



**Role of Organisational career websites for employer brand development**

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## Role of organizational career websites for employer brand development

### Introduction

The burgeoning of social media in the talent market has been found to prompt potential talent pools to consider the employer brands of their prospective employers by visiting websites such as Glassdoor.com, Salary.com and Payscale.com when making initial applicant decisions based on salaries and company ratings (Tanwar and Prasad, 2017). Besides, ever since, the internet has become the window to the world for all banks operating in emerging market contexts and from an image management standpoint (Hinson *et al.*, 2010), corporate recruitment websites in turn are being perceived as an effective tool banks can use to position themselves as employers of choice through the design and communication of authentic employer branding (EB) strategies (Martin *et al.*, 2011). Consequently, survival in the current context of financial turmoil, calls for the crucial need to have a strong and differentiated employer brand (Bravo *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, the enthusiasm for research and practice of EB by organisations has spread drastically worldwide recently following the global financial crisis (GFC) where EB became the vital main concern of the top management team. The main objective of EB initiatives have been on talent attraction strategies throughout the financial growth period. Yet, with the cutback in staffing and headcount following the GFC, organisations transferred their attention to engagement and retention of the existing talent pool. Consequently, the economic recession has in fact had positive influences on the adoption of EB as organisations are actually recognizing the real advantages of EB as the key driver of talent attraction, engagement and retention strategies (Minchington, 2010).

Despite the takeoff of internet recruitment research (Backhaus, 2004; Lee, 2005; Kroustalis and Meade, 2007) not much has been debated regarding the career website as the communication vehicle of the employer brand. In fact there exists a paucity of available literature on the views of HR professionals on the use of the web for communicating the employer brand. Nevertheless, Bondarouk *et al.*, (2013) has focused on analyzing the perceptions of HR professionals regarding the impact of social media on employer branding. However, the views of HR professionals regarding the dissemination of the employer brand through career websites have not yet been well researched.

As a result to address this significant gap in the literature this study embarked on a journey to investigate the use of career websites to publicize the employer brand for sustainable strategic relationship management (STRM) having as research context the Mauritian Banking Sector

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3 (MBS). It is a known fact that winning the war for talent in tight labour market conditions across  
4 the globe, especially in the banking sector post GFC is the current dilemma being experienced  
5 by many banks as an aftermath of the Barclays controversy regarding highly remunerated  
6 senior HR positions (Jenkins and Goff, 2012). Consequently, the role and responsibility of the  
7 Human Resource function in winning the talent battle through the use of HRMarketing (Welsing-  
8 Boogard, 2006; Jothi, 2010) more specifically branding principles has become a must and a  
9 necessity given that branding the organization as an employer is not the same as branding it for  
10 external customers. However, many employers more specifically senior management and HR  
11 practitioners seem perplexed when their views about their respective employer brands are  
12 solicited (Universum global, 2014).  
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20 Therefore this qualitative study makes an attempt to address the existing gap in the literature  
21 regarding the utilization of the career website to broadcast the employer brand within the MBS.  
22 The core values of the Mauritius Bankers Association (MBA) revolve around an innovation  
23 culture resting on strong work ethics and team work achieved through the employment of  
24 qualified and dedicated staff. Besides, in line with the honesty and integrity core values,  
25 employees are assured to be treated with respect and dignity (Mauritius Bankers Association,  
26 2014). Accordingly, HR professionals of the MBS were considered to be the most appropriate  
27 informants to enlighten the academic and practitioners community regarding the communication  
28 of the employer brand for STRM using banks' corporate recruitment websites. Therefore the  
29 main purpose of this paper is firstly to investigate the use of career websites in the Mauritian  
30 banking sector for disseminating the employer brand and secondly to explore the  
31 communication of total rewards as part of the employer branding strategy on banks' career  
32 websites.  
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## 42 **Theoretical background**

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44 Employer branding is perceived as a precious determinant of strategic organisational  
45 competitive advantage, designed not only to attract the finest talent from the external talent pool  
46 but also to engage and retain the internal talent pool (Kucherov and Samokish, 2016). The  
47 origins of employer branding are linked to the internal marketing concept such that "Employer  
48 branding has been viewed as a pre mature and underdeveloped component of internal  
49 marketing and employer attractiveness, whereby the latter denotes the potential benefits  
50 envisaged by the external talent pool as prospective employees" (Berthon *et al.*, 2005, p.151).  
51 Consequently, the heart of the EB concept has been portrayed as the power "to attract better  
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3 candidates, as it helps them picture themselves as being a part of the corporation whereby, by  
4 using employer branding, companies show how they differ from their competitors and why the  
5 best applicants should choose to work for them” (Bondarouk *et al.*, 2013 p.27).  
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9 EB has also been described as a calculated long-standing stratagem designed to attract,  
10 engage and retain talent (Minchington, 2009). In this context, Scialpi (2016) has taken a  
11 HRMarketing stand regarding EB as fundamentally a Marketing Strategy applied to Human  
12 Resources such that just as companies realize marketing and communication activities to attract  
13 and retain high value clients, communication and marketing strategies are deployed to attract,  
14 engage and retain high value people for effective organizational performance. However as  
15 argued by Bondarouk *et al.*, (2013), EB is much more than the people within an organization, as  
16 it is a complete practice put in place to enhance the corporate image of the company as an  
17 employer of choice to current and potential talents. As a tool to gain competitive advantage, EB  
18 is also looked upon as a long-term strategy to construct an authentic and attractive employer  
19 personality to handle the opinion of future and existing talents (Bondarouk *et al.*,2013).In  
20 addition it has been reported by (Oladipo *et al.*, 2013) that the incapability of HR practitioners to  
21 design effective Human Resource policies, practices and strategies to attract, engage and retain  
22 scarce talent has triggered the birth of EB which is still undergoing a steady progress and  
23 attention around the globe. Nevertheless, numerous companies have still not yet totally  
24 appreciated the value of adopting EB initiatives. Drawing from earlier studies conducted by  
25 (Cable and Turban, 2001), Baum and Kabst (2014) have recently thrashed out three  
26 fundamental aspects of employer knowledge which they describe as the employer brand.  
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39 The first aspect ‘familiarity with the company’, sheds light on the ease with which a prospective  
40 job applicant can spot an organization as a potential employer, based on its corporate image  
41 and reputation (Gatewood *et al.*, 1993; Cable and Turban, 2003; Collins, 2007; Chunyan *et al.*,  
42 2015). Furthermore, the second element concerns employer reputation, portraying the  
43 prospective applicants’ perceptions of the organisations’ employer of choice status. Finally, the  
44 third aspect of job information depicts individual applicants’ perceptions of accuracy in job and  
45 organizational characteristics such as the career opportunities provided by the corporation,  
46 pertaining to information provided in job previews, job advertisements and career websites. As a  
47 result talent attraction is determined by the information conveyed in the employer brand.  
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54 Given that nowadays corporations have a plethora of channels to communicate their employer  
55 brand and to recruit from, it is primordial to assess which channels provide the best return on  
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3 investment based on recruiting objectives. The use of social media to communicate the  
4 employer brand has also been found to consolidate the corporate reputation of the entity  
5 (Siverentzen *et al.*, 2013; Ladkin and Buhalis,2016),given that social media information about  
6 potential applicants are a useful means to predict person–organization fit (Van Iddekinge *et*  
7 *al.*,2016). Nevertheless, the real benefits of social media on talent attraction would only be  
8 reaped through the design and communication of an authentic employer branding strategy  
9 (Priyadarshini *et al.*,2017).Besides, despite social media being described as the main activity  
10 being undertaken by companies to enhance their employer brand, career website development  
11 continues to rate highly along with recruitment advertising, employment marketing and  
12 recruitment branding (Minchington, 2014; Novak,2017). Thus a study conducted by Minchington  
13 (2013; 2014), revealed that 20% of potential applicants considered organisational career  
14 websites as their preferred recruitment channel. Besides, potential applicants are increasingly  
15 being attracted by career websites such that more than 97% of job seekers explore job  
16 opportunities by accessing employers' corporate recruitment websites (Singh, 2017)  
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### 28 **Career websites**

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30 Potential applicants have a tendency to critically scrutinize employment related information  
31 provided on career websites to determine organizational attractiveness (Hu *et al.*, 2009;Ladkin  
32 and Buhalis,2016). However, despite being the most usual channel and touchpoint recently,  
33 online recruitment has not yet positioned itself as the leading recruitment method (Parry and  
34 Wilson, 2009; Singh, 2017). This may be attributed to the fact that it is still perceived to be  
35 depersonalized given that there are some reservations concerning the handling of the process  
36 and the integrity of the job advertisements (Brando *et al.*, 2017). In spite of this, based on  
37 previous research conducted by (Landers and Schmidt, 2016; McDonald and Thompson, 2016),  
38 Hooley (2017) posits that organizations as employers are making considerable use of the  
39 internet for the purpose of talent attraction in the recruitment and screening of potential job  
40 applicants. Furthermore, a thorough scrutinization of the top ten Forbes listed Saudi corporate  
41 websites by Khan (2017) revealed that potential talents were attracted by organizations having  
42 attractive corporate and career websites. Likewise, commercial banks are making use of career  
43 websites to portray the banks' specific employer image such that an online search of banks'  
44 career websites disclose unique arrangement of information targeted at the talent market  
45 (Amine *et al.*, 2013).  
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Career websites have been designed for communicating both the employer and internal branding strategies such that major banks from the global banking industry for instance have a web link dedicated to training and orientation as key components of their career websites (e.g. goldmansachs.com; Baraclays.com). Furthermore, research in the field of e-recruitment suggest that the nature of information available on organization websites and career web pages has a strong impact on potential applicants perceived person-organization fit and person job fit as well as intention to apply (Gardener *et al.*, 2012; Scialpi, 2016). Similarly, it has also been reported that development and career related information of job previews displayed on career websites normally triggers inquisitiveness and delight amongst potential applicants (Priyadarshini *et al.*, 2017). In the same way, several studies have been conducted to analyze talent attraction to organisations' career websites (Williamson *et al.*, 2003; Backhaus 2004; Williamson *et al.*, 2010; Walker *et al.*, 2009; Cable and Yu 2006; Lievens, *et al.*, 2007). However, the majority of these studies have either focused on fictitious websites or sectors, but not yet on a specific sector thus giving rise to a research gap which the present study aims to address by targeting the banking sector. An examination of corporate recruitment websites of familiar banks such as Goldman Sachs, Barclays, and HSBC in the global sectors has disclosed the existence of a career corner directing potential applicants to relevant information regarding the work environment, realistic job previews including rewards, benefits as well as development opportunities.

Additionally, the literature on e-recruitment highlights the existence of three main purposes of career websites namely recruitment orientation, screening orientation and dual purpose orientation (Williamson *et al.*, 2003). The use of screening orientation has also permitted the attraction of higher quality talent pools for actual web-based job advertisements due to the provision of precise information to support potential applicants to self-evaluate and self-screen their fit to the job position (Dineen and Williamson, 2012).

Another gap in the literature is identified at this point, since general studies have been carried out on commercial banks' corporate websites (Bravo *et al.*, 2011, 2012; Amine, 2013) with few studies on career websites across sectors (Backhaus, 2004; Zamparini *et al.*, 2010) but not specifically in the banking sector. Certain studies relied on fictitious career websites (Williamson and Lepak, 2003; Walker *et al.*, 2009; Lievens *et al.*, 2007; Thompson *et al.*, 2008; Priyadarshini *et al.*, 2017) whereas others relied on real company websites mostly fortune best places to work (Lee, 2005; Braddy *et al.*, 2008; Young and Foot 2005; Cober *et al.*, 2004).



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3 Generally, the key informants of these previous studies have been undergraduate and graduate  
4 students at specific universities who have been answering to survey questions in computer labs  
5 either after or while viewing specific career websites (Cable and Yu 2006; Williamson and  
6 Lepak, 2003, Marcel *et al.*, 2008). Regarding the impact of the content of career websites on  
7 talent attraction, previous research has indicated the positive effects of communicating  
8 compensation, career information in realistic job previews either using traditional or web  
9 recruitment methods on initial talent attraction (Cober *et al.*, 2003). Former studies have also  
10 widely employed content analysis as the main tool to scrutinize corporate websites (Srivasta *et*  
11 *al.*, 2009) as well as corporate recruitment websites (Lee, 2005, Backhaus, 2004). However, a  
12 dearth of relevant research portraying the views of HR professionals on the use of career  
13 websites to communicate the employer brand is evident . Having provided an overview of the  
14 contents of career websites, the next section focuses on the total rewards components aspects  
15 of the employer brand displayed through career websites to address the second research  
16 objective of the study.

### 25 26 **The Total rewards component of the employer brand and career websites**

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28 Based on an empirical study conducted in the Indian IT sector, Tanwar and Prasad (2017)  
29 strongly recommend the incorporation of compensation, benefits, development and career  
30 opportunities as well as work life balance, the four key components of the total rewards strategy  
31 as core elements of the employer brand to assist organizations in facing the challenges involved  
32 in the attraction, engagement and retention of talent.

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34 Likewise, the incorporation of the total rewards components in the employer brand has recently  
35 been proposed to enable organizations to differentiate themselves in the competitive talent  
36 market to win the ever tough war for talent (Schlechter *et al.*, 2015). Hence the need to  
37 communicate the total reward components as part of the EB strategy becomes a leeway to  
38 harness authenticity. Besides, the notion of authentic voice engendered by Harquail, (2009) has  
39 been put forward by (Martin *et al.*, 2011) to sustain the uniqueness of the employer brand since  
40 “authentic voice refers to the expression of self identity created when people are empowered to  
41 speak the truth about themselves, when they tell us what they know about themselves, when  
42 they are allowed to argue for what they care about, when they tell the world how they see things  
43 from their unique perspective and when they argue for their own wisdom, in their unique way”  
44 (p.14). Correspondingly, a comparison of the contents section of Cober *et al.*, (2004) career  
45 website dimensions displaying employment related information show the presence of the five  
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3 total rewards components which is illustrated by compensation, salary, benefits, work life,  
4 performance and recognition exemplified by employee testimonials and profile of star  
5 employees and finally development and career opportunities which is accounted by the training  
6 aspect proposed by Cober *et al.*, (2004).  
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10 Moreover, a study carried out by the world at work association on EB and total rewards in  
11 (2010) has revealed the capital importance of integrating total reward as a core element of the  
12 employer brand for the purpose of differentiation in the talent market. The study further  
13 discloses the emptiness state of an employer brand in the absence of the total reward  
14 component as the authentic stuffing. In contrast a total reward oriented employer brand  
15 embellishes the employee value proposition rendering the employment relationship deal  
16 underlying the psychological contract more meaningful. In addition many employers aspire to  
17 align total reward to the employer brand to guarantee that they uphold to the promise of  
18 positioning the organisation as a great place to work, to eventually sustain talent engagement  
19 as part of the STRM process (CIPD and Mercer, 2010).  
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27 The literature synthesis can be concluded with the following conceptual framework as displayed  
28 in figure 1. The conceptual framework portrays the employer brand depicting the total rewards  
29 components which matches the employment related information of Cober *et al.*,(2004) career  
30 website dimensions. The conceptual framework also illustrates the ultimate purpose of EB,  
31 “STRM” achieved having as vehicle the career website.  
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36 **INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE**  
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### 39 **Research context and Methodology**

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41 This research adopted a case study approach with the aim of examining a particular  
42 phenomenon the employer brand disseminated through organisations' career websites within a  
43 particular context the banking sector (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2013). The premise of  
44 this paper has been to investigate the utilization of banks' career website to communicate the  
45 total rewards components of the employer branding strategy. Likewise, given that the context of  
46 the study is the MBS, the career websites of the 21 banks from the MBS were scrutinized to  
47 identify the communication of the Towers Watson (2013) total rewards model comprising of  
48 compensation, benefits, development and career opportunities, work life balance and  
49 performance and recognition as core components the EB strategy. In order to identify the  
50 presence of the five total rewards components on banks' career websites, qualitative content  
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3 analysis having as basis the content section of career websites pertaining to employment  
4 related information proposed by Cober *et al.*, (2004) was used.  
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7 Furthermore, in line with the purpose of this study, the research population comprised of MBS  
8 HR professionals who are fully cognizant about employer branding and career websites. The  
9 number of interviews was selected using the theoretical saturation method given that the usual  
10 premise governing the use of semi structured interviews in qualitative research is that sufficient  
11 interviews are conducted till similarities and saturation is reached (Mason,2010; Fusch and  
12 Ness, 2015). Previous qualitative studies (e.g.Gilani *et al.*, 2016) reached saturation with a  
13 sample size of 12 whereas (Lukea-Bhiwajee and Garavan, 2016) purposive sample comprised  
14 of 16 participants. Similarly, Hess and Kelman (2017) gathered their qualitative data from 9  
15 participants in a SIDS context. Likewise, Kemp and Zhao (2016) collected their qualitative data  
16 from a sample of only 19 Emirati participants. In the current study, saturation was reached with  
17 27 HR practitioners. As a result, the views of the 27 HR practitioners from the 13 banks who  
18 participated in this qualitative study comprising of HR directors, reward managers and talent  
19 managers, were gathered through semi-structured interviews which lasted for 60 to 90 minutes.  
20 The Mauritian Bankers' Association website was used to obtain the contact details of banks. All  
21 the interviews were conducted in English and were digitally recorded with the participants'  
22 permission. Additionally, detailed notes were also taken simultaneously during the interviews.  
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33 Furthermore, for confidentiality purposes, the banks' real identities have been concealed in  
34 the analysis and discussion. As a result, multinational banks having a branch in Mauritius have  
35 been referred to as MNE HQ UK for example if the headquarters is located in the UK and MNE  
36 HQ France when the MNE is located in France. The 27 participants have been referred to as P1  
37 to P27 with the corresponding HR position such as P3 HR manager MNE HQ France. Similarly  
38 Mauritian banks have been referred to as MB for example P 15 Group Head of HR MB 6  
39 denoting the sixth Mauritian bank having participated in the study. Table 1 below provides  
40 details regarding the job positions of the participants.  
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47 **INSERT TABLE 1 HERE**  
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## 49 **Findings and analysis**

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51 Qualitative data were analysed using the coding method whereby in the first instance concepts  
52 and categories related to the content section of career websites as defined by (Cober *et al.*,  
53 2004) were considered as benchmark for the identification of the presence of the five  
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3 components of the total rewards model on banks' career websites. Therefore, the respective  
4 career websites of the 21 banks of the MBS were scrutinized having as basis the contents  
5 section of Cober *et al.*, (2004) career website dimensions. Consequently, the employment  
6 related information depicting the five total rewards components of compensation, salary,  
7 benefits, work life, performance and recognition exemplified by employee testimonials and  
8 profile of star employees and finally development and career opportunities (Cober *et al.*, 2004)  
9 were isolated on the banks' career websites.  
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15 Moreover, the semi structured interviews provided further in depth insights on the  
16 communication of the total rewards components of the employer brand by the career websites.  
17 The interviews were fully transcribed as per standard qualitative techniques (Glaser and  
18 Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1998) and data analysis was guided by the Braun and Clark  
19 (2006) thematic analysis framework. Key concepts from the literature related to the total  
20 rewards contents of the employer brand displayed on banks' career websites were brought to  
21 the data for the purpose of coding and data interpretation. As a result, main and subthemes  
22 pertaining to the communication of total rewards through the banks' career websites emerged to  
23 give shape to the findings. Attempts were made to maximize the rigor element required of  
24 qualitative studies (confirmability, dependability, credibility, transferability and applicability) in  
25 line with the guidelines provided by (Krippendorff, 2012). Additionally, to amplify reproducibility,  
26 the transcripts were coded and analyzed by two research assistants separately. Consequently,  
27 the codes and corresponding quotations were analyzed and organized into relevant themes.  
28 Following the coding exercise, the researchers compared and discussed the differences in  
29 findings and interpretations. The findings on which the researchers disagreed were omitted as  
30 recommended by (Ballafkih *et al.*, 2017).  
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41 Furthermore, the guidelines of "pattern matching" and comparative methods to draw  
42 conclusions (Yin, 1994) assisted in the consolidation of the findings. Patterns were detected  
43 from the interview transcripts through the thematic analysis process, which subsequently  
44 uncovered three main themes:  
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- 47 • The employer brand communicated by MBS banks' career website
  - 48 • The need for career website revamping
  - 49 • Career websites displaying total reward component of the employer brand
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53 These themes derived from the thematic analysis process are displayed in table 2 below. The  
54 pattern matching exercise carried out with sample relevant text extracts supporting the  
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3 corresponding themes is also clearly demonstrated. The integral text extracts have  
4 consequently assisted in the in depth discussion of the findings.  
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9 **INSERT TABLE 2 HERE**  
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## 11 12 **Discussion**

### 13 14 **The employer brand communicated by MBS banks' career website** 15

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17 MBS HR practitioners confessed that presently their respective banks' career websites can be  
18 mostly categorized as being recruitment oriented (Williamson *et al.*, 2003). Nevertheless the  
19 desire to upgrade to screening orientation for effective STRM is in the pipeline. Moreover  
20 according to the rewards and benefits manager at MB6, all jobs are advertised internally first on  
21 the intranet and then externally on the career webpage. Nevertheless, the career websites of  
22 Mauritian banks is viewed by HR practitioners to be not enough interactive in the absence of  
23 employee testimonials, animations and videos. Therefore, HR practitioners want more effort to  
24 be exercised by their team to portray the employer brand on their respective career websites.  
25 Some relevant affirmations made by HR professionals such as P 17 HR operations manager at  
26 MB 6 and P20 Talent management specialist at MB 6 can be observed from table 2 above.  
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33 In the same way, P19 the HR services manager at MB6 appeared worried that the actual career  
34 website is not very effective in communicating the employer brand. He believed that it needed to  
35 be more dynamic and interactive with more vibrancy by including employee testimonials. He  
36 also proposed adding a section for applicants to answer questions and obtain a prompt reply  
37 thereby facilitating self-selection (Ryan *et al.*, 2000) and job,organization,brand and culture fit  
38 objectives as suggested by existing literature (kristoff- Brown, 2000; Hurell and Scholarios,  
39 2013).  
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45 Consequently, HR professionals suggested placing more emphasis on screening orientation  
46 while at the same upgrading the interactivity element of the function section of the career  
47 website. Similarly, participants revealed that the global career websites reflect the employer of  
48 choice status of the MNEs and portrays the global employer brand as stated by one Head of  
49 HR: "*The group career website tries to portray employer of choice status and the publicizing of*  
50 *employer awards. However no local career website has been designed to date*". P4 Head of HR  
51 *MNE HQ South Africa*  
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3 As a result, no customised local career website reflecting the local employer brand is yet  
4 available since the employer brand is still at conceptual stage and once ready it will be  
5 displayed on the revamped career website. Other reflections regarding the utilization of the  
6 career website for publicizing the employer brand greatly contributed to unearth the views of the  
7 HR professionals as can be gleaned from the following statement.  
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12 *“Internal and external recruitment depend on different communication means. The external*  
13 *career website is carefully formulated, with little and basic information. Communication should*  
14 *aim at engaging talents to the employer brand.” P 10 HR officer MB 1*  
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17 The honest communication of the employer brand on the career website was also  
18 recommended by HR professionals. The core values of a bank reflecting the employer brand  
19 being clearly displayed on their respective career website depicts the type of talents the bank  
20 wants to recruit. It further demonstrates organizational culture and prospective brand fit (Bouton,  
21 2015; Hurell and Scholarios, 2013; Nazir 2005; Kristoff-Brown, 2000).  
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26 Furthermore, the HR manager of an Indian MNE bank shared that the position of the bank as an  
27 employer is well defined and relevant information about the work environment is provided on the  
28 career website. In addition, the HR staff also emphasize on the need to provide accurate  
29 information on the career website for the employer brand to be effective (Martin *et al.*, 2011),  
30 which supports the literature governing the honesty feature of the employer brand as per the  
31 signaling theory (Spence, 1973; Connelly *et al.*, 2011; Bangerter *et al.*, 2012; Celani and Singh,  
32 2011).  
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38 *“The position of the bank as an employer is well defined and relevant information about*  
39 *the work environment is provided on the career website. We need to provide accurate*  
40 *information as honesty is important.” P2 HR manager MNE HQ India B*  
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43 Likewise, the HR officer of a major South African MNE confirms the presence of a career  
44 section on the bank’s corporate website where the message from the CEO about the bank, the  
45 strategy of the bank locally and globally is well communicated. The participant also shared that  
46 the communication of the South African graduate program is made simultaneously on the global  
47 corporate and career websites. Consequently, the HR department in Mauritius is actually  
48 working on a local graduate programme which has been depicted as campus recruiting and  
49 internships in previous studies by (Cober *et al.*, 2004).  
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3 *"I am fully aware of the career section on the corporate website where the Message from CEO*  
4 *about the bank, the strategy of the bank locally and globally is well communicated. The South*  
5 *African graduate program is available on the global corporate and career website .Consequently*  
6 *the HR staff in Mauritius are actually working on a local graduate programme". P5 HR officer*  
7 *MNE South Africa*

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11 In contrast, the vice president of Finance at MB 5 who is responsible for people management at  
12 the bank confessed the absence of a career website to communicate the bank's employer  
13 brand.  
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17 *"The bank does not possess a formal career website, however the core values such as ethics is*  
18 *present on the corporate website. The corporate website briefly talks about the values of the*  
19 *bank, however the bank does not have a formal career website or even a link on the corporate*  
20 *website related to career up to now". P 14 Vice president of Finance MB 5*

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23 The above statement by the Vice President of finance confirms the crucial role of HR  
24 professionals in ensuring that banks as organisations possess a well-designed career website  
25 to communicate their respective employer brands for the attraction, engagement and retention  
26 of talents. In this particular case it can be deduced that since the responsibility for HR has been  
27 attributed to a finance professional, not enough effort is being dispensed to the employer  
28 branding strategy itself.  
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### 30 31 32 33 **The need for career website Revamping**

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36 Most of the banks are currently in the process of revamping their career websites even though  
37 few find it quite accessible in its present attire as confirmed by the rewards manager at MNE HQ  
38 UK A who professed that: *"The career website needs a lot of revamping. It should be more*  
39 *attractive in terms of employee sharing their experiences and how easy it is for applicants to*  
40 *apply that is in terms of user friendliness. Not all components are present. However,*  
41 *Assignment opportunities, Learning opportunities and the term Competitive remuneration*  
42 *packages are communicated". P7 Rewards manager MNE HQ UK A*  
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48 As a result, HR practitioners of the MBS have expressed their desire to urgently embark on the  
49 revamping journey of their existing career websites. Such a decision would encourage a greater  
50 number of potential applicants to apply for job positions. This was captured by the comments  
51 made by the Head of HR at one of the major banks and provides useful insights for  
52 consideration by the global HR community. *"The revamped career website would reflect the*  
53 *employer branding strategy. It will also exhibit success stories through employee testimonials.*  
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3 *Career opportunities offered provides the ability to see global opportunities. The total rewards*  
4 *components are not yet displayed. Only general information is available on the local career*  
5 *website, however, the global career website offers more detailed information". P8 Head of HR*  
6 *MNE HQ UK A*  
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10 In addition the need to include a testimonials section (Walker *et al.*, 2009) on the career page  
11 has also been recommended by the Head of HR & Change of one bank.  
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13 Moreover, MBS HR professionals additionally evoked the provision of screening orientation  
14 (Williamson *et al.*, 2003) to allow more interactivity as supported by the following text extract:  
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17 *"The career website needs a lot of revamping. It should be more attractive in terms of employee*  
18 *sharing their experiences and how easy it is for applicants to apply that is in terms of user*  
19 *friendliness." P7 Rewards manager MNE HQ UK A*  
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23 Furthermore, the HR professionals proposed the idea of having a better display of the employer  
24 brand on the career website.  
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27 *"The career website does not really reflect the employer brand and needs to be revamped and*  
28 *reworded. A simplified job description is available on the career website without providing many*  
29 *details on the total reward components." P3 HR manager MNE France*  
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33 *"The present career page does not really reflect the EB strategy which is being developed right*  
34 *now. Thus, the career website is being revamped. P 15 Group Head of HR MB 6*  
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37 The views expressed by MBS HR practitioners regarding the revamping of their respective  
38 banks' career websites provide rich insights for the MBS to position itself as the employer of  
39 choice amidst the challenges involved in the war for talent.  
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#### 41 42 **Career websites displaying the total reward component of the employer brand** 43

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45 A close analysis of the welcome and opening statements of the career websites of the 21 banks  
46 of the MBS reveal the communication of total reward strategy, whereas the content section of  
47 career websites disclose only introductory information on the five total rewards components.  
48 This fact is further confirmed by the statements made by one HR officer: *"Brief mention of work-*  
49 *life balance, performance and career development appear on the career website." P5 HR officer*  
50 *MNE HQ South Africa* and one talent management coordinator: *"General information on Total*  
51 *rewards is displayed on the career website." P 24 Talent management coordinator MB 6* and the  
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3 group Head of HR at a major bank: *"The total rewards components have not yet been fully*  
4 *included on the career website."* P 15 Group Head of HR MB 6

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7 Moreover, a detailed scrutinisation of the career website content section analysis using the  
8 Cober *et al.*, (2004) dimensions, revealed the presence of the Towers Watson (2013) total  
9 rewards components which is further confirmed by the following statements from the MBS HR  
10 professionals:  
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14 *"The total rewards components are briefly mentioned at MB1."* P 10 HR officer MB 1

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16 *"The total rewards components have not yet been displayed in details but in general"* P 17 HR  
17 *operations manager MB 6*

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20 *"Only general information on total rewards are displayed on the career website."* P 23 Talent  
21 *management coordinator MB 6*

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23 Likewise, despite the concern expressed regarding career website revamping, MBS HR  
24 practitioners are still reluctant to fully consider the holistic dissemination of the compensation  
25 component of their total rewards strategy on their respective career websites. The main reason  
26 being that compensation is still being viewed as 'confidential'. This finding contradicts previous  
27 studies by Cober *et al.*, (2004) and Williamson *et al.*, (2003) who recommended the  
28 communication of compensation and benefits.  
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31 Correspondingly the following statement by the Head of HR of a South African MNE buttresses  
32 the current finding from the MBS: *"These details about the compensation and benefits*  
33 *components of total rewards are quite confidential and are thus not communicated on the career*  
34 *website"* P4 Head of HR MNE HQ South Africa which is supported by the other HR  
35 professionals having participated in the study such as the following views expressed by one HR  
36 manager:  
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39 *"Excluding compensation all the other components are present on the career website."* P2 HR  
40 *manager MNE HQ India B*

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43 In addition, the analysis of the contents of MBS banks' career websites contradict Cober *et al.*,  
44 (2004) research findings by straightforwardly providing an overview of the performance and  
45 recognition initiatives of the banks.  
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48 Furthermore, MBS HR professionals have also voiced out their opinion regarding the inclusion  
49 and communication of the total rewards elements as the core foundation of the EB strategy and  
50 profess that detailed information regarding the individual components differs across banks  
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3 which according to HR professionals reflect the culture of the bank concerned. As a result, very  
4 brief overview has been provided regarding compensation and benefits packages, development  
5 and career opportunities, performance and recognition and work life balance.  
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9 For instance the career website of MNE HQ UK A displays just “recognition and bonus,  
10 retirement benefits, travel benefits”, whereas the career website of MNE HQ India B only briefly  
11 mentions “attractive compensation and benefits”. On the other hand MNE HQ UK B displays  
12 “development and career opportunities, recognition as well as work life balance initiatives” on its  
13 career website. Likewise, the employer brand communicated by the career website of MB 6  
14 exhibits the bank’s “development and career opportunities, recognition, work life balance,  
15 compensation and recognition initiatives, while emphasizing on the “handsome rewards”  
16 provided as well as the “entrenched performance culture”. Nevertheless, all jobs posted exclude  
17 compensation details as MB6 wants employees to be motivated by the job not the money. In  
18 addition, standardized benefits are communicated on the employee corner for all grades, yet  
19 only introductory information about compensation is mirrored on the career website.  
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27 In the same way the majority of HR professionals have agreed to the fact that only general brief  
28 information about the total rewards components are displayed on the career websites of their  
29 respective banks. Some have emphasized on the presence of development and career  
30 opportunities, and others on performance and recognition. It is also interesting to note that the  
31 Rewards and Benefits manager at a major Mauritian bank confessed that “*details about the total*  
32 *rewards components are present only on the intranet and not the career website*” implying that  
33 the existence of discrepancies regarding the internal branding strategy for internal recruitment  
34 and the EB strategy targeted at the external talent pool.  
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40 Besides, the HR officer at a South African MNE bank professed that brief details of work-life  
41 balance, performance and career development are in fact mentioned on the career website. In  
42 the same way the Rewards manager at MNE HQ UK A asserted that assignment opportunities,  
43 learning opportunities and only the term “Competitive remuneration packages” are  
44 communicated as part of the EB strategy through the career website. Moreover, the Head of HR  
45 of the same bank added that in fact the total rewards components are not yet fully displayed and  
46 only general information is available on the local career website. However, the global career  
47 website offers more detailed information without going into much detail since these are  
48 perceived to be very confidential information according to the HR practitioners. The following  
49 extract buttress the views expressed by MNE HR professionals.  
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3 “Career opportunities offered provide the ability to see global opportunities. The total rewards  
4 components are not yet displayed. Only general information is available on the local career  
5 website, however, the global career website offers more detailed information”. P8 Head of HR  
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7 MNE HQ UK A  
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10 The views of the MBS HR professionals show their reluctance to provide extant details on the  
11 total rewards components of the employer brand on the banks’ career websites, which they  
12 have attributed to the competitive culture prevailing in the Mauritian talent market. However, as  
13 illustrated by figure 1 the conceptual framework, the thematic analysis outcome (table 2)  
14 portraying the empirical findings confirm the presence of the total rewards components as a  
15 core aspect of the employer brand disseminated through banks’ organisational career websites.  
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## 20 **Conclusion**

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22 The career websites of Mauritian banks is viewed by HR practitioners not to be enough  
23 interactive without employee testimonials, animations and videos. The core values of the banks  
24 reflecting the employer brand is clearly displayed on the career website which depicts the type  
25 of talents the bank wants to recruit. However, HR professionals would like more effort to be  
26 exercised by their team to portray the employer brand on their respective banks’ career website.  
27 Most of the banks are currently in the process of revamping their career websites even though  
28 few find it quite accessible in its present attire. The general opinion shared by MBS HR  
29 professionals is to provide equal attention to the form, content and function sections of the  
30 career website. Moreover the adoption of a screening orientation on top of the existing  
31 recruitment career website orientation would more effectively portray the employer brand. At the  
32 same time mixed views are shared regarding the sharing of detailed information about the total  
33 rewards strategy specifically compensation and benefits as the core element of the employer  
34 brand conveyed via the career websites. The main causes of resistance include the corporate  
35 and national culture as well as the need to maintain confidentiality for greater competitiveness to  
36 eventually win the talent war.  
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## 46 **Theoretical and practical implications**

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48 This study provides rich insights on the communication of the employer brand using  
49 organisational career websites from the HR professionals’ perspective, an underdeveloped  
50 research area to date. The methodology used in previous research (Zamparini *et al.*,  
51 2010, Williamson *et al.*, 2010, Walker *et al.*, 2009; Backhaus, 2004; Cober *et al.* , 2004)  
52 discussed in the literature on the employer brand using career websites reveals a purely  
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3 quantitative orientation (use of correlation and regression analysis, cluster analysis) stemming  
4 from a holistic positivist paradigm which creates a dearth of qualitative research and gap which  
5 the current study has made an attempt to address by adopting a qualitative approach. More so,  
6 in contrast to previous studies, the current study contributes to the e-recruitment literature by  
7 providing an HR practitioners' perspective to the communication of the employer brand having  
8 as vehicle the career website. Given the existing dearth of research on the HR professionals'  
9 views and perceptions on the dissemination of the employer brand through the career website,  
10 this study presents immense benefits to the HR profession. In the first instance, it is an  
11 encouragement to make use of the career website to publicize the employer brand. Secondly  
12 the whole organization as an entity will be involved to ensure the honest communication of the  
13 corporate values and culture through the employer brand thereby embracing the signaling  
14 theory (Spence, 1973; Connelly *et al.*, 2011; Bangerter *et al.*, 2012; Celani and Singh 2011) as  
15 strongly recommended by (Vinayak *et al.*, 2017) for effective talent attraction, engagement and  
16 retention.  
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### 27 **Limitations**

28 This qualitative study was not immune to limitations. Data were obtained from only HR  
29 professionals from a single sector which may limit the ability to generalize the findings to a wider  
30 spectrum of organizations and industries. Compounding this limitation is the fact that the chosen  
31 sector was the one mostly affected by the tarnished reputation of the HR profession as an  
32 aftermath of the GFC (Jenkins and Goff, 2012). Nonetheless, the study was restricted to the  
33 banking sector and HR practitioners' perspective. Certain banks are still skeptical regarding  
34 their EB strategy and therefore some participants were hesitant to provide factual comments on  
35 its dissemination through the career websites. As a result, the HR professionals have been quite  
36 thrifty to share their views on the communication of total rewards having the corporate  
37 recruitment website as vehicle. Nevertheless given the fact that successful EB relies on  
38 departmental collaboration (Minchington, 2014), the views of the other departmental managers  
39 such as MBS marketing and communications professionals have not been considered, mostly  
40 due to the dearth of research from an HR professionals' perspective as previously pointed out.  
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### 51 **Future research directions**

52 It would be interesting to investigate the views of the external talent pool potential applicants on  
53 the attractiveness of the career websites in terms of the five total rewards components followed  
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3 by a study on the views of the internal talent pool on the career website not only HR staff.  
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5 Consideration can also be given to other industry sectors as well. Moreover, the views of  
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7 communications and marketing staff on their contribution to the career websites will also be  
8  
9 beneficial. As a result, it would be interesting to get the views marketing and communications  
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11 professionals on the use of the career website for the communication of the employer brand  
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13 which can be taken up as future research directions. Thus, it would be interesting to have the  
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15 views of the marketing and communication staff on the specific design requirements of the  
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17 career website to effectively portray the employer brand. Furthermore it is also imperative to  
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19 gather the views of senior management on the use of career websites for competitiveness and  
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21 differentiation and its impact on the corporate reputation and image of the entity.  
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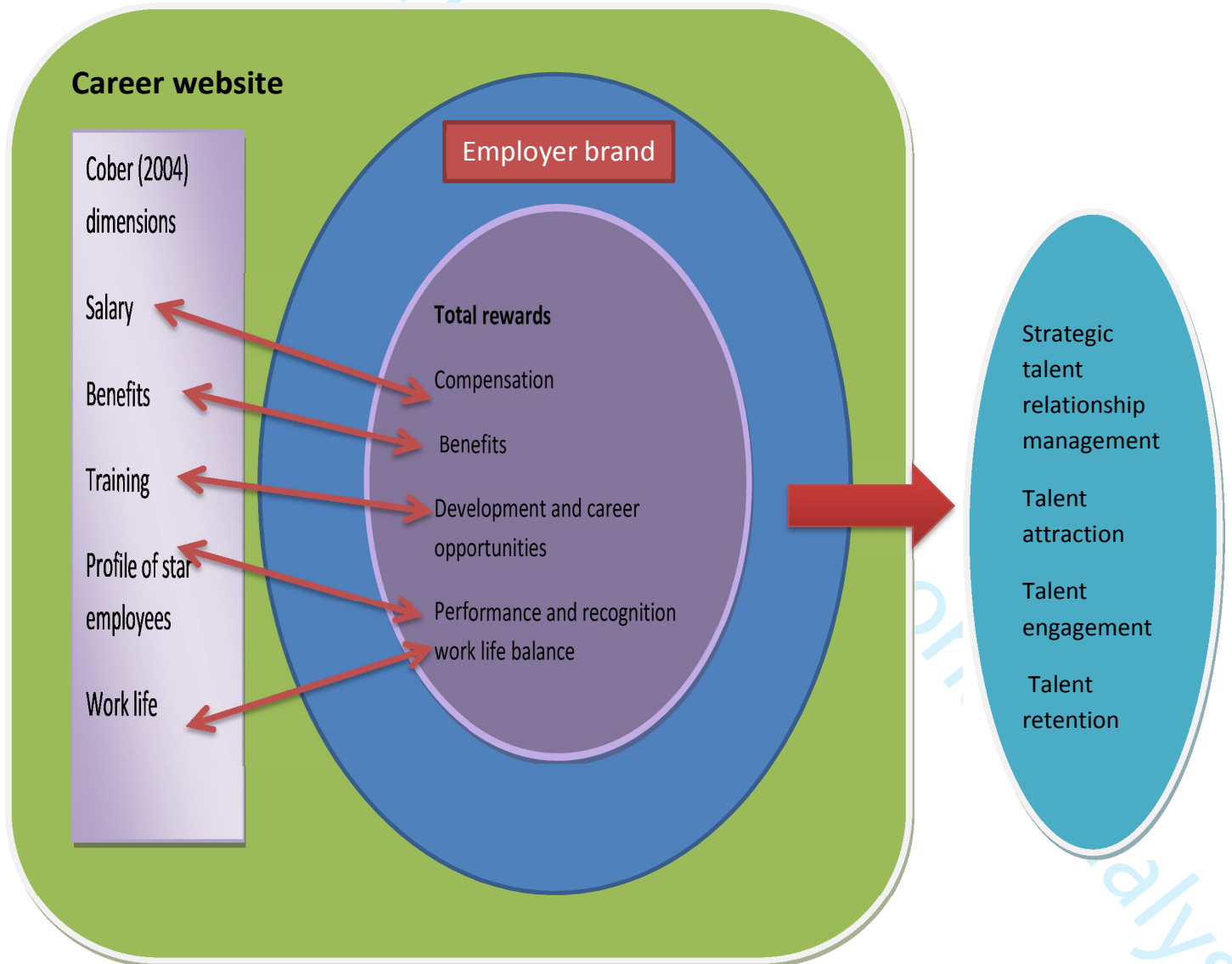
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Figure 1: conceptual framework



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**Table 1: Participants' profile**

Participant No./bank status	Job title	Years of experience in HR profession banking sector
P1 MNE HQ India A	Manager HR/Administration	26
P2 MNE HQ India B	HR manager	14
P3 MNE HQ France	HR manager	13
P4 MNE HQ South Africa	Head of HR	25
P5 MNE HQ South Africa	HR officer	3
P6 MNE HQ UK A	Resourcing manager	14
P7 MNE HQ UK A	Reward Manager	4
P8 MNE HQ UK A	Head of HR	16
P9 MNE HQ UK B	HR manager	16
P10 MB 1	HR position customer service representative	4
P11 MB 2	Head of HR and Change	4
P12 MB 3	HR Consultant	15
P13 MB 4	HR Head	3
P14 MB 5	Vice President of Finance	2 years in HR, 14 years in Financial
P15 MB 6	Group Head of Human Resources	30
P16 MB 6	Learning and Talent Manager	8
P17 MB 6	HR operations Manager	9

P18 MB 6	Rewards & benefits Manager	21
P19 MB 6	HR services Manager	14
P20 MB 6	Talent Management Specialist	12
P21 MB 6	Talent Management Specialist	12
P22 MB 6	Talent Management Specialist	4
P23 MB 6	Talent Management Coordinator	17
P24 MB 6	Talent Management Coordinator	14
P25 MB 6	HR Business Partner	6
P26 MB 6	HR Business Partner	7
P27 MB 6	HR Business Partner	10

**Table 2: Thematic analysis outcome**

Theme	Participant details	Text extract
The employer brand communicated by MBS banks' career website	P17 HR operations manager MB6	<i>More details need to be provided on the internal career website and the HR team is actually working on the detailed EB strategy for the career website."</i>
	P20 Talent management specialist MB6	"More thoughts need to be given on how the career website should fully incorporate the employer brand"
	P4 Head of HR MNE HQ South Africa	"The group career website tries to portray employer of choice status and the publicizing of employer awards. However no local career website has been designed to date".
	P10 HR officer MB1	"Internal and external recruitment depend on different communication means. The external career website is carefully formulated, with little and basic information. Communication should aim at engaging talents to the employer brand".
The need for career website revamping	P7 Rewards manager MNE HQ UK A	"The career website needs a lot of revamping. It should be more attractive in terms of employee sharing their experiences and how easy it is for applicants to apply that is in terms of user friendliness. Not all components are present. However, Assignment opportunities, Learning opportunities and the term Competitive remuneration packages are communicated".
	P8 Head of HR MNE HQ UK A	"The recently revamped career website would reflect the employer branding strategy. It will also exhibit success stories through employee testimonials. Career opportunities offered provides the ability to see global opportunities. The total rewards components



		are not yet displayed. Only general information is available on the local career website, however, the global career website offers more detailed information”.
	P7 Rewards manager MNE HQ UK A	“The career website needs a lot of revamping. It should be more attractive in terms of employee sharing their experiences and how easy it is for applicants to apply that is in terms of user friendliness. Not all components are present. However, Assignment opportunities, Learning opportunities and the term Competitive remuneration packages are communicated”.
Career websites displaying the total reward component of the employer brand	P5 HR officer MNE HQ South Africa	Brief mention of work-life balance, performance and career development appear on the career website.”
	P24 Talent management coordinator  MB6	“General information on Total rewards are displayed on the career website.”
	P15 Group Head of HR  MB6	The total rewards components have not yet been fully included on the career website.”
	P4 Head of HR MNE HQ South Africa	These details about the compensation and benefits components of total rewards are quite confidential and are thus not communicated on the career website”