-94. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/nin.12080> [Accessed 9 September 2024].
- Sarfo, J. O., Debrah, T., Gbordzoe, N. I., Afful, W. T., and Obeng, P. 2021. Qualitative research designs, sample size and saturation is enough always enough. *Journal of Advocacy, Research and Education*, 8(3): 60-65. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.13187/jare.2021.3.60> [Accessed 9 October 2024].
- Sataøen, H. L., and Wæraas, A. 2013. Branding without Unique Brands: Managing similarity and difference in a public sector context. *Public Management Review*, 17(3):443–461. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2013.841976> [Accessed 11 June 2024].
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. 2019. *Research methods for business students*. Pearson education.
- Schad, J. and Smith, W. K. 2019. Addressing grand challenges' paradoxes: Leadership skills to manage inconsistencies. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 12(4), 55-59. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21609> [Accessed 11 April 2024].
- Scott, R.J. and Bardach E. 2018. A comparison of management adaptations for joined-up government. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 78 (2):191-212. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12348> [Accessed 11 April 2024].
- Seimiene, E., and Kamarauskaite, E. 2014. Effect of brand elements on brand personality perception. *Social and Behavioural Sciences Journal*, 156(1):429-434. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.11.216> [Accessed 18 April 2024].
- Shaari, H. Salleh, S.M. and Hussin, Z. 2015. Employees Brand Citizenship Behaviours: Front-liner Versus Backstage Employees' Perspective. *International Journal of Marketing Service*, 22(1):23-32. [Online]. Available at: <https://doaj-org.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/article/124bb812652f46c88536ed2d4eb0d9ab> [Accessed 4 April 2024].
- Shapiro, S., Weinblatt, E., and Densen, P M. 1966. Longitudinal vs. cross-sectional approaches in studying prognostic factors in coronary heart disease. *Journal of Chronic*

Diseases, 19(8): 935-945. [Online]. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0021-9681\(66\)90009-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0021-9681(66)90009-9) [Accessed 5 July 2024].

Sibbald, S.L, Paciocco, S., Fournie, M., Van Asseldonk, R. and Scurr, T. 2021. Continuing to enhance the quality of case study methodology in health services research. *Healthcare Management Forum*, 34(5): 291-296. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/08404704211028857> [Accessed 4 July 2024].

Simbula, S. Margheritti, S. and Avanzi, L. 2023. Building Work Engagement in Organizations: A Longitudinal Study Combining Social Exchange and Social Identity Theories. *Journal of Behavioural Sciences*, 83(13):1-16. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13020083> [Accessed 10 April 2024].

SimpliLearn. 2024. What Is Brand Management: Definition, Principles, Strategies, and Benefits, 9 April 2024. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.simplilearn.com/brand-management-article> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Singh, K. D. 2015. Creating your own qualitative research approach: Selecting, integrating and operationalizing philosophy, methodology and methods. *The Journal of Business Perspective*, 19(2):132-146. [Online]DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0972262915575657> [Accessed 24 July 2024].

Skripak, J, S., Cortes, A. and Walz, A. 2018. Chapter 9 Structuring Organizations. [Online]. Available at: <https://otn.pressbooks.pub/fundamentalsofbusiness/chapter/chapter-9-structuring-organizations/> [Accessed 7 July 2024].

Steger, M. F., Dik, B. J., and Duffy, R. D. (2012). Measuring Meaningful Work: The Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI). *Journal of Career Assessment*, 20(3):322–337. [Online] DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072711436160> [Accessed 3 June 2024].

Stephen, S., Bell, L., Khan, M., Love, R., Macintosh, H., Martin, M., Moran, R., Price, E., Whitehead, B., and Elliott, R. 2021. Comparing helpful and hindering processes in good and poor outcome cases: A qualitative metasynthesis of eight Hermeneutic Single Case Efficacy Design studies. *Psychotherapy Research*, 32(1): 389 - 403. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10503307.2021.193474> [Accessed 8 October 2024].

Struminskaya, B., and Sakshaug, W, J. 2023. Ethical Considerations for Augmenting Surveys with Auxiliary Data Sources. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 87(1): 619-633. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfad030> [Accessed 7 July 2024].

- Sudheesh, K., Duggappa, R. D., and Nethra, S. 2016. How to write a research proposal. *Indian Journal of Anaesthesia*, 60(9): 631-631. [Online]: DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5049.190617> [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Suomi, K. Saraniemi, S. Vähätalo, M. Kallio, T.J. and Tevameri, T. 2021. Employee engagement and internal branding: two sides of the same coin. *Corporate Reputation Review Journal*, 24(1):48-63. [Online]. Available at: https://ideas.repec.org/a/pal/crepre/v24y2021i1d10.1057_s41299-019-00090-0.html [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- Tajfel, H. 1981. *Human groups and social categories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Tajfel, H. and Turner, J. C. 1979. An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin, and S. Worchel. eds. *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-37). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Takahashi, A.R.W. and Araujo, L. 2020. Case study research: opening up research opportunities. *RAUSP Management Journal*, 55 (1):100-111. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/RAUSP-05-2019-0109> [Accessed 18 April 2024].
- Taku, B. Saini, Y.K. and Abratt, R. 2022. The impact of internal branding on employees' brand supporting behaviour in banking. *Services Marketing Quarterly Journal*, 43(2):166-182. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332969.2021.1987610> [Accessed 5 April 2024].
- Tang, D. 2022. Cultural conflicts and integration in Chinese enterprises' cross-border mergers and acquisitions. *Accounting & Corporate Management*, 4(5): 1-10. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.23977/acccm.2022.040506> [Accessed 7 July 2024].
- Thibaut, J.W. and Kelley, H.H. 1959. *The social psychology of groups*. John Wiley & Sons, New York.
- Thokoa, R. L. Nadioo, V. and Herbst, T. 2022. An exploration of internal branding at the National Treasury of South Africa. *South African Journal of Business Management*, 53(1):1-15. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajbm.v53i1.2593> [Accessed 20 March 2024].
- Thompson, G., Buch, R., and Glasø, L. 2018. Low-quality LMX relationships, leader incivility, and follower responses. *Journal of General Management*, 44(1): 17–26. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306307018788808> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Thusi, X., Matyana, M., and Jili, N. 2023. Lack of political will: a barrier to public service delivery in South Africa and a high cost for citizens. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 9(2):137-147. [Online]. DOI: <http://www.jssshonline.com/> [Accessed 24 July 2024].

Tilley, C. 1999. Built-in branding: How to engineer a leadership brand. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 15(1-3):181-191. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1362/026725799784870405> [Accessed 5 April 2024].

Tulane University. 2018. What is social exchange theory, 20 April 2018. [Online]. Available at: <https://socialwork.tulane.edu/blog/social-exchange-theory/> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Tuli, F. 2010. The Basis of Distinction between Qualitative and Quantitative Research in Social Science: Reflection on Ontological, Epistemological, and Methodological Perspectives. *Ethiopian Journal of Education and Sciences*, 6(1): 1-12. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4314/ejesc.v6i1.65384> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Tybout, A. M. 2019. Brand positioning: The foundation for building a strong brand. In: Tybout, A.M. and Calkins, T. eds. *Kellogg on branding in a hyper-connected world*. New Jersey: Wiley, Chapter 1: 3-19.

Vallaster, C., and De Chernatony, L. 2005. Internationalisation of services brands: The role of leadership during the internal brand building process. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 21(1-2): 181-203. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1362/0267257053166839> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Vallaster, C. and de Chernatony, L. 2006. Internal brand building and structuration: the role of leadership. *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(7/8):761-784. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560610669982> [Accessed 5 April 2024].

Van der Walddt, G. (2020). Constructing conceptual frameworks in social science research. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, 16(1):1-9. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/td.v16i1.758> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Vergara, A., F., Fischer A., Seuring T., Beaufort., C.D., Fagherazzi, G., and Aguayo., G.A. 2023. Mixed-methods study protocol to identify expectations of people with type 1 diabetes and their caregivers about voice-based digital health solutions to support the management of diabetes distress: *the PsyVoice study*, 1(1): 1-7. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-068264> [Accessed 4 July 2024].

Wahyuni, D. 2012. The research design maze: understanding paradigms, cases, methods and methodologies, *Journal of Applied Management Accounting Research*,

10(1):69-80. [Online]: Available at:

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2103082 [Accessed 18 April 2024].

Wang, Y.C., Yang, J. and Yang, C.E. 2019. Hotel internal branding: A participatory action study with a case hotel. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 40(2):31-39. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2019.05.002> [Accessed 29 March 2024].

Weiskopf, D. A. 2008. The origins of concepts. *Philosophical Studies*, 140 (3):359 - 384.[Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11098-007-9150-8> [Accessed 21 May 2024].

Wimmer, D.R. and Dominick, R.J. 2011. Qualitative Research Methods. In: Mass Media Research: *American Marketing Association*, 9(10):114-154. [Online]. Available at: https://saleemabbas2008.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/1353087914-wimmer_dominick_mass_media_research_2011.pdf [Accessed 27 October 2024].

Wright, P.M., Gardner, T.M., and Moynihan, L.M. 2003. The impact of HR practices on the performance of business units. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 13(3):21-36. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2003.tb00096.x> [Accessed 3 June 2024].

Xiong, L. 2023. It takes a village: examining how and when brand-specific transformational leadership affects employees in internal brand management. *Journal of Brand Management*, 30(4):333-346. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi-org.pxz.iubh.de/8443/10.1057/s41262-022-00308-3> [Accessed 29 March 2024].

Xu, S.T., Wang, Y.C. and Ma, E. 2022. A workplace-driven model on the formation of OCB-C: perspectives of social exchange theory and agency theory, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34(7):2684-2703. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org.ezproxy.iielearn.ac.za/10.1108/IJCHM-11-2021-1409> [Accessed 2 June 2024].

Yang, J.T., Wan, C.S. and Wu, C.W. 2015. Effect of internal branding on employee brand commitment and behaviour in hospitality. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 15(4):267-280. [Online]. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1467358415580358> [Accessed 29 March 2024].

Yeh, Y.P. 2014. Exploring the impacts of employee advocacy on job satisfaction and organizational commitment: case of Taiwanese Airlines. *Journal of Air Transport*

Management, 36(1):94-100. [Online]. DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jairtraman.2014.01.002> [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Yilmaz, K. 2013. Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research traditions: Epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences. *European Journal of Education*, 48(2):311-325. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12014> [Accessed 18 April 2024].

Yin, R. 2009. *Case study research: design and methods*. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Zimmer, M. 2018. Addressing Conceptual Gaps in Big Data Research Ethics: An Application of Contextual Integrity. *Social Media and Society*, 4(2): 1-5. [Online]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118768300> [Accessed 27 October 2024].

ANNEXURE 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



Our Ref: M. 390824
Enquiries: research@iie.ac.za

19 August 2024



Outcome of Ethics Clearance Application for Master of Commerce in Strategic Brand Leadership.



Student name: Akhona Gushman
Student number: ST10250845
Brand and campus: IIEVega



Dear Akhona,

Thank you for submitting the ethics clearance application for the study: *The role of internal branding in employee brand citizenship behaviour: a public sector case study.*



We are pleased to inform you that the IIE's Higher Degrees Committee considered and granted ethics clearance. This means that you may proceed with data collection. Kindly reflect on the feedback provided by the Higher Degrees Committee to ensure that suggestions are considered in the mini-dissertation. If you are collecting data from a specific organisation, ensure that you have a gatekeeper's letter that confirms their approval of the data collection being done.

You are reminded that any changes made to the research methodology or title of the research study must be signed off by the IIE's Higher Degrees Committee. Kindly ensure that all ethical considerations are duly applied whilst collecting, analysing and interpreting the data for the completion of your research.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your programme team or supervisor directly.

All the best with your research.

Dr Willy Engelbrecht
Chair: Higher Degrees Committee



AdvTECH House: Inanda Greens, 54 Wierda Rd West, Wierda Valley 2196
P.O. Box 2369, Randburg 2125
Directors: GD Whyte (UK), JDR Oesch, MD Aitken, SCD Lurie
Group Company Secretary: CB Crouse



The Independent Institute of Education (Pty) Ltd is registered with the Department of Higher Education and Training as a private education institution under the Higher Education Act, 1997 (reg. no. 2007/HE07/002). Company registration number: 1987/004754/07.

ANNEXURE 2: INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



PARTICIPANT OR RESPONDENT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants
To whom it may concern, My name is Akhona Gushman, and I am a student at The IIE's Vega School. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Prof Ilse Struweg about the role of internal branding in employee brand citizenship behaviour: A public sector case study. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the function of internal branding in promoting employee brand citizenship behaviour within the DMRE. I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.
What will I be doing if I participate in your study?
I would like to invite you to participate in this research because you are a relevant sample as junior, middle or senior management. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to meet in person or virtually. You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.
Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?
Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your experience in relation to the department, in regards to internal branding and employee brand citizenship behaviour. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating. Detail the potential risks and how it will be managed by the researcher. Indicate how the ethical considerations will be applied in the context of the study.
Do I have to participate in the study?
• Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary. • If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so. • Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.
Will my identity be protected?
I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be

able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my Master of Commerce in Strategic Brand Leadership. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Akhona Gushman
073 162 4363
gushmanas@gmail.com

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Prof Ilse Struweg
011 559 1255
istruweg@uj.ac.za

Participant or respondent Informed Consent – Audio and Visual Recordings.

I agree to participate in the research conducted by Akhona Gushman about the role of internal branding in employee brand citizenship behaviour: A public sector case study.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- I agree to participate in this research and be recorded for the purpose of data collection.
- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private and confidential.
- My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
- I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature	Date
	7/8/2024

ANNEXURE 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction and Interview Questions

The researcher will begin by introducing themselves and explaining the purpose of the interview, assuring the participants that their confidentiality and anonymity will be protected. The participants will be reassured that the interview contents will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and that their identities will not be revealed.

The research study will seek the interviewee's consent to record the interview, facilitating data analysis. Additionally, the participant will be assured that the transcript will be shared in order to verify or confirm the accuracy of the information provided. The participant will also be informed that they may choose to discontinue the interview at any time without facing any negative repercussions, per the terms outlined in the prior informed consent document.

After that, the broad range of questions outlined below will be posed. Additional follow-up questions may also be asked depending on the participant's responses and the contextual setting.

Interviewer will explain the following definitions to participants:

Brand Citizenship Behaviour

Brand citizenship behaviour is when employees go beyond their regular job duties to support and promote the company's brand and values. It's about showing pride in the company and acting as a positive representative, not only with customers but also within the community and among coworkers. This can include things like providing excellent customer service, talking positively about the company, or being involved in community events that align with the company's values.

Internal Branding

Internal branding is a critical aspect of organisational success, as it helps to align the beliefs, values, and behaviours of employees with the overarching brand identity of the company. When employees understand and embrace the brand, they are more likely to deliver consistent and positive brand experiences to customers, ultimately strengthening the company's position in the market. It is not just a top-down initiative, but a collaborative effort that requires their active participation.

Brand promise

A brand promise is a concise statement that captures the core essence of a company's brand and the key benefits it offers to customers. It is more than just a trademark or logo - it is a trust mark that holds immense value for the organisation. (Jawabreh, 2014) Branding is the process through which a company or product establishes a strong

association with specific values, aspirations, or characteristics in the minds of consumers (Thu & Binh, 2023).

Research Question 1: What internal branding practices are implemented by NGD to foster employee brand-citizenship behaviour?

1. What is your experience of internal branding?
2. How do you get information on what the values of the department are from the employer?
3. How would you describe the culture in the department internally among employees?
4. How would describe the vision and values of this department?

Research Question 2: How does the NGD leadership actively encourage employees to fulfil the brand promise?

1. How does the leadership do encourage as an employee to fulfil the brand promise of the department?
2. Can you give me examples of how leadership reinforces the brand promise?
3. Do you think you live up to the brand promise? How so?
4. Do the leaders create an enabling environment for productivity?
5. What gets in the way of working productively and achieving the best performance

Research question 3: What approaches does the NGD employ in utilising brand-centric human resources management to align employee performance with the NGD brand values?

1. How long have you been employed by the department?
2. How does HR encourage your productivity and performance in relation to your KPIs and KRAs
3. What would make you go over and above the call of duty in your line of work?

Research question 4: What are the primary barriers and challenges the NGD employees face in aligning their performance with the NGD brand promise?

1. How long have you had these challenges/obstacles since working at the department?
2. Have they been reported? What have some of the resolutions been or promises?

Research question 5: How do employees perceive the effectiveness of NGD internal communication in enhancing employee brand citizenship behaviour within the organisation?

1. Please provide some examples of internal branding-building campaigns you have seen around the department or that you remember.
2. Do you think leaders in the department effectively communicate and effectively steer the ship the right way?

The interview will conclude with the researcher expressing gratitude to the participants for their time and the data they have contributed. The researcher will also take the opportunity to summarise the key points discussed during the interview and invite the participant to add any additional thoughts or reflections (Bugos *et al.*, 2014).

ANNEXURE 4: List of codes – Atlas. ti

1. Impact of Internal Branding
2. Employee Perception of Brand
3. Strategies for Enhancing Employee Behavior
4. Strategies for Enhancing Employee Behavior
5. Employee Perception of Brand: Fear
6. Employee Perception of Brand: Above and Beyond
7. Employee Perception of Brand: Alignment
8. Employee Perception of Brand: Autonomy
9. Employee Perception of Brand: Advocacy
10. Employee Perception of Brand: Behavior
11. Employee Perception of Brand: Behavior Guidance
12. Employee Perception of Brand: Behavior influence
13. Employee Perception of Brand: Behavior Influence
14. Employee Perception of Brand: Behaviors
15. Employee Perception of Brand: Behavior Outlook
16. Employee Perception of Brand: Beliefs
17. Employee Perception of Brand: Commitment
18. Employee Perception of Brand: Brand Identity
19. Employee Perception of Brand: Brand perception
20. Employee Perception of Brand: Collective Responsibility
21. Employee Perception of Brand: Brand Promise
22. Employee Perception of Brand: Communication Influence
23. Employee Perception of Brand: Collective Effort
24. Employee Perception of Brand: Communication Style
25. Employee Perception of Brand: Communication
26. Employee Perception of Brand: Contribution
27. Employee Perception of Brand: Customer Relationships
28. Employee Perception of Brand: Employee Contribution
29. Employee Perception of Brand: Discouragement
30. Employee Perception of Brand: Disjointed Culture
31. Employee Perception of Brand: Consequences
32. Employee Perception of Brand: Employee Reflection
33. Employee Perception of Brand: Decision-making Involvement
34. Employee Perception of Brand: Employee Perception
35. Employee Perception of Brand: Feedback
36. Employee Perception of Brand: Feedback Influence
37. Employee Perception of Brand: Feedback Perception
38. Employee Perception of Brand: Impact on Behavior
39. Employee Perception of Brand: Influence
40. Employee Perception of Brand: Influence Behavior
41. Employee Perception of Brand: Influence on Behavior
42. Employee Perception of Brand: Inspiration
43. Employee Perception of Brand: Interaction
44. Employee Perception of Brand: Interaction Influence
45. Employee Perception of Brand: Interactions

46. Employee Perception of Brand: Interest in Gaining Insights
47. Employee Perception of Brand: Internal Culture
48. Employee Perception of Brand: Key Factor
49. Employee Perception of Brand: Lack of Positive Feedback
50. Employee Perception of Brand: Lack of Reminders
51. Employee Perception of Brand: Leadership Communication
52. Employee Perception of Brand: Leadership Influence
53. Employee Perception of Brand: Loyalty
54. Employee Perception of Brand: Loyalty Building
55. Employee Perception of Brand: Mood Setting
56. Employee Perception of Brand: Motivation
57. Employee Perception of Brand: Negative influence
58. Employee Perception of Brand: New Hires
59. Employee Perception of Brand: Objectives
60. Employee Perception of Brand: Onboarding
61. Employee Perception of Brand: Organisational Brand
62. Employee Perception of Brand: Organisational Values
63. Employee Perception of Brand: Perception
64. Employee Perception of Brand: Perception Influence
65. Employee Perception of Brand: Perception Variation
66. Employee Perception of Brand: Personal Values
67. Employee Perception of Brand: Positive Output
68. Employee Perception of Brand: Positive Perception
69. Employee Perception of Brand: Prescriptive communication
70. Employee Perception of Brand: Pride
71. Employee Perception of Brand: Productivity
72. Employee Perception of Brand: Recognition
73. Employee Perception of Brand: Remuneration
74. Employee Perception of Brand: Remuneration Fairness
75. Employee Perception of Brand: Reputation Building
76. Employee Perception of Brand: Rewarding Good Work
77. Employee Perception of Brand: Shared Direction
78. Employee Perception of Brand: Stakeholder Relationships
79. Employee Perception of Brand: Strategic Documents
80. Employee Perception of Brand: Team Alignment
81. Employee Perception of Brand: Team dynamics
82. Employee Perception of Brand: Teamwork
83. Employee Perception of Brand: Value Alignment
84. Employee Perception of Brand: Values
85. Employee Perception of Brand: Valuing Work
86. Employee Perception of Brand: Vision
87. Employee Perception of Brand: Vision and Values
88. Employee Perception of Brand: Vision Understanding
89. Employee Perception of Brand: Work Environment
90. Impact of Internal Branding: Above and Beyond
91. Impact of Internal Branding: Advocacy
92. Impact of Internal Branding: Alignment
93. Impact of Internal Branding: Alignment with Values

94.	Impact of Internal Branding: Allegiance Building
95.	Impact of Internal Branding: Appreciation
96.	Impact of Internal Branding: Autonomy
97.	Impact of Internal Branding: Barriers
98.	Impact of Internal Branding: Behaviors
99.	Impact of Internal Branding: Being Taken Seriously
100.	Impact of Internal Branding: Beliefs
101.	Impact of Internal Branding: Belonging
102.	Impact of Internal Branding: Boosting Confidence
103.	Impact of Internal Branding: Brand Citizenship
104.	Impact of Internal Branding: Brand Identity
105.	Impact of Internal Branding: Brand Promise Fulfillment
106.	Impact of Internal Branding: Challenges
107.	Impact of Internal Branding: Collective Participation
108.	Impact of Internal Branding: Collective Responsibility
109.	Impact of Internal Branding: Commitment
110.	Impact of Internal Branding: Commitment Fostering
111.	Impact of Internal Branding: Communication
112.	Impact of Internal Branding: Communication Dynamics

ANNEXURE 5: ITERATION TABLE

Data Item	Iteration 1	Iteration2	Iteration3	Iteration4	Iteration5	Iteration6	Iteration 7	Iteration 8	Iteration 9
Question 1: What internal branding practices are implemented by NGD to foster employee brand-citizenship behaviour?									
What is your experience of internal branding in this company, in this department?	1. Empowerment of employees in terms of organisational culture (employee general understanding of internal branding). 2. Training is an internal practice implemented by NGD (perception related to the NGD)	Substandard internal branding at NGD (employee brand perception)	1. Building loyalty of the organisation (general understanding of internal branding) 2. Team members pulling same direction (general understanding of internal branding) 3. Employees being brand ambassadors (general understanding of internal branding)	Brand components within the NGD so that people understand, what is it that we are doing, who we are and what type of service can be given to them or available to them (perception related to NGD)	1. Employees of the NGD being ambassadors (general understanding of internal branding) 2. Employees being talking heads of the department (general understanding of internal branding) 3. Knowledge of what is happening in the department (general understanding of NGD)	1. Ensuring brand visibility	"My experience of internal branding at this company is that it doesn't really exist. There is no, there is no personality, there is no character. Apart from the logo that is there. Apart from the name. And the corporate colours. That's how I view it. Because I don't feel like, um, there is a culture that I can relate to. That I can coin into being part	1. Branding of Pens 2. Books 3. Bottles 4. USB's 5. Books	Internal branding in government is not done with intention

							of the internal branch”		
How do you get information on what the values of the department are from the employee?	1. HR department 2. Stored in Intranet	1. Internet 2. Senior manager interaction 3. Emails 4. Meetings and discussions	1. Strategic documents (Annual performance plan and annual performance report 2. Internal communication channels	1. Internal communications 2. Leaflets 3. Flyers 4. Pamphlets	1. They cascade down from top management to junior management	1. Website 2. Pamphlets in all 11 official languages 3. Pamphlets in sign (recommendation)	1. HR 2. This that are written and not lived 3. Tick box exercise 4. Policy exercise 5. One way kind of information sharing	Internal emails	Publication strategic documents of the department
How would you describe the culture in the department internally amongst employees?	1. Good and bad culture (Employee brand perception on culture) 2. Get it done mentality (employee brand perception on culture) 3. Silo mentality (Employee brand perception on culture) 4. The need for Integrated Culture (Strategies for enhancing culture & BCB)	1. Lack of unity (employee brand perception on culture) 2. Selfish mentality (employee brand perception on culture) 3. Silo mentality (employee brand perception on culture) 4. The need for teamwork (strategy for enhancing culture & BCB)	1. Limited room for mistakes (employee brand perception on culture) 2. Disjointed culture & us and them mentality (employee brand perception on culture) 3. Lack of decision making -fearful culture (employee brand perception on culture) 4. Fear of engagement with senior staff (employee brand perception on culture) 5. The need for team member involvement boosts confidence (strategy for	1. Merger of two departments in one NGD created silo mentality 2. One department had an inclusive environment with social gatherings outside work 3. The other department not embracing togetherness and working in own corners, don't often meet 4. So, the NGD culture is like what we are use to	1. Laid back 2. Democratic 3. Flexible culture	1. Difficult because of the previous merger 2. Diverse 3. Policy driven culture	Toxic “I don't even know what the company stands for as a brand. What is it that every second person can allude to and say, this is us, this is what we believe in, this is how we look, this is what we are about, I think people view the	1. Self – entitlement 2. General feeling of complacency	No one solidified cultured because of two departments that merged Previously having their own culture No single well developed culture

			enhancing culture & BCB) 6. Instilled trust (Strategy for enhancing BCB) "It is almost a misnomer to pick up a phone and call for example a director general somebody much higher than you especially if you're much junior and that shouldn't be the case"				culture in this organization differently. I promise you, if you speak to five people, you won't get the same answer. We'll definitely not get the same answer because I don't think we share the same values"		
How would you describe the vision and the values of this department?	1. To regulate & implement policies (Employee understanding of vision & values of NGD). 2. To attract investment and to industrialize (Employee understanding of vision & values of NGD) 3. To empower females in industrial sectors (employee understanding of vision and values of NGD). 4. To be a leader in regulation	Transformation (employee understanding of vision and values of NGD)	1. Sustainable and secure supply of electricity and sustainability of the mining sector (employee understating of vision and values of the NGD) "There are team members who sort of don't even recognise or realise the vision of the organisation but there are other team members who are actually actively working hard to get	"I find it very difficult to say" 1. The vision ensure that the country has got nuclear	1. Monitoring certain entities of the state 2. Ensure South Africans have electricity & petroleum products	1. We deal with energy	1. Forward thinking 2. Innovation and creativity from science side Either than that 1. People are working in silos <i>"The fact that people, um, sort of performing in silos really doesn't give</i>	Creating a sector that is globally competitive.	Forward thinking & forward-looking vision "I don't think it's inspiring. Yeah, that's the way that I'm looking for. For me, it's, it's the vision as it is. Expressed in ways and written, I don't,

	(employee understanding of vision & values of NGD)		to the realisation of that vision” “The values and the vision are intertwined, and they seem to be going to the same direction. If you were to live the values, you would ultimately realise the vision”				<i>much confidence to me or to even talk about. The vision of the overall company I left, particularly I picked one that I think I sort of see where they are going and that's it”</i>		it's inspiring for me. It's weird that are too academic for me that do not inspire anything”
Question 2: How does the NGD leadership actively encourage employees to fulfil the brand promise?									
How does the leadership do encourage as an employee to fulfil the brand promise of the department?	1. Stakeholder-centricity (Leadership encouragement on fulfilling brand promise) 2. To be receptive and warm towards stakeholders (leadership encouragement on fulfilling the brand promise)	Inclusion of junior management in higher level management meetings (Leadership encouragement of fulfilment of brand promise)	1. Lack of active encouragement (employee perception on leadership) 2. Lack of brand promise reinforcement (employee brand perception on leadership) 3. Autonomy to contribute (Strategy to enhancing BCB)	There needs to be a sense of openness	1. Assigned job description	1. Answer given was not relating to the question	1. Through leadership trying to create a single-minded culture after the merger 2. Hiring external company for culture change 3. Nig meeting held for staff to register concerns <i>“But after that, I don't even, I don't even know whether</i>	1. Through giving staff bursaries that can help department achieve their desired goal	“To encourage employees to leave the brand promise of the department, we are not doing enough, and I believe we could, we could do better, you know. But I think I've seen recently that there is a resurgence and there is a recognition that

							<i>you got the feedback. If you got the feedback, what was it saying? Was it conclusive or was it just for your information? Are they still going to take it further or what? I don't know"</i>		we need to do more as a leadership"
Can you give me examples of how leadership reinforces the brand promise ?	Constant employee reinforcement and engagement (Examples of leadership reinforcing brand promise)	Involvement & staff engagement in decision making (Examples of leadership reinforcing brand promise)	No examples to give, no encouragement of leadership reinforcement of brand promise.	1. Through service charter agreement	1. Monthly & Quarterly reporting on the things you say you will do	1. By making sure that incorrect work does not get sign-off	Same answer as previous		1. Having regular meetings at the branch and at the Chief Directorate and at the branch at the directorate level
Do you think you live up to the brand	1. Yes 2. Contribution, Responsibility, Collective effort (ways employees live up to brand promise)	1. Yes 2. Passion towards the industry (ways employee lives up to brand promise)	1. Yes 2. Never bringing brand in disrepute (ways employee lives up to brand promise) 3. Protecting image of the brand internally	1. Yes 2. If not it's because there are capacity issues. The department is under-capacitated	1. Yes, but we need enablers e.g. 2. Availability of funding (Strategy on how employee can live up to	1. Yes, Through: 2. Delivering positive representation of the brand	Yes <i>"You know, the thing is, I don't have</i>	Yes, <i>"I've accepted that a leader is about being</i>	No I believe I am failing you as a leader

promise ? How so?			and externally (ways employee lives up to brand promise) 4. Clear distinction between personal and private work (ways employee lives up to brand promise)		3. the brand promise) 4. Resource availability 5. Material e.g. ICT Tools of trade “We need warm bodies, we need people, you need to have a whole system must work and be well oiled for the car to move forward. I might want the car to move forward, I might be willing to be sort of like, I might be willing to steer the ship in the direction where the ship wants to go, but if the wheels are not there, or if the captain is not there, it becomes difficult”	“So, for me, it's just understanding the corporate identity, understanding values, understanding what the department wants from me, my own mandate within the department. That's what helps me to pursue the brand. That's what helps me to move forward with the brand, represent the brand”	<i>confidence in the brand, so it's really difficult to, to treat, to truly, truly be yourself and, um, try and perform to the best of your ability because you just feel like, what's the point? Does anyone really care? Do people know what they are doing? You know, when you, when you are in that kind of a position, you really don't give it your all”</i>	<i>influenced and be in a position to influence. So, as a leader, it's not that you are always right. You also learn from those who work with you”</i>	
Do the leaders create	1. Yes and No 2. Budget Constraints (Impact on	1. Gradual improvement (leadership perception	1. It is not a yes, no type of question 2. Leadership style influence	1. To a certain extent	1. Leadership is failing “I think they are failing in a sense	Yes and no	No 1. Lack of competency	I'm not sure, I hope so	No,

an enabling environment for productivity?	3. productivity and performance) Lack of resources (impact on productivity & performance) 4. Lack of information (impact on productivity & performance)	2. resulting to productivity) Financial constraints (impact on productivity and performance) 3. The need for budget in branding as its core of organisation (strategies for effectiveness and productivity enhancement)	(employee brand perception)		that, like I said, it gets difficult to do what you're supposed to do if you don't have means or resources to do that which you're supposed to do"	1. Yes - given creative freedom 2. No – under-resourced 3. No correct equipment 4. Tedious procurement process	from leadership	"There's this thing of bureaucracy. If you go into a meeting or you are not allowed into meetings, you are not allowed to participate in key activities of the department because you are a junior staff. For me, I've observed that, so I can't say, I can't generalise and say it's not happening, but also, I can't generalise and say it's happening"	"we work within the context where there's scarcity of resources to enable jobs and I mean if you want to buy something. One, if you have to buy ICT equipment's like as an example takes the ages before you can get 1/2. If you want to get some things that are innovative. That will assist you to do a job efficiently, you get sent from pillar to post so which I
---	---	---	-----------------------------	--	--	--	-----------------	--	--

									think doesn't create a conducive environment for anyone to be productive"
What gets in the way of working productively and achieving the best performance	Lack of communication (obstacle for achieving productivity)	Opportunities (obstacle for achieving productivity)	1. No conducive work environment (Obstacle for achieving productivity) 2. Lack of consequence management (Obstacle for achieving productivity) 3. Personal matter and personal well-being "The reality is that you cannot resign from yourself if you've got issues at home or wherever you're at financially uh whichever way health-wise can definitely be affected to from a productive point of view"	1. Interference from management 2. Dictatorship mindset	1. So many reporting lines and bureaucracy in government (Obstacle for achieving productivity)	1. Working with people stuck in an era 2. Working with people who aren't versatile in manner 3. No technological advancement "You get people who would be like, you try to come up with a suggestion that is off now, then they'd be like, no, back in my day, that's not how we did it. And you're like, oh my goodness gracious, back in what day, I was not there. So that	1. Personal issues 2. Insecurities 3. Incompetencies 4. Lack of professionalism 5. Lack of product knowledge because people are doing things haphazardly 6. Lack of information sharing v	Gatekeeping and working in silos	1. Culture 2. Tools of trade 3. Lack of budget 4. Attitude towards work

						becomes a problem'			
Question 3: What approaches does DMRE employ in utilising brand-centric human resources management to align employee performance with the NGD brand values?									
How long have you been employed by the department?	10 years	More than 20 years	3 years	12 years	13 years	2 years	Just over a year	Current role is 6 months But 6 years in the department	2 years
How does HR encourage your productivity and performance in relation to your KPIs and KRA's	1. Lack of HR encouragement (brand perception) 2. Performance encouragement left to employee (brand perception) 3. Systemic approach in relationship between HR and employee (Performance development & management system & Monitoring systems).	1. Incentives (HR initiatives to encourage productivity and performance)	1. Policies, structures and templates (HR initiatives to encourage productivity and performance) 2. HR must play more active role in guiding and not leave guidance to templates (strategies on how HR can encourage productivity & performance)	1. Performance agreements	1. Personal development plan submitted beginning of the year	1. They don't 2. Tick box function 3. They don't particularly encourage "For me, it feels like another tick, box ticking exercise. Like, you know, inform people about disability day tick. Inform people about cancer awareness tick. Inform people	1. Clear KPI's 2. Clear KRAs 3. Performance is measured the best way it can	No sure. Not had that experience	They are not, never seen that in my experience

						about youth. It's June. It's obviously, it's everywhere in South Africa. You know, it's a tick box, a box ticking exercise for me. They don't impact me in any other way. And I would hate to, um, compare them to my previous employers in another department where I'd compare their HR with the current HR. Whereas, like I had said, if the HR for the DMRE got its own support, they don't have enough support"			
What would	1. Leadership appreciation (Strategies for BCB)	1. Resources (Car allowance, cell phone allowance, S&T)	1. Being given autonomy (strategy for enhancing BCB) 2. Appreciation, acknowledgment	1. No concrete answer was given. I think we should yield this as data that is	1. Healthy environment 2. Positive and productive relationship	1. Its innate 2.	1. To be given room to be creative 2. To be listened to	1. Compensation	"It is basically getting support being

make you go over and above the call of duty in your line of work?	2. Leadership acknowledgment (Strategies for BCB) 3. Access to resources (Strategies for BCB) 4. Flexibility and liberal approach (Strategies for BCB) 5. Leadership Liberalism (Strategies for BCB)	Strategies for enhancing BCB	and feedback (strategy for enhancing BCB) 3. Clear expectations 4. Recognition and reward strategy for enhancing BCB 5. Leaders leading by example (strategy for enhancing BCB)	not usable. Most of the answers where not aligned to the actual question.	3. with employees Having flexibility		3. To be considered 4. No interference <i>"I don't want interference because there's a lot of meddling and people interfering in one space. I have a team that reports to me, but people still feel the need to interfere with my team. I take decisions. Decisions are overruled. Decisions are ignored, not by the team members, but the influence that interferes with my team. So, if there was no interference, unnecessary</i>	provided with the tools to do my job right? Like where to be provided and be given a space to do my job given my provided with the tools and support in whichever way. Yeah, that that will enable me to do my job perfectly"
---	---	------------------------------	--	---	---	--	--	---

							<i>interference, I believe that I could soar to greater heights”</i>		
Question 4: What are the primary barriers and challenges the NGD employees face in aligning their performance with the NGD brand promise?									
How long have you had these challenges since working at the department?	Budgetary constraints obstacles- since employment tenure (10 years)	1. Budget constraints & constant introduction of new leadership key challenge – challenges are always there 2. Need for better budget prioritisation especially branding (Suggested leadership implementation strategy)	Biggest challenge is lack of feedback – challenge since employment inception	Issues of being under-capacitated and proper allocation of resources (right people in the right positions) These are issues that have been had since ever since participant started working for the department.	1. Since the beginning of the year 2. Especially blurry role lines which creates chaos “You see, the thing is with government departments is that they have cross-functional roles. So, something that I do, there's someone who's in the same level as me who does it for HR. Something that I do, someone else, so there are so many things that I do that someone else does, but their definition of	Since I started working Biggest challenge is outdated equipment	6 months “ <i>They're just so stereotypical in their way of doing things and doing, you know, and doing things. It's the same way over and over because it's been done this way, therefore it's the right way to do it. You see, that's how I feel like some of the barriers can dream, uh, are managed”</i>	Since starting at the department “	My duration of employment 2 years

					what they do, the definition is different, but the actual execution of what they're doing is exactly what I'm doing. So, I think that's one of the problems, especially because how this department, all departments are separated”				
Have they been reported ? What have some of the resolutions been or promises?	Yes, no resolution efforts made to combat challenges	Yes, no resolution efforts made to combat challenges even though reported to leadership	Yes, no resolution efforts made to combat challenges even though reported to leadership	Yes, no resolution, just 1 extra position allocation which was funded for.	“You get told about things like the budget. You get told about things like the fiscal, which is, again, it's the budget, the fiscal being overstressed and some things we can do, some things we can't do, but those are the things that need money. But on the things that	Yes, several times and no resolution	Yes, Promises made, nothing done	<i>Well, it's difficult to change a culture. It goes back to what I said with people working in the private sector and the public sector. (13:33) It's very difficult to change that culture, but it's something that every day you try and push for</i>	Yes and no resolution

					don't need money, it shows that there is a misalignment at the top in the organisational structure, because when HR sits down and they draft these job descriptions, you can't have something, well, what I know is that, according to the Public Service Act, there cannot be more than, not unless it's just the number of people with the same job description"			<i>people to accept and you can't force it down their throats. But there's this general hope that eventually they will realise that it's not for them"</i>	
Question 5: How do employees perceive the effectiveness of NGD internal communication in enhancing employee brand citizenship behaviour within the organisation?									
Please provide some examples of internal brandin	1. Take a girl child to school campaign (Impact on Internal branding) 2. Creation of bursaries for girl child campaign (Impact on	1. Previously there was a lot but now there are none 2. Treasury & Presidency as bottlenecks 3. Government must look into creating conducive environment for employees	"Honestly, I have not seen it" 1. Opportunity for department to build internal brand deliberately (Strategies for	Workshops	1. Change management campaigns "department only big on campaigns that are paid but things that don't	1. Youth month campaign 2. Women's month campaign "So internal communications , it's, it's a little	Only one which is woman's day campaign "People were happy. You	Either than the branding of materials I can't think of any	Women's day activities and Heritage Day last year

g building campaigns you have seen around the department that you remember.	3. internal branding) Mental health campaigns (Impact on internal branding) 4. Employee profiling campaign (Impact on internal branding)	4. through internal brand building campaigns (Strategies for enhancing internal branding & BCB) Projects such as (Gym within the organisation, creche, cafeteria, transport)	2. internal brand building) Internal communication is reduced to conveyer belt where announcements (employee perception on internal communications) 3. More a prescriptive form of communication and not a platform to galvanize, support, motivate and encourage team 4. Research – run surveys on to check mood of team members “Setting the mood, or moodset. High-performance climates have inspiring servant-leadership at the heart of them. The leader maintains a balance between the "balcony" and the "dancefloor" to win the hearts of the team” – Tim Wigham		have monetary value, but matter the most to the workers, they don't take them seriously”	slow, it's a little backward”	<i>know when people don't even get enough activities to be done. It doesn't matter what you give them, they'll appreciate it because they don't get enough. The little that you give, they'll jump at that opportunity. But I feel like the internal comms can do better”</i>		
Do you think leaders	Yes, however there is:	Not 100%	Generally,	Improvement is needed	No, I don't think so	No, they are not	Definitely not	“Ever since I've been in this department, the	No, I don't think we

in the department effectively communicate and effectively steer the ship the right way?	1. Lack of information sharing (Leadership perception)	1. Lack of communication (Leadership perception) 2. Need for drastic improvement of leadership (Leadership perception)	1. Top-down approach and instructive. No two-way 2. Instructive communication results to despondent team 3. Respect= better results Ultimately: "Effectiveness of communication depends on the receiver of the communication and not necessarily the centre of the communication, in my view"	1. Misallocation of resources "Can't have a captain in that flight. Can't have somebody who doesn't even have a code, a C1 driver's licence to be driving it. That's as simple as that. Allocation of resources, the right people at the right position will be able to drive. And as I see it now, we are still having a challenge. That is why the skills audit, we're still having a challenge of people who are sitting in the wrong positions with the specific qualifications. So, once we can get that onto the right, the ship will move fast. It's going directionally right, but it is not moving in the right place because of	1. Lot of animosity among leaders 2. Political interference "When the head of the fish is rotten, automatically the whole body is aborted. If you get it right at the top, it's easy for everything to just to just be straight and narrow and to go into. So, if the management can get that right, managers behave like managers. Managers must think like managers. Managers must be managers"		1. Too many politics 2. Too much interference "I wish people could just understand that they are not in leadership positions to bully people or to sort of, um, make you envy them or worship them. I wish people could understand that being a leader, you are there to shape someone, to mentor someone, to create, um, a path for someone that's going to lead after you, you know, I wish there was sort of a succession	communication has always been centred around one person- The leader. Not leadership. There's this feeling that, that's my biasness. People hide behind the leader, and they never want to communicate the work they are doing and whereas it is their work. The best place to communicate it but there's this general feeling of people trying to play safe and never want to be in the public domain. Never want to find themselves contradicting	communicate effectively
---	--	---	---	--	---	--	--	---	-------------------------

				misallocation of resources”			<i>plan that people were aware of and they were really nurturing it. So, I feel like people are just self-focusing. They don't care about who's coming next. What am I teaching this person”</i>	<i>one another and then it is always left to one particular individual. The leader at the time who's assigned to this particular portfolio in the department to do the communication which is very much limited. I think that's one area that needs to improve”</i>	
--	--	--	--	-----------------------------	--	--	---	--	--

ANNEXURE 6: NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

In this Agreement, "Confidential Information" shall mean all information disclosed by the Parties to this Agreement, directly or indirectly, in writing, orally, which by its nature or the circumstances of its disclosure should be reasonably construed as being confidential.

It is a condition of engagement that the Parties shall preserve and aid in preserving all Confidential Information, in particular any confidential company information, which may be revealed during the course of the Parties' interactions. Such Confidential Information relates to information that is not in the public domain.

1. The Parties shall at all times keep the contents of the interview recordings provided by the researcher, and this agreement, confidential and shall use its best endeavours to keep confidential any information which it has acquired or may acquire.
2. The Parties undertake in relation to the Confidential Information, as follows:
 - a. not to use any Confidential Information for any purpose (including any technical or commercial purpose) other than for the permitted use.
 - b. not to disclose any part of the Confidential Information to any third party; and
 - c. not to disclose any part of the Confidential Information to its employees or professional advisors, except to those employees or professional advisors who are required to receive the Confidential Information for purposes of the permitted use, it being understood that the Parties shall –
 - i. inform such employees or professional advisors of the confidential nature of such information; and
 - ii. instruct them to treat such information confidentially in accordance with the terms of this Agreement; and
 - iii. be responsible if its employees or professional advisors to whom it has disclosed the Confidential Information should fail to treat such information confidentially in accordance with the terms of this Agreement.
3. Neither Party shall use or disclose Confidential Information except with prior written consent or in accordance with an order of a court of competent jurisdiction or in order to comply with

any law or governmental regulations by which any Party concerned is bound or as may be lawfully requested in writing by any governmental authority.

4. In the event that the receiving party should breach the provisions of this agreement and fail to remedy such breach within 7 (seven) days from date of a written notice to do so, then the disclosing party shall be entitled to invoke all remedies available to it in law including the institution of urgent interim proceedings and/or an action for damages.
5. The Parties undertake to permanently delete any electronic copies of Confidential Information received and destroy any confidential printed documentation or similar material in their possession promptly once they are no longer required for the negotiation of a proposed services or on completion of the contracted services.
6. Upon termination of negotiations for a proposed service or on completion of the contracted service, the Parties are to confirm to each other that they are no longer in possession of any Confidential Information.
7. The confidentiality obligations as contained in this Agreement shall commence from the date of signature of this Agreement and shall remain in force indefinitely irrespective of the termination of the contracted services.

For the researcher:

Signed by at ___ on this _____ day of _20____. Name: _____ Signature: _____

Witness 1: ____ Witness 2: ____

For the editor:

Signed at ____ on this _day of _20____. Name: _____ Signature: _____

Witness 1: ____ Witness 2: ____

ANNEXURE 7: GATEKEEPER APPROVAL LETTER



mineral resources
& energy
Department
Mineral Resources and Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

192 Visagie Street, Private Bag X 59, Arcadia, 0007, Tel: 012 406 7539, Nomvuyo.Sam@dmre.gov.za

Ms Akhona Gushman

Master of Commerce Student

Dear Ms Gushman

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY

Your request to conduct research in the Department has reference.

This letter serves to inform you that your request to conduct research in **"The role of internal branding in employee brand citizenship behaviour: a public sector case study"** within the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy has been approved.

Kindly be informed that the Department should be provided with the copy of the research report and that this research application is only approved for academic purposes and not to be published without the consent of the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. This approval is valid until December 2025 academic year.

If you have any concerns or require additional information, kindly contact Ms Nomvuyo Sam on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully



DIRECTOR GENERAL

DATE: 30/8/2024

ANNEXURE 8: EDITOR CONFIRMATION



CONFIRMATION OF EDITING

28 October 2024

Client: Akhona Gushman
Via Email: 5T10250845@vugconnect.edu.za
Masters submission

Title: The role of employee brand citizenship behaviour in internal branding: A Public Sector case study

Dear Ms A Gushman

Thank you for the privilege of editing your submission in fulfilment of your Masters qualification entitled *The role of employee brand citizenship behaviour in internal branding: A Public Sector case study*

This letter confirms that this document has been edited :

- All grammar has been corrected.
- All punctuation and sentence construction has been corrected.
- Spelling has been corrected and standardised.
- Queries and recommendations are raised in the comments.

References:

- All references have been standardised and corrected.

All the best!

Many thanks
Dr. Ara

Dr Ara Rammond-Mansingh Ph.D (UKZN)
083-3665635
The Research Coach is part of the
DARA Group (PTY) LTD
Currie Road, Morningside, Durban
2020/067901/07