THE ROLE OF INTERNAL BRANDING IN IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA POWER

by

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APPROVAL

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I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

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<tr>
<td>KP</td>
<td>Kenya Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>KPLC</td>
<td>Kenya Power and Lighting Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>KPC</td>
<td>Kenya Power Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>NACOSTI</td>
<td>National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
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<td>IMC</td>
<td>Integrated Marketing Communication</td>
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess the role of internal branding on a company’s customer service delivery, with a specific focus on Kenya Power (KP). The objectives guiding the study were to establish the communication methods employed to educate employees about KP’s brand, evaluate the challenges encountered during internal branding at KP, and determine the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery at KP. The study was guided by the corporate image and identity building theory. A mixed-methods approach was used, and a questionnaire and interview were utilized to collect data from KP employees. Data obtained through the questionnaire and interview was processed and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0. The qualitative data was subjected to descriptive statistics, while correlation analysis, using Pearson Chi-square was utilized in the quantitative data analysis. The study established that KP educates its employees about its brand through trainings (50.0%) and internal meetings (49.4%), with the mostly used communication channels being notice boards (89.4%) and memos (38.8%). The study also established that when employees share similar values and have more knowledge about the company’s brand, the chances of kindling their performance will be higher. The study concluded that internal communication influences employees’ brand attitudes and behavior, subsequently enhancing service delivery. Consequently, the study recommends KP’s adoption of internal branding as a change strategy towards enhancing the company’s customer service delivery. Another recommendation is the creation of adequate awareness covering all the expected and actual dimensions of internal branding majorly to curb the challenge of unawareness among KP employees.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother, Perpetuah Nyambura, for her strong belief in the acquiring of a proper education and her constant encouragement through my entire study journey.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Internal branding refers to the activities taken by an organization to ensure intellectual and emotional staff buy-in into the organization’s corporate culture and the specific brand personality invoked within this culture (Patla & Pandit, 2012). Internal branding centers on what should be done in-house to project the company’s desired image to the outside. Customers are a vital asset to any company; therefore, realizing and exceeding their (customers) expectations and needs is every company's goal. Any company's success depends not only on its customers’ willingness to purchase its products and services but also on the frequency at which the customers do the purchasing. Satisfied customers are bound to purchase products and services frequently, as well as pay their bills on time (Karjaluoto, Mattila, & Pento, 2002).

As highlighted by Ross (2017), customer service is critical for the growth of any company. Stock and Lambert (2001) defined customer service as a process that takes place between a buyer, a seller, and a third party, which, when properly executed, ensures customer satisfaction with a product or service. Hence, most companies have adopted internal branding strategies to achieve customer satisfaction (Ross, 2017).

Most organizations devote most of their resources to developing, maintaining, and improving their brand, with the aim of selling their products and services to their consumers (Mosley, 2007). In recent years, there has been an increased focus on organizations’ internal branding. From a communication’s point of view, internal branding is regarded as the most precious asset in a company and is considered a
partner, an emotion, and a symbol (Batey, 2015). In fact, it is through internal branding that a company builds an identity and successfully communicates the identity to create awareness in the target population.

This chapter presents the study background, problem statement, purpose, objectives, and research questions. Other areas covered in the chapter are the study’s significance, justification, assumptions, limitations and delimitations, scope, and definitions of key terms.

**Background to the Study**

For any business that aims to be competitive and make profits in the commercial environment, marketing communication is a familiar term. According to Wiefels (2002), marketing communication refers to the means adopted by a company to convey messages to customers directly or indirectly about the products and the brand the company sells, intending to persuade the customers to purchase from the company. More often than not, marketing communication serves two primary functions, that is, creating and sustaining demand and preference for a product and shortening the sales cycle. Marketing communication includes advertising, direct marketing, branding, packaging, online presence, printed materials, public relations activities, sales presentations, sponsorships, and trade show appearances (Cornelissen, 2000).

Today, with the emergence of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), the importance of marketing communication has been felt widely due to the impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Indeed, the multiplication of media, demassification of consumer markets, and the value of the Internet today are just three of the areas in which technological innovation has impacted businesses globally. This, in turn, has left marketers in a challenging and competitive
environment, as they try to fulfill customers’ wants and needs while also developing long-term relationships with the customers. IMC can help create coordinated and consistent messages across various channels of communication. Nevertheless, corporate communications, described by Cornelissen (2008) as a structured means of conveying consistent attitudes, beliefs, and goals of an organization - is critical to the process.

Corporate communication determines, to a large degree, how businesses and organizations communicate with various internal and external audiences and it can take many forms depending on the audience being addressed. Ultimately, an organization’s communication strategy will typically consist of the the written word (internal and external reports, advertisements, website copy, promotional materials, email, memos, press releases), spoken word (meetings, press conferences, interviews, video), and non-spoken communication (photographs, illustrations, infographics, general branding), among others. Corporate communications departments play a key role in how investors, employees, and the general public perceive a company (Stobierski, 2019).

Consequently, customer service commands high levels of interactivity between the employees of the company and the clients. This requires that an organization’s employees serve as brand ambassadors and brand contact points for their organization (Lacle, 2013). Therefore, each interaction an employee has with a customer is extremely important for the growth of the organization. This means that to achieve internal branding successfully, the organization must determine the key drivers that motivate employees to offer services that are reflective of the brands they work for. Kenya Power (KP) is one such organization that has focused on improving customer service through internal branding (Atambo & Momanyi, 2016).
Kenya Power (KP)

Kenya Power is a limited liability company whose mandate is to transmit, distribute, and retail electricity to its customers across the country; and offer an optic fibre connection to telecommunication companies in the country. It is also drawn to music production. The company’s headquarters are located at Stima Plaza, Kolobot Road, Parklands, Nairobi City County, Kenya. KP faces stiff competition from other electricity and optic fibre providers such as PowerGen and Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen). According to Nashappi, Omari, and Nyamonaa (2014), KP is obligated to implement measures that ensure customers have access to quality services. This can only be done when the company enhances its corporate communication strategies through consistent messages to both its internal and external audiences.

The company was founded in February 1922 as Kenya Power Company (KPC), and was commissioned to construct the transmission line between Nairobi and Tororo in Uganda to transmit power generated at the Owen Falls Dam to Kenya. KPC was managed by East African Power and Lighting Company, which exited Tanzania in 1964 by selling its stake in Tanzania Electric Supply Company Limited to the government of Tanzania. Due to its sole presence in Kenya, East African Power and Lighting Company was renamed KPLC in 1983. KPC de-merged from KPLC in 1997 and rebranded as KenGen. In 2008, the electricity transmission infrastructure role was transferred from KPLC to the Kenya Electricity Transmission Company. As stated by KPLC (n.d.), KPLC was rebranded as KP in June 2011. KP is owned partly by the government and partly by private investors at 50.01% and 49.9% shareholding, respectively.
The number of connected customers of KP rose from 2.7 million in 2013 to 6.7 million customers by May 2018. This rapid increase in customers has been thanks to two major projects: the Global Partnership Output-Based Aid and the Last Mile Connectivity. The former, which is jointly funded by KP and the World Bank is aimed at providing legal, safe, and quality power supply to residents of informal settlements at subsidized costs. The latter project’s targets are to increase electricity access, particularly for low-income Kenyans across the country (KPLC, n.d.).

The government of Kenya has put in place measures to strengthen the country’s economic recovery and provide quality service to citizens. Hence, as a company partly owned by the government, KP has an obligation to implement such measures and ensure that customers have access to quality services (KP, 2015). The researcher, as an employee of KP and having worked in different departments, namely supply chain, communication, and currently customer service department, understands the importance of quality service delivery to the organization’s public image. Customer service is an area that the company has focused on in order to meet the publics’ expectations (KPLC, n.d.).

The KP employees are, therefore, its pillars in terms of the achievement of its goal of quality service delivery to its customers. As suggested by Ponsignon, Smart, and Matull (2011), as customers’ demands increase, it becomes difficult for an organization to provide top-class services without the joint efforts of all employees. It is through KP’s services and products that the company’s employees interact with their customers, either directly or indirectly. Accordingly, these services and products are variants of attitudes and behaviors of the KP employees who produce them. In contemporary service provision, employees play an essential role in customer relations and support, hence the critical role of internal branding (Atambo &
Momanyi, 2016; KPLC, n.d.). The current study established the role of internal branding in improving customer service delivery in organisations.

Statement of the Problem

The need for improved customer service delivery is attributable to dynamism in the corporate environment brought about by the uncertainty of consumer attitudes and behaviour, as well as competition (Ross, 2017). To overcome such challenges, companies have adapted internal branding as a new communication strategy considered more appealing to the customers. However, outcomes of internal branding may be varied based on the customers and the company’s employees who have the mandate of executing the brand values. In this regard, attempts of internal branding to improve customer service delivery may succeed or fail.

About eight years ago, the former KPLC was rebranded to KP (KPLC, n.d.). One of the rebranding reasons was improved service delivery, as stipulated in the company’s performance contract and service charter. Additionally, during the rebranding from KPLC to KP, there were changes in the company’s vision, mission, core values, and brand colours. Nonetheless, KP’s customer experience is still rated poorly; the company is still not projecting the right image in terms of service delivery to its customers. The company has been struggling to address customer complaints, as evidenced by a campaign held in the year 2018 titled ‘power clinics,’ a customer open day, aimed at restoring customers’ confidence.

Over the years, there have been reports of numerous customer complaints regarding KP’s poor service delivery. Such complaints have come through calls at KP offices, social media platforms, emails, suggestion boxes, and mainstream media. The complaints vary from frequent power outages, delayed power reconnections, delayed new connections, unexplained power interruptions, account closures, billing errors,
prolonged processing of pre-paid token numbers, slow response to emergency cases. For instance, according to the Watchman (2018), a customer in Kitui received a bill yet was off power supply for three weeks in the respective month, and despite having visited KP’s regional office in Kitui. These challenges hinder the nation’s development as most individuals depend on electricity for their large and small-scale businesses.

In view of all these, this question remains, “what happened to this company that was rebranded a few years ago?” Although external branding took place, customer complaints have persisted in terms of service delivery. Consequently, the question begging answers is whether internal branding actually took place in KP. Therefore, this researcher considered it necessary to investigate internal branding’s role in improving KP’s customer service delivery.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine how internal branding at KP affected its customer service delivery in attracting more customers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To establish the communication methods employed to educate employees on the brand at KP.
2. To evaluate the challenges encountered during internal branding at KP.
3. To determine the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery at KP.

Research Questions

1. What communication methods are employed to educate employees on the brand at KP?
2. What challenges are encountered during the internal branding process at KP?
3. What is the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery at KP?

Justification for the Study

Internal branding brings about business and academic challenges in the process of improving customer service delivery (De Chernatony, 2010). Customer service is an important component that influences demand and provides an interface between internal branding, communication, and improved productivity. In the past three decades, there has been an increase in customers’ demands and expectations regarding organizations’ abilities to meet their needs. Suggested management solutions for the increased customer demands and expectations include nurturing a customer-based employee network and developing customer-centered operations (Ross, 2008). In view of this, organizations have attempted to improve customer service practices in their communication strategies to set up and uphold a viable lead.

According to Mosley (2007), over the past few years branding has shifted its focus from customers to employees. The new branding model emphasises on creating brand values through employees’ involvement in brand building. Therefore, the aspect of internal branding, which is focused on achieving higher levels of customer satisfaction, is gaining attention in many organizations. However, research regarding internal branding is yet to be acknowledged as an important subject in academic literature. A concerted approach is consequently required to establish a deeper comprehension of internal branding and customer service delivery.

As much as internal branding is progressively seen as a measure to shape employees brand attitude and behaviour towards improving customer service delivery, there is minimal research carried out on the role of internal branding for companies in
Kenya (Atambo & Momanyi, 2016). Most studies have focused on branding research that seeks to understand service delivery process from the viewpoint of privately-owned companies. Elsewhere, research on quality service delivery has been done in various organisations in Kenya (Korir, Rotich, & Bengat, 2015). However, most of the research done has focused on external branding and not internal branding.

As mentioned by KPLC (n.d.) a unique opportunity for analysing the role of internal branding in improving customer service delivery is offered by the KP company. The company, in a quest to diligently serve its customers, has undergone some transformations at different levels. The rebranding of the company was one of the major transformations undertaken that was aimed at improving revenue collection and service delivery to customers. However, literature review reveals that no study on how internal branding influences customer service delivery at KP has been done. Thus, this study was carried out to acquire information on internal branding that can be used to improve customer service delivery in organisations.

Significance of the Study

The findings from this study could be used to add knowledge on the key role of internal branding in improving customer service delivery. This will help to promote an easy resolution to many customer related complaints and reduce the turn-around time for resolution of customer complaints.

Additionally, the findings may also be important in the improvement of customer satisfaction and the KP’s image to their customers. By looking at internal branding in the KP context, the same knowledge can be applied to other companies seeking to improve on service delivery.

In academia, this research findings may be applied to generate more knowledge on service delivery through internal branding.
Finally, this study can be used to fill a gap between internal branding and communication literature by providing new information on service delivery through internal branding.

Assumptions of the Study

This study made the following assumptions:

1. The questionnaires would be responded to and completed within the allocated time.
2. That the approval was granted by KP to carry out the study.
3. That the respondents were honest in their responses.
4. That there were internal branding practices employed by KP.

Scope of the Study

The study was carried out at KP company departments in Nairobi and it focused on employees in the Nairobi West region. The departments included finance, ICT, customer service, operations and maintenance, and design and construction. The employees were selected across all cadres, ages, and from both genders. This eliminated age and gender bias. The study was restricted to the role of internal branding in improving employees customer service delivery.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

There was the anticipated challenge of some respondents (being employees of KP) being unwilling to share what they perceived as confidential information regarding their departments at the risk of losing their jobs. To mitigate this, the researcher guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents.

Busy and inconsistent working schedules of the respondents limited their availability to fill in the questionnaires and return them in good time. To curb this, the
researcher facilitated a flexible schedule for the respondents to fill in the questionnaires.

With the researcher being an employee of KP, the institution under study, fellow employees were likely to either give favourable responses to the study or refuse to fill the questionnaires due the relationship they may have with the researcher. As a mitigating measure, the researcher employed two research assistants who helped in administering the questionnaires.

The study focused solely on KP, a state-owned cooperation. Therefore, further generalization of the study results should be concluded after studies have been done in other sectors. This is because some organizations may hold different levels and views from KP, concerning employee - customer interaction.

Definition of Terms

Brand: De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998), defined a brand as “a multidimensional construct whereby managers augment products or services with values, and this facilitates the process by which consumers confidently recognise and appreciate these values” (p. 427). In this study, a brand is used to clarify the overall experience of a customer that distinguishes KP and its products from other parastatals in the eyes of the customer.

Internal branding: De Chernatony (1999) describes internal branding as a process that aims to motivate, mobilise, and manage employees at all levels of the organisation in order to continuously improve how they serve external customers and their delivery of the cooperate brand to them. In the current study, internal branding is a corporate strategy course of action to validate and persuade employees to not only keep the brand promise but to "live" it.
Customer service: Refers to the activity which takes place between buyer, seller, and third party (Stock & Lambert, 2001). The activity adds value to the product or service exchanged. This added value in the exchange process might be short term in form of a single transaction or long term in form of a contractual relationship. The value added is also shared by each of the parties involved in the transaction or contract. Customer service as used in this study is the process of ensuring customer satisfaction with a product or service.

Internal communications: The definition of internal communication by Welch and Jackson (2007) stated that it is, “communication between an organization’s strategic managers and its internal stakeholders, designed to promote commitment to the organization, a sense of belonging to it, awareness of its changing environment and understanding of its evolving aims” (p. 186). In this study, internal communication means passing brand related massages and brand values that manipulate employees’ behaviours.

Corporate communication: Van Riel and Fombrun (2007) defined corporate communication as a framework in which all communication specialists (marketing, organizational and management communication) integrate the totality of the organizational message, thereby helping to define the corporate image as a means to improving corporate performance. In this study corporate communication is used to clarify a management function dedicated to the circulation of information to its stakeholders, both internally and externally.

Summary

In this chapter, the research topic of the study has been introduced and the background of the study has been provided. An explanation of the role of internal branding in improving customer service delivery and the study location (KP) have
been provided. The chapter has also presented the study’s purpose, objectives, research questions, significance, justification, assumptions, limitations and limitations, scope, and finally definitions of key terms used in the study.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical and the conceptual framework on which this study is based, as well as a review of the general and empirical literature related to the topic under study. The general literature on the role of internal branding and customer service delivery is reviewed. Following this is the empirical literature review which covered internal branding and customer service delivery improvement.

Theoretical Framework

This study was based on corporate image and identity building theory which formed the theoretical framework for the study.

Corporate Image and Identity Building theory

The corporate image and identity building theory takes the meta-theoretical approach to image building in the area of internal branding. Van Riel and Blackburn (1995), the first corporate communications experts to put forward this theory, described the theory as a framework in which all communication specialists integrate the totality of the organizational message. In doing so, they help to define the corporate image as a means to improving corporate performance. The authors believed in customer service, communication, promotional elements that boost customer’s confidence in the employees, and goods and services of the organisation.

Also, according to Cornelissen (2000), corporate image and identity building theory consists of fundamental variables including corporate identity, corporate communication, corporate image, and feedback. Corporate identity is the reality of the corporation - the exclusive, distinct personality of the company that distinguishes it
from other corporations. Corporate communication is a collection of sources, messages, and media through which a corporation presents its brand to its several audiences. Corporate image is in the eye of the beholder, that is, how the audiences of the corporation view its brand.

Riel and Fombrun (2007) supported Cornelissen (2000) findings, that the fundamental variable this theory centres on understanding is how corporate identity, corporate communication, corporate image, and feedback, which are referred to as organizational communication, influences an employees' behaviour. Organizational communications, for example that of public relations and environmental communication, is critical in influencing a company's stakeholders thus, is necessary in building a positive corporate image. The internal branding concept and corporate communication approach have related outcomes. The outcomes are basically an equilibrium between internal branding and external branding. In external branding, an organization communicates its brand promise to customers (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2010; To, Martin, & Billy, 2015).

To succeed in external branding, employees need to be able to convey the brand promise and to execute it (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Khan, 2009). For this reason, the company needs to embrace internal branding through efficient internal communication. To attain an equilibrium between internal branding and external branding, internal communication and external communication should be incorporated to convey a steady message that relates to the general corporate brand. External communication and internal communication are components of a corporate communication approach (Van Riel & Fombrun, 2007). Therefore, it is justified to say that corporate communication approach and internal branding are related.
The most important aim of the meta-theoretical approach relevant to this study is to ensure that corporate communication approach, through organizational and management communication, takes an important role in developing dimensions of internal communication (Steyn, 2002). The dimensions, according to the theory being discussed, is a foundation of the concept of internal branding. Based on this study, corporate communication approach in KP is believed to be incorporated in internal communication in the concept of internal branding. Again, in this study, corporate image and identity building theory is described in order to determine how it influences the development of internal branding in a company. This is important because it will assist employees in KP to appropriately sell the company’s vision and mission as per the brand values. Therefore, this study attempted to establish the role of internal branding in improving customer service provision at KP.

General Literature Review

Internal Branding

Internationally, companies have invested heavily in their brands, which have become key elements in their communication strategies irrespective of their business type (Davis, 2017; Fan, 2005). Because of this, most of the branding research emphasised on the external branding angle that is focused on various tactics and strategies that should be adapted by companies when building a brand (Keller, 2008). Without a doubt, communicating a brand’s promise to customers is a priority to all companies. However, most companies have also realised that for them to sell their brand’s promises, the partners and employees must understand what they are doing and why they are doing it. As a result, internal branding has taken centre stage in the area of business management and brand research (Davis, 2017).
Internal branding is described as “making sure that the members of the organization are properly aligned with the brand and what it represents” (Keller, 2008, p. 125). Based on this definition, the organization has the obligation to educate employees regarding their brand: what the brand represents, how the brand is built, and what it takes for the company when it comes to conveying the brand promise. Drake, Gulman, and Roberts (2005) took the idea further and stated that “internal branding involves getting employees to love the brand so they, in turn, will convince customers to love it” (p. 3). Therefore, according to this definition, companies should prioritise selling their brand to their employees first as they will act as the brand ambassadors to their customers. Keller (2008) noted that internal branding guides the implementation of outside brand management through creation of appropriate communication strategies that fulfil the brand promise.

Internal branding is currently more of a customer experience concept. It is viewed as a set of strategic processes that authorise and align workers to deliver the companies brand promise and experience consistently (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). The employees’ ability to deliver that experience is becoming increasingly important (Foster, Punjaisri, & Cheng, 2010). Previously, companies have focused on the internal stakeholders who are the employees in their quest to attract and retain customers. The success of internal branding in an organization is anchored to the alignment of the organization around its service brand. The brand promise needs to be made clear to its internal stakeholders to communicate a proper direction for the whole organization (Tosti & Stotz, 2001). As mentioned by Davis (2017), two fundamental aspects are used to summarize the internal branding concept. The first aspect is educating the employees about the brand, its meaning, and its effectiveness to the organization. The second one is sensitizing the organization employees to the
brand and implementing it in their daily work activities. All these aspects should be aimed at making the brand operational and integrating it in the entire business, to make employees more fruitful regarding the brand essence.

Behaviour and attitude are important aspects to the delivery of brand promise by the employees. Punjaisri, Evanschitzky, and Wilson (2009a) argued that, at each service encounter, the employees’ behaviour should be synchronized with the brand promise and the management should put in place measures for the synchronization. The espoused brand value of an organization is easily transformed into reality courtesy of internal branding. This idea has come up as a critical tool that enables the creation of a strong and competitive service brand (Burmann, Zeplin, & Riley, 2009; Punjaisri et al., 2009a).

When successfully implemented, internal branding can be beneficial to the companies in several ways. To begin with, through internal branding employees’ get a concrete reason to believe in their employer (Boukis, Gounaris, & Lings, 2017; Russel & Brannan, 2016). Therefore, employee satisfaction and retention rate increases. This eventually boosts employees’ individual contributions and can as well save the company from hiring and training a new workforce. In the long run, the company enjoys financial benefits that allow it to realize and surpass the value of employee remuneration. Secondly, a common spotlight on the brand and the customers intensify a productive and cohesive environment. The focus can also promote interdepartmental innovativeness and communication which has great impact on the company’s output. Furthermore, there is a high level growth of employee pride aimed at gratifying the brand promise (Davis, 2017; Piehler, Grace, & Burmann, 2018; Yu, Asaad, Yen, & Gupta, 2018). Theoretically, these aspects are combined to positively influence the ways employees serve customers.
Internal Branding Themes

For clarification and proper analysis of internal branding, its themes must be well understood. These are: internal communication, recruitment and training, employee motivation, and lastly, the role of management. These themes are necessary for effective implementation of internal branding (Kang & Sung, 2017; Simmons, 2009; Verghese, 2017).

Internal communication

Organizations need to reflect on aspects that can develop the employee’s knowledge and skill about the brand. This is important because it assists employees in selling the organization’s vision and mission as per the brand values. Internal communication is one such aspect that has been embraced by companies. There are two forms of internal communication according to literature: non-verbal and verbal communications (Burmann et al., 2009). The former refers to employees showing dedication to the company brand and living the brand value while the latter refers to meetings and mailings among the company staff. According to the existing literature on internal branding, communication appears to be a primary factor.

Verghese (2017) mentioned that communication is the foundation of structuring “a brand idea” in internal branding. Verghese explained that “a brand idea” is anchored on several elements which include a core idea, a functional idea, an emotional idea, and values. These elements represent the essence of the company, what the company offers, what motivates employees, how the brand differs from others, and the most important belief of the company. When “a brand idea” and the associated elements are well communicated to the employees, they feel more committed to their role (Verghese, 2017). However, for this to be achieved, the “brand idea” should have the following qualities: it should be imaginative as that...
helps in adding values which stir employees’ imaginations and builds enthusiasm and commitment; the brand idea should be authentic both in words and action; it should be courageous to create a sense of dynamism; and it should be empowering. Empowering can be realised when employees are given a chance to generate and hold onto self-intellectual competence.

Moreover, Verghese (2017) described a deeper meaning of words in his discussion about communication in regard to “the brand idea”. He believed that words describing a brand need to be thought out carefully as they can be construed differently, based on the employee’s artistic references and experience. Verghese suggested that creating workshops where employees engage in small groups to discuss the meaning of the brand and whether it describes their organisation is important. This kind of arrangement helps establish if the brand distinguishes the company in question from others. It is important to understand that in a company set up, words and contexts will often change as the organization adapts to a changing environment (Verghese, 2017). Therefore, employees should be constantly updated on new changes through continuous communication.

Additionally, Fill and Turnbull (2016) suggested that internal branding brings about an amalgamation of activities in an organization, given that internal activities of a company need to be adequately coordinated. Enough coordination creates a perception of consistency and uniformity of the brand in the external marketplace. However, Fill and Turnbull argued that, for there to be consistency and uniformity, there must be a marketing communication strategy that is integrated. This strategy should be endorsed by every employee who intermingles with the clients. Also, if all employees in a company adopt “a customer focus behaviour” and “live” the brand, consistency and uniformity of a company are brought out clearly. This can be
achieved partially through in-house documentation and the use of training courses. Full achievement of this aspect of customer focus behaviour can be realised through modification of company culture. Modification of company culture entails a long-term period adoption of new techniques, ways of thinking, procedures, and behaviours. Therefore, internal communication is pivotal in achieving both “in-house documentation” and organizational culture change. Finally, Fill and Turnbull (2016) described integrated marketing communications as the ability of an organization to blend external and internal variables of communication to bring about clarity, consistency, and the core proposition of a brand.

A brand is successful if employees are properly educated and informed on it (Ansari & Riasi, 2016). Properly educated and informed employees are likely to recognize how their behaviour manipulates the brand delivery. They believed that this can only be achieved through an open and clear internal brand communication system. Ansari and Riasi noted that educated employees have the opportunity to create commitment and engagements amongst themselves. Commitment and engagement among employees are key drivers of brand loyalty. Internal brand communication should be measured by how the company communicates information related to the brand internally. Another important aspect to be measured, according to Ansari and Riasi (2016), is how the employees take part in disseminating the same information.

Welch and Jackson (2007) suggested that, as much as internal brand communication is an important channel through which employees are notified of important elements of the brand, a company is supposed to carry out training programmes. The training programmes should be directed at teaching the employees about the brand promise and values. By doing so, the employees are able to
comprehend the brand values and, at the same time, deliver the company brand promise.

Recruitment and training

Like communication, recruitment and training is an important subject for a company’s internal branding. The awareness and skills of employees concerning the brand are enhanced by training. Training can be in the form of orientation, development, courses, and education programs. Taking an employee through some of these forms of training improved their brand promise delivery techniques (King & Grace, 2008; Punjaisri et al., 2009a). Therefore, training is a long-term process aimed at aligning the organization’s brand values with the employees’ personal values (Sharma & Kamalanabhan, 2012). Even though recruitments and trainings are normally handled by the human resource department, it is strongly connected to internal branding.

Bailey, Mankin, Kelliher, and Garavan (2018); and Rees and Smith (2017) discussed the significant role of the human resource department during internal branding. The authors supposed that a brand should be incorporated in the company at the recruitment stage, during training and development, as well as at the reward stage. However, this is rarely observed during the recruitment process in many companies because of the costs involved. To develop a human resource strategy that is more brand focused, investments in recruitment, learning materials, reward systems, and electronics are required. The authors believed that even though it is an expensive process, if handled correctly, the investments automatically result in higher profits. Based on this logic, companies’ managements should have the roles of the human resource department re-evaluated. In conclusion, a company that properly
communicates its values and what it believes in attracts employees with related beliefs and interests during the recruitment processes.

According to Tanwar and Prasad (2016), companies put a lot of resources into employee branding and recruitment in search of people who can be “the brand”. Tanwar and Prasad believed that internal branding, through recruitment, makes sure that the existing employees comprehend the company’s aspiration as well as attracting the most promising new recruits to the company. Employer branding is especially more helpful in marketplaces where mergers, acquisitions, and bankruptcies have tarnished the company’s distinctiveness and flustered its employees’ security. Nevertheless, Tanwar and Prasad (2016) stated that despite the huge significance of internal branding, some companies are still struggling with assessing the impact of their employer branding efforts.

Establishing a strong brand can easily turn a company into an employer of choice (App, Merk, & Büttgen, 2012). The experience gained during an employment period forms the basis of the employer brand. The experience in this case is influenced by things like salary, benefits, work culture, values, learning opportunities, recognition, rewards, and style of management. App et al. (2012) argued that the recruitment process and employee experience contributed to employees’ gratification at work hence loyalty to the company. Furthermore, employees seek an employment experience, with strong economic conditions, that best suits their needs. This need for a suitable employment experience makes employees change companies to find it. However, an excellent match between the employment experience and the employees’ needs can help keep the later at their present employer. Employment experience provides self-confidence for employees which keeps their motivation levels high.
Employee motivation

Another theme of internal branding that is highly regarded in theories is employee motivation. Wilden, Gudergan, and Lings (2010) noted that employees are part of the most significant ambassadors of an organization’s brand. Therefore, they need to be educated on the company’s brand and motivated to be productive in accordance with the brand promise. The central ideas, regarding how lively the brand is, are executed in different terms other than those used in external branding (Wilden, Gudergan, & Lings, 2010). Internal brand activation builds trust between customers and the company.

To form a culture whereby employees are encouraged to strive to excel at the brand promise delivery, a company ought to find out what customers anticipate from the it and what its employees can deliver (De Chernatony, 2010). Sometimes, to adequately deliver the brand promise, modification of the organization may be required. De Chernatony stated that, a company is required to treat employees with trust, respect, and to acknowledge the worth of their contributions. This makes the employees feel like they are a part of the company and assume a role of advocating the company’s brand. To attain the commitment of employees, the company needs to initiate a recognition and reward system that is formal and supported by development and training (De Chernatony, 2010). It is also imperative to conduct satisfaction surveys on customers and employees. This assists in determining the extent to which employees are accepting the brand and its effects on them.

Ind (2007) asserted that, internal branding is necessary as a guarantee of people’s values and purpose at work. He used Maslow’s hierarchy of needs to show that a business cannot be based on physiological needs and safety alone. It must involve the other higher needs on the pyramid. Employees who have a common
purpose stimulate innovation, contribute to knowledge, and build a flourishing brand. This is important as it boosts an organization’s image and delivers maximum values irrespective of the changing environment.

It is natural for people to always look for superior values in life. They also need to be rational in what they do in adding value to their life. This implies that organizations need to reconsider their ways of handling employees and guaranteeing them a sense of fulfilment, self-esteem, and self-actualisation. Ind (2007) observed that failure of imagination is the key inhibiting factor to achieving self-actualisation. Therefore, companies ought to encourage employees to exercise their imagination and to stimulate their curiosity and creativity. Nonetheless, in most cases, the management may find it hard to develop trust in their employees and give them enough freedom. These kind of management lacks the willingness to acknowledge that, focused personnel may have superior intellectual capacity, knowledge, and ideas as compared to the board of directors.

Role of management

Most literature regarding internal branding seem to agree that companies’ management should have a lot of interest in the issue of internal branding. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2012) posited that the management needs to fully accept and recognise an internal branding strategy before implementation of the strategy. While building an internal brand, the employees should be encouraged to take part in the building: this helps motivate employees especially since they can participate in the process with the management. Employees who realise that they can perform a big role in improving something that is of value to them regarding internal branding, will commit themselves to the goals of the brand (Aaker, 2009).
Dobre (2013) considered that, management ought to show, through their words and actions, that they value and prioritise internal branding. Khan (2009) reiterates this by stating that, to motivate the employees to “live” the brand, the managers have to “live” by the brand themselves. Dobre (2013) suggestions resonated well with Balmer (2013) who had earlier suggested that a company’s management needs to centre on goals for assorted employees. For the management to come up with a proper decision on what to prioritise, they should consider three important questions. These questions are: “what matters the most to the customers?”; “Where can our employees stand out?”; and lastly, “What can our employees actually deliver on consistently?”

Tourish (2018) went a step further and looked at this concept from a religious perspective. Tourish likened the managing director of a company to a religious leader, in charge of the dissemination of the company’s religious message. The traditional market modification philosophy, according to Tourish, is defined by a frail management. To successfully implement a corporate internal brand, the managing director ought to undertake the authority of leading the company.

Criticism of Internal Branding

Even though most of the available literatures that cover internal branding appear to have a positive approach towards the subject, there are some literatures with a different view of internal branding. For instance, Guaspari (2002) questioned the typical understanding of internal branding. He argued that, there are a lot of assumptions that are anchored to the traditional approach to internal branding. First, it is assumed that if an organization’s employees cannot comprehend the its brand, they will not be in a position to effectively deliver on the brand. Secondly, it is believed that the organizations should invest in educating its employees on what the
company provides to consumers. Lastly, if the above two assumptions are achieved, then the company is at a vantage point to deliver the brand promise and employ motivated individuals who will aid in delivering that promise.

Guaspari (2002) emphasised that a positive approach towards internal branding does not capture the whole rationale of internal branding. This approach wrongly describes the meaning of internal branding and encourages several misconceptions. One such misconception is that for the brand to be effective the employees must mirror the organization’s beliefs. Another misconception is that internal branding alone can keep the employees energised. The last misconception is viewing internal branding as the responsibility of the communication and human resources departments majorly.

In an attempt to critique this, Guaspari (2002) argued that first, it is the additional efforts of the employees that make the brand, insisting that employees just by themselves do not reflect the brand. Secondly, the brand energy already exists within the employees. What remains is just tapping the energy as opposed to creating it. Lastly, both internal communication and recruitment processes are vital basics of internal branding. Nevertheless, these three aspects are not the only basics implicated in the internal branding processes.

To eliminate these shortcomings, Guaspari (2002) explained that the employees should be involved in comprehending the needs of the customers and creating a connection with the customers by applying internal branding within the organization. When all is achieved, then employees can be drawn towards building and delivering the brand. Therefore, companies should understand that all employees’ efforts together influence the services delivered to customers and how customers observe the brand.
Brand Management and Internal Branding

For internal branding to be accomplished, a properly defined management with a well-structured strategy is needed. According to past literature review, a lot of organizations assert that they value their employees as their greatest asset even though it is never reflected in their branding efforts. For that reason, to properly put internal branding into practice, organizations ought to develop the correct structures, resources, and incentives and out them in place (Keller, 2008). The process of putting the correct structure, resources, and incentives in place is known as internal brand management.

Internal brand management mechanisms, when instituted, ensure that the partners and employees appreciate and have knowledge of central branding notions and how this impacts on the company brand (Keller, 2008). The end result is to motivate everyone, from the trainee to the Chief Executive Officer, to become brand advocates. As proposed by Davis (2017), this can be attained by adapting a three-step path: “Hear It, Believe It, Live It”. To pull the employees towards “living” the brand, organizations need to come up with a brand awareness program that will help get the brand into the employees’ “hands,” then into their “heads,” and at last into their “hearts”. However, once the brand is in the employees’ “heart,” several factors are required for the brand to seem to work practically.

The underlying factors that are needed are clearly defined values, vision, norms, a strong company brand-building culture, and an organizational symbol (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2012). The culture, which reflects the company’s philosophy, leadership, history, beliefs, and values, drives behaviour and determines whether employees will or will not support the company brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2012).
If an organization prioritizes a brand and is also supported by the top management, then it will be simple for the workforce in the organization to address any complex branding issues. In addition, culture can be helpful in combining different brand interpretations as well as adjusting the behaviours of employees from different departments (Kang & Sung, 2017).

Apart from a strong organizational brand-building culture, Kang and Sung further noted that, there has to be someone taking care of the internal branding process, seeing that it is implemented successfully and efficiently, bringing up to date the brand strategies, and scheming predicament management plans to handle probable disasters. For internal branding to be achieved, the senior management should take responsibility in spear heading the process (Davis, 2017). For instance, at the end of the day, the Chief Executive Officer sets the attitude and conformity with brand-based tradition and finds out whether proper procedures are in place for the company in question.

Internal Branding and Brand Identity

Antorini and Schultz (2005), Olins (2017), and Balmer (2017) proposed that the basis for internal branding is a clearly described brand identity. Aaker (2009) mentioned “the external perspective trap” as one of the bases of dysfunctional and ineffective brand strategies, so as to bring out the connection between brand identity and internal branding. The issue of an external perspective trap is likely to come up when the companies in question fail to recognize the role of brand identities in portraying their core values and purpose.

According to Aaker (2009) recognising the role of brand identity is critical because a useful brand identity provides a platform for internal communication on what the brand stands for. It is argued by some scholars that, the concept of brand
identity is of relevance to internal branding at corporate and individual levels. Each company, therefore, should strive to contain an identity that its stakeholders understand. To measure a stakeholder’s awareness of the brand identity, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2012) posited two questions that can be applied in the brand identity assessment analysis.

The first question determines the level of knowledge and internal understanding of brand identity dimensions. The second question focuses on employees’ loyalty and forming an emotional commitment to the brand. The results are mostly very informative: the organizations with a comprehensible and strong brand identity get rapid replies as their employees are familiar with and care about their brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2012). Consequently, the basic conclusion is that a strong and visibly defined brand identity sets the foundation for successful internal branding.

Brand Promise

In order to come up with a strong brand for an organization, it is necessary to introduce to the customers a value-based brand promise and strive to keep the promise (Davin, 2017). A promise that fills customers with a feeling of anticipation. Hence, the organizations should always meet the customers’ expectations which are instituted in the brand promise (Punjaistri & Wilson, 2017).

In literature, different ways of looking at brand promise and interpreting the brand concept have been adapted. For example, Khan (2009) referred to brand promise as “bundles of attributes that someone buys and that provides satisfaction.” The attributes can be illusory or real, emotional, or rational, and tangible or intangible. Gapp and Merrilees (2006) viewed the brand as “a promise for future performance which when achieved then the brand is likely to be trusted by the
customers in the future.” Based on these definitions, brand promise and its implementation are important aspects for a company to succeed. These aspects act as ideologies that make a company a value-based institution.

Brand promise outlines the company’s organizational direction and purpose. It sets the standards which the employees can follow in carrying out their duties. The uniqueness of the brand promise is that how the ideology around it is invented and named does not matter a lot. What is important is how to make it clear and truthful to the company so that it can help propel the objectives of the company forward. Thus, the brand promise provides a framework on how to act and disseminate information externally and internally, in representing the organization.

Brand Promise Delivery

Several companies have established the tradition of communicating promises to its potential customers as well as actual customers. They achieve this by facilitating interaction of the customers with the brand through external communication. Wheeler (2006) noted that to make a company look different from its competitors, certain things must be accomplished concerning the brand promise. It is imperative that the companies’ give a delivery of their brand promise in such a way that they appear distinct from their competitors (Piehler et al., 2018). At the same time, they should strike a balance between the external and internal perspectives of their brand (Kimpakorn & Toqcuer, 2010).

Customers look at a brand promise as an assurance of the value they will be receiving. It is because of this that Piehler et al. (2018) proposed that communication activities are likely to fall short after brand launching, if the promises given by the brand are not supported by a strong foundation. Internal brand is revealed to suffer the most whenever a brand promise made to the external market is not being implemented
to the internal stakeholders (Backhaus, 2016). Therefore, a company that fails in delivering its brand promise, through the assistance of its employees, is likely to put to waste all its external advertising (Khan, 2009). This suggests that it is of great importance to deliver brand promise consistently since customers evaluate all the relations they have had with the company and make a brand image (De Chernatony, 2010). Constant delivery of the brand promise is an integral aspect that promotes consistent brand image (Davis, 2017).

Employee Behaviour

Employee behaviour has a large impact on the performance of internal branding towards meeting the organization’s objectives. Employees who have a common knowledge of the brand promise together with an established brand commitment, act as per the brand doctrine. The employees represent the brand diligently through their actions and words and deliver the brand promise in a reliable manner that improves customer service delivery (Kang & Sung, 2017).

Some scholars have described “living” the brand as brand employee behaviour. The scholars, through some empirical analysis have established that the framework of brand employee behaviour has three dimensions. The dimensions are self-development, helping behaviour, and brand enthusiasm (Burmann et al., 2009). Helping behaviour is described as the willingness of an employee to help a customer regardless of whether it is their area of duty or not. This dimension brings out the employees’ positive attitude and their friendliness towards the customers during their interactions. Brand enthusiasm is reflected in an employee who goes the extra mile for a customer during their interactions. Self-development conversely attributes to how far an employee will go to improve their brand associated expertise (Du preez, Bendixen, & Abratt, 2017).
The Outcomes of Internal Branding

Internal branding and activities related to it have a great impact on the growth of a business. For example, employees’ identification with their employer is critical for business growth. Farooq, Rupp, and Farooq (2017) observed that, “the more employees identify with the organisation, the more they are likely to uphold that identity in their actions”. By itself, internal branding is influential in inducing employee brand identification.

Brand identification is an aspect that promotes an organization’s brand image. Employees are moved to behave in a manner that promotes their collective goals when they relate with customers (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). This results in an increase in customer attraction which boosts the business. Foster et al. (2010) stated that when a brand is believed to be prestigious and distinctive, employees will strive to identify with that particular entity. Associating themselves with a certain brand stimulates them to enhance the brand values, which are their source of identity. According to the theory of organizational identity, employees associating themselves with a given social group will act in the interest of the group when faced with the choice of maintaining consistency between their own goals and the group (Seidl, 2016).

As mentioned by Punjaisri and Wilson (2017), recent studies have supposed that internal branding has a constructive impact on employees’ commitment towards the brand. The organizational commitment theory put forward that if an employee accepts and believes in the organization’s goals and values, they will automatically put in more effort on behalf of the organization (Gagné, Chemolli, Forest, & Koestner, 2008).
Internal branding manipulates employees’ loyalty towards the brand and their readiness to remain part of the brand (Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006). Brand loyalty, when expressed by employees, is an indication that they are satisfied with the brand. Satisfied employees are more productive, which means they will give improved services to their customers. This creates trust between the company, the employee, and the customers. Whenever there is trust among the three then business automatically flourishes.

Techniques and Tools of Internal Branding

Several factors are necessary for internal branding to be established in an organization (Vatsa, 2016). These factors include internal communications, workplace design, training support, job design, brand management, leadership practices, recruitment practices, rewards, and recognition. Employee communication, which is similar to internal communication, is important as it encourages vital alliances and dialogue within the organization. This kind of interaction is common across different levels of employees. It can happen between managers, pioneers, and employees. It can also be distributed from employee to employee or pioneer to-pioneer. Training support directed towards employees promote productive undertakings during service delivery to customers in an organization. Powerful leadership practices in an organization are the driving force behind building a strong internal brand (Liu, Chapleo, Ko, & Ngugi, 2015; Sehgal, 2017; Varun, Indu, & Ashish, 2015).

Although all the factors above are continuously employed in establishing internal branding at an organization, rewards and recognition are the two factors that should be mostly considered. Organizations are required to set up projects that recognize, motivate, and reward an individual employee. As much as recognition
projects are frequently joined with reward programs, they have another purpose altogether. They are anticipated to give mental prizes.

Recruitment practices are also essential in establishing a strong internal brand. This involves detecting and contracting the best-qualified contender for a career opportunity through an application method. The application method includes analyzing the requirements of the profession, drawing in employees to that profession, choosing candidates, contracting, and coordinating the new employee with the organization (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 2017; Kerzner, 2017).

Internal Branding and Customers’ Service Quality Perception

Internal branding is used as a mechanism to provide quality customer services that will have customers develop loyalty in a brand. Therefore, internal branding and its associated activities can be used to measure if the organization is moving towards a positive trend in relation to service provision or not. For instance, increased brand identification is a measure of good customer outcome. The outcome includes how the customers perceive the quality of services offered to them.

When applied at the point of service delivery, internal branding helps consumers to develop a social identity with their service provider (Peppers & Rogers, 2016). According to Pearson (2016) a brand may be a main psychological variable that influences the customer’s judgment of products. Obviously, customers that recognize a product have the highest probability of maintaining favourable transactions with the brand (Kähr, Nyffenegger, Krohmer, & Hoyer, 2016).

Kenya Power

The main distributor in the electric power supply industry is KP. It is mandated with purchasing bulk electricity supply, transmitting, distributing, and retailing of electricity to end users throughout country (KPLC, n.d.). KP provides
world class power that delights its customers and empowers people to live better lives by innovatively securing their business sustainability. The company’s objectives are: to efficiently transmit and distribute high quality electricity throughout Kenya that is cost effective; to achieve the highest standards of customer service; and to ensure the company a long term technical and financial viability. In light of these objectives, KP is committed to providing quality services to its customers.

The board, management, and staff of KP are committed to an effective implementation and continual improvement of the quality management system that complies with ISO 9001:2008. This is important for the company as it aims to surpass the requirements and expectations of its customers and other stakeholders. KP also has in place a five-year corporate strategic plan stretching up to vision 2030 which outlines the targets of the company. Nonetheless, during the formulation and implementation of the corporate strategic plan, the company was faced with issues that had an impact on the company’s operations. The company was forced to pursue strategies to resolve these issues and to learn from them in the process.

Challenges of Customer Service Delivery

Ponsignon et al. (2011) stated that customer satisfaction is a measurement of customer attitude towards the service provider. It can also be an expressive response to the distinction between what is expected by the customers and what they receive, in line with their accomplishment of some desire, goals, or needs. Halvorsrud, Kvale, and Foslstad (2016) observed that nearly all service companies declare that their aim is to offer better services. However, in most organizations the quality of service does not meet the expectations of customers. One explanation for not meeting a customer’s expectation is the lack of commitment and skills of the employees at the frontline (Halvorsrud et al., 2016).
Even though service employees have multiple challenges that range from badly behaved customers to technical faults, Angelova and Zekiri (2011) believed that the way through which these challenges are solved separates excellent service providers from ordinary ones. Wheeler (2017) posited that employees who interact one on one with customers need to perform in accordance with the brand value as well as the brand promise.

However, Berry, Davis, and Wilmet (2015) observed that during the “service journey,” customers meet several service providers. Any change in a service provider’s behaviour towards a customer throughout the course of service transactions makes it difficult to control the brand experience and brand performance. This eventually undermines the company’s efforts to establish lasting relationships with customers. The failure of a company in keeping its promises to its customers again and again negatively affects the development of customers’ trust and commitment which are the key elements of a relationship between the company and the customers.

Situational variables at the place of work can also be a challenge of service delivery to customers in a company. Previous literature has highlighted the relevance of internal branding in ensuring stable internal relationships in a company. Relationships between employees and leaders in a company can influence attitudes and performances in service delivery to customers. Employees might experience a lack of support from their work colleagues which makes them feel uncomfortable in the organization. This negatively affects their service delivery as well as their objectivity and commitment to the organization’s brand purpose.

Personal variables regarding an employee can also hinder service delivery to the customer. For example, an employee’s age can be a determining factor of whether he or she will stay in the company or leave. In most cases, younger employees below
30 years of age with an ambition to grow their career are likely to leave their organization for another one of a different brand. Educational background of the stakeholders in a company can also hinder the company’s service delivery. Well educated employees who are being underutilised in a company may leave the company for other career opportunities.

Empirical Literature Review

The benefits of internal branding activities in customer service delivery have been of interest to researchers. Published works which evaluate the relationship between internal branding activities and customer service delivery are in existence. In this section, the study carries out an empirical review of the published works related to internal branding and customer service delivery.

Customer service delivery can be facilitated through proper understanding of the relationship between internal branding and employees within an organization. One such study carried out by Punjaisri, Wilson, and Evanschitzky (2009b) sought to understand the process of internal branding from a service provider angle within the hotel industry in Thailand by carrying out a case study on the Thailand hotel industry. The study employed mixed methodologies.

Punjaisri et al. (2009b) carried out in-depth interviews with 30 customer-facing employees in six major hotels in Thailand and followed this with a quantitative survey. In the survey, 699 respondents drawn from five major hotels in Thailand were required. The findings reported that the attitudinal and behavioural aspect of an employee when delivering a brand promise was significantly impacted by internal branding when coordinated jointly with the human resource department. The study further noted that employees’ commitment to their brand was not statistically
significant with brand performance. Therefore, there is no significant association between employee brand performance and internal branding.

The findings of the study by Punjaisri et al. (2009b) are practical in nature and can be used to understand several significant managerial implications. From these findings we understand that the effect of internal branding on employee behaviour could be dependent on the extent by which it manipulates their attitudes towards the brand. The study offers important insights from the internal audience’s outlook to the internal branding process. It has empirically revealed the link between internal branding and the behavioural outcome of employees, on top of the partial effects of employees’ identification, commitment, and loyalty towards the brand.

However, the study has also presented some weaknesses. For example, the research took place in Thailand, an Asian country. This could raise concern whether the concept of the study would be of any significance when applied in other places for example Europe, Africa, and America. It should be noted that people in Thailand have a diverse culture. The differences in culture between Thai people and other people such as Americans and Europeans are large. For example, while Asian cultures are collectivist with strong group orientations, Western cultures are individualist and self-reliant (Roland, 2018; Triandis, 2001).

Internal branding requires that brand customer experience be driven at all brand touch points. Many of these touch points are operated by all employees who contribute directly or indirectly to the products, services, and communication of the brand (Balmer & Greyser, 2003). Investigations have been done to explore the role of employees in creating a customer-based brand. For example, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) developed a holistic model for internal brand management that was based on
the best practices noted in companies with a strong brand and good organizational behaviour.

The power of a brand is dependent on the consistency of the customers’ brand experience along all customer touch points determined by the brand identity. Burmann and Zeplin (2005) tested the hypothesis that the power of a brand can only be ensured if all employees display brand citizenship behaviour based on a strong individual commitment to the brand. The best-practice measures taken to generate commitment to the brand were consolidated into three mechanisms: brand-centred HR activities, brand communication, and brand leadership. These mechanisms are only fruitful if the context factors of culture and structure fit, employee know-how, and disposable resources are aligned with the brand identity.

The findings of this study are very useful as they can be used to draw management attention to the relevance of internal branding and gives valuable suggestions towards its execution. The study can further be used as a baseline for implementation of an institutionalized process of internal brand management with clear responsibilities for the corporate and service industry brands. This study is however limited to exploring how the tools used for customer delivery affect the employees and the customers. The study does not analyse the contributions of internal branding to improving customer service delivery. The relation is in general discussed as if it is approved without having an empirical investigation to back up the argument.

Nyambane and Ezekiel (2015) carried out a study aimed at finding out the outcome of rebranding at KP based on the loyalty of its customers. A greater number of customers at 53.8% agreed that the quality of service at the organization had significantly improved since rebranding. Only 2.7% of the customers believed that the quality of service had not improved by strongly disagreeing on the subject. 17.5% of
the customers reported highly improved while 18.8% of the customers were uncertain on the subject. The impression that the majority of the respondents gave on the quality of service was that there was a significant improvement since rebranding which can be affirmed by the change of attitude towards KP’s new brand by a great number of its customers.

To further analyze the customers’ perception of KP, Nyambane and Ezekiel (2015) established that a great number of respondents, 48.9%, believed that the response to customer complaints were handled fairly. A very few, 6.3%, believed that the response to customer complaints was handled poorly. This was believed to confirm on the change in perception of the customer towards KP is greatly attributed to the rebranding as a strategy towards change, leading to an increased level of customer loyalty towards KP.

By this, the researcher established that customer awareness and increased funding for rebranding should be a priority for organizations in order to achieve positive results. The findings of this study are important to the research because they evaluate the links between rebranding and customer satisfaction. This study will help to improve how researchers and other experts understand the impact of branding and customer satisfaction.

However, it is important to note the fact that the study does not fully explore issues that are under investigation in this research. Even though the effects of KP rebranding on loyalty among its customers have been explored, they have not gone to the depth of exploring how various aspects of internal branding play a role in customer service delivery. Nonetheless, the study has been reported in a clear and easy to understand style.
Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a schematic presentation of factors that when brought together can explain the subject of interest (Green, 2014). The variables of interest in this study are largely focused on internal branding and improved customer service delivery. The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 2.1 and it shows the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Branding</td>
<td>Employee satisfaction and productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved Customer Service Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services designed and delivered to meet targeted customers’ needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Internal communication
- Workplace and job design
- Tools for service delivery
- Brand management
- Training programs
- Recruitment practices
- Reward and recognition

H₁: Internal branding positively influence employee’s satisfaction and productivity
H₂: Employee’s satisfaction and productivity positively influence customer service delivery

*Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework*
Source: Author (2020)

Discussion

In this work, the conceptual framework is designed to accommodate one independent variable and two dependent variables. All the variables are drawn from the objectives of the study. The first dependent variable is employees’ satisfaction and productivity at KP. The second independent variable is the improved customer service delivery at KP. The independent variable is internal branding. Internal branding, in
this study, is assumed to be a major factor that brings about improved customer service delivery at the company.

Strategies to improve customer service delivery should employ internal branding and be delivered by the employees through their interaction with customers. Themes and activities that promote internal branding are therefore important and form part of the independent variable of this study. This study will assess internal branding mechanisms that have been employed at KP in relation to the company’s vision, mission, and core values. Some of the mechanisms that will be targeted include internal communications, job and workplace design, tools for serving customers, brand management, training programmes, recruitment practices, reward, and recognition among others.

These mechanisms are important because they determine an employee’s satisfaction and productivity which is the first dependent variable. Also, the study will seek to determine employees’ brand knowledge and attitudes towards the same. Some of the aspects to be assessed will include brand identification; an employee’s sense of belonging to the KP brand and a perception of being intertwined with the brand’s fate and success, commitment; an employee’s psychological and emotional attachment to the brand, and loyalty; an employee’s willingness to remain with their present brand. These aspects reveal more about employee satisfaction and productivity which have direct impact on service delivery to customers of the company.

Employee satisfaction and productivity are essential elements of success for most companies. Employee satisfaction and productivity, in this study, will be revealed through employees’ attitude about the work environment at KP. Normally, the satisfaction of an employee can be analysed by the output that the individual produces, and it is related to office environment. In this study, it is postulated that the
outcome of a well-orchestrated internal branding should be improved customer service delivery. This study will analyse how internal branding has influenced employee service delivery at KP.

Summary

This chapter has presented a literature review where the concepts of internal branding and customer service delivery have been discussed at length. The chapter contained the theoretical framework, general literature review, empirical literature review, and conceptual framework of the study. The subsequent chapter shall concentrate on research methodology.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the methods that were used in data collection as well as the data analysis plan. It includes the research design that was used, the study population, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, data collection tools and procedures, pretesting of the data collection tools, data analysis plan, and the ethical aspects that the study took into consideration.

Research Design

In this study, the research design adapted mixed methods where both qualitative and quantitative data was used. The study also adapted the four major types of mixed method designs which are triangulation design, the embedded design, the explanatory design, and the exploratory design. The mixed methods are revealed to be useful in circumstances where the contextual conditions of events under study are critical and in events where the researcher has marginal control over them as they unfold. It allows investigations into an issue to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. An in-depth and comprehensive study was conducted to find out the role of internal branding in providing effective delivery of customer service in the case of KP. The case study was structured to accommodate all levels of employees within the organization.

Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) defined a population as the whole group of objects or persons who share an observable characteristic that is common. The
population of this study was composed of 503 employees of KP who are based in Nairobi West in Nairobi County. This population was composed of a section of employees within the organization as a way of understanding if internal branding is effective at KP.

Target Population

The study targeted the employees in 5 out of the 11 departments at KP. This is because the targeted departments bear the image of the company directly and frequently engages with the stakeholders. The targeted departments included the finance department, ICT department, customer service department, operations and maintenance department, and design and construction department. The employees of these mentioned departments were engaged in this study in order to provide answers to the research questions.

According to Yin (2009), a target population is a group of people who are the focus of the study hence, the sum of all items that are consistent with the determined stipulations of the study. In this study, the target population was the employees of KP who understood and conceptualized the organizational vision, mission, and core values in providing services to the customers.

Sample Size

According to Kothari (2008), a researcher should come up with a sample size that is a representative of the population. As such, sampling to verify a small size of the population may misrepresent the reality. The population and sample size is shown in Table 3.1.
For proper representation of the population, 40% of the members from each stratum were selected (Kothari, 2008). The 40% of the members were picked in order to minimize on the sampling error which is statistically significant based on Kothari’s suggestions.

**Sampling Techniques**

In this study, a stratified random sampling method was used. First, the population was divided into strata. After dividing the members of the population into strata, they were randomly picked. This process was preferred because it ensured that no element of the study population was left out and each member had an equal chance of being picked. This process also ensured that the sampling error was reduced (Srivastava, Hinton, Krizhevsky, Sutskever, & Salakhutdinov, 2014).

In the sampling procedure, the employees from KP were stratified into different departments. They included the finance, ICT, customer service, operations and maintenance, and design and construction departments. From each department, individuals were randomly picked to participate in the study. These departments were chosen because they have direct contact with the customers. A list of the population was then drawn for each sector from the human resources department. Simple random sampling was then carried out in each of the targeted stratum. In this process, all the names of employees in the departments were obtained. The names were then written
on papers, folded, and put in a container. The researcher then picked 40% of the papers, in each department.

Data Collection Instruments

The study used questionnaires and in-depth interviews as the data collection tools. A questionnaire is a tool used to collect data using several questions and other prompts. The main aim of a questionnaire is to collect the required information from the respondents while also avoiding ambiguity in analysis of results, as they have standardized questions that have standardized responses (Axinn & Pearce, 2006). However, this tool offers the respondent a limited expression chance (Kothari, 2008). The questionnaires had both open and closed ended questions.

In-depth interviews were carried out with the heads of the five departments selected including the finance (KP-5), ICT (KP-3), customer service (KP-1), operations and maintenance (KP-2) and, design and Construction (KP-4). This was done because, in internal branding concept, the executives are critical in carrying out the implementation. Data was collected from across all the job levels from the departments.

Data Collection Procedures

In this study, data was collected by administering the questionnaires through the research assistants. The researcher, being an employee at the institute, did not take part in administering the questionnaires. The questionnaires were accompanied by a copy of the authorization letter from Daystar University and National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). After getting the approvals of the respondents by signing the consent forms, they were requested to fill the questionnaires and have them ready for collection within one week. The one-week
period considered in this study was enough to get many of the sampled employees to participate in the study. The interviews were carried out in a period of one week following the schedule that was provided by the heads of each department.

**Pretesting**

The data collection tool was pretested to ensure that the results would meet the validity test. To ensure validity, the research instruments incorporated all areas that answer the research questions. In the current study, pretesting enabled the researcher to know if the research instruments were stated correctly and were clearly understood.

The pretesting was carried out at the head office of the customer care department at KenGen prior to the authentic data collection. There were no amendments made on the research instruments tools after the pretest since the questions were found to capture all the objectives quite well. Validity was confirmed through consistency of the responses to the questions.

**Validity and Reliability of the Instruments**

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), validity is the degree to which outcomes obtained from the analysis of data represents the variables of the study. It can also be referred to as the accuracy and relevance of interpretations, which are based on the research results. On the other hand, reliability refers to the ability of a research instrument to consistently measure characteristics of interest over a period (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Reliability is also a measure of the degree to which the instruments brings out results that are consistent.

In this study pretesting of research instruments, questionnaires and informant interviews, was done before the actual data collection process.
Data Analysis Plan

Data obtained from the questionnaires and interviews was coded, entered, and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22.0. Qualitative data was subjected to interpretative and descriptive statistics. Descriptive analysis is the process of transforming mass of raw data into tables, figures, frequency distribution, and percentages of the data collected to create discernment. The quantitative data was subjected to correlation analysis using Pearson Chi-square. Pearson Chi-square procedure was applied to determine the significant level of each objective. The interview and questionnaire responses were read several times to confirm the participants’ knowledge and experiences.

Qualitative data from interviewees were analysed using thematic analysis approach whereby data obtained in each open-ended question was categorized into themes and each theme assigned a subtitle. The subtitles were coded, entered into SPSS and statistically analysed like quantitative data. The findings of both quantitative and qualitative data were presented using descriptive statistics in form of frequencies tables, charts and figures.

Ethical Considerations

Before going to the field to collect data, the researcher sought permission to conduct the research from Daystar University and NACOSTI. Daystar University through its postgraduate bureau went through the document and ensured that it had met all the requirements. An introductory letter from Daystar University was then requested to carry out the research. Thereafter, a permission letter from the NACOSTI was obtained authorizing the researcher to collect data from KP. Following the above approvals KP human resources department was informed of the research and granted authority to conduct the study within the organisation.
During data collection, ethical issues were considered. The study considered all the underlying ethical principles that govern studies involving data collection. First, research assistants were used to administer the questionnaires and interviews since the researcher is an employee of the institution. This approach helped in reducing biasness of data collection from people whom the researcher interacts with daily.

The second issue to be considered in this research was autonomy. In ethics of research, autonomy is the right of the respondent to decide whether to participate in the study or not. In the questionnaires, the essence of freedom of the respondent to participate or not to participate in the study was clearly stated. Respondents were informed that they had the freedom to return the questionnaire unfilled if they feel it infringes on their rights or their comfort and they consented to fill the questionnaires by signing a consent form.

Thirdly, this study ensured that the confidentiality of the respondents and their responses were maintained. To ensure this, the data collection tool did not have a provision for indicating the names of the respondents. Again, this study ensured that all data was guarded against biasness during analysis and reporting of the findings. The study findings were reported as recorded from the questionnaires and interviews and no results were altered.

Summary

In this chapter, the research methodology that was used in this study was discussed. Areas covered include the research design, the study population, target population, sample size and sampling methods, data collection instrument and procedures, the data analysis plan, pretesting of the data collection instrument, and the
ethical considerations that guided this study. The next chapter delves into the data presentation, analysis, and interpretation.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter explores the presentation of the collected data, its analysis, as well as its presentation. Interpretations of the results obtained from the respondents as per every research question of the study have been presented. The chapter gives a breakdown on the background information of the respondents and the analysis based on the objectives of the study. Inferential and descriptive statistics have been employed to present the study findings. Data obtained through structured questionnaires and interview schedule were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS version 22.0.

Analysis and Interpretation

Response Rate

The study response rate was as illustrated in Table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.1: Response Rate</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administered Questionnaires</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returned Questionnaires</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study, 200 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. Out of the targeted respondents, 160 filled in and returned complete questionnaires hence a response rate of 80%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) such a response rate is acceptable to support conclusions for the study. On the other hand, five interviews were conducted with the heads of the five selected departments (KP, 1-5).
Demographic Information

Gender of the respondents

During data collection, this study required to capture the gender of the respondents. Figure 4.1 shows the gender of the respondents.

![Gender Distribution](image)

*Figure 4.1: Respondents’ Gender*

The participants were asked to indicate their gender. Based on the findings as indicated in Figure 4.1, it was revealed that majority of the respondents were female at 55.0% while the male respondents were 45.0%. This information on gender clearly shows that both males and females took part in this study and therefore, the study’s findings are not subject to gender bias.

Respondents’ age, academic qualification, and year of service

The respondents’ age, academic qualification, and year of service was as tabulated in Table 4.2.
Table 4.2: Demographic Information of the Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic information</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages (Years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-committal</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest academic qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Diploma</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-committal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration in service at KP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 years</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 years</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 30 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-committal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.2, the age of the respondents was well distributed. Majority of the respondents were between the age of 31 to 40 years 70(43.8%) and 21 to 30 years 56(35.0%). The other respondents were between the age of 41-50 years 21(13.1%) and above 50 years of age represented by 3(1.9) % of the respondents.

This study also sought to establish the academic qualification of the participants and the results are documented in Table 4.2. The respondents’ level of education was varied with a larger portion of the respondents 69(43.1%) indicating that they had a degree level of education. This was followed by those with a diploma level at 38(23.8 %). The least number of respondents 5(3.1%) pointed out that they have a high school education and 16(10.0%) had certificate level of education.

Finally, on demographic information, this study sought to understand how long the respondents have been serving in their place of work at the KP Company (see Table 4.2). The study findings established that a majority of interviewed respondents
had served for the last 6-10 years 55(34.4%) and 11-20 years 47(29.4%). Only 1(0.6 %) of the respondents had served in their place of work for more than 30 years. Over (50%) of the interviewed respondents have served at their place of work for more than 5 years. This implies that a bulk of the respondents were well acquainted with the institution and could be relied upon by this study.

Communication Methods Employed in Educating Employees about The Brand

The study findings showed that the communication methods employed to educate the employees about the brand are departmental meetings, internal meetings, trainings, and external meetings. Each of these methods are presented in Figure 4.2.

![Figure 4.2: Employees Hearing about KP Missions and Visions](image)

The methods used in sharing messages to do with the KP mission, vision, core values, logo, and symbol with employees were trainings (50.0%) and internal meetings (49.4%) as well as departmental meetings and external meetings.

Consequently, Figure 4.3 represents the communication approach that is normally used.
A high percentage of the respondents (55.6%) stated that the communication approach that is normally used at KP is very formal. However, (31.9%) of the respondents noted that it is somehow formal while (6.3%) of the employees indicated that communication is very informal. This implies that the communication approach used at KP is more formal than informal.

The communication channels normally used to engage employees at the KP Company are as indicated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Communication Channels Used to Engage Employees at Kenya Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal telephone calls</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emails</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memos</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face meeting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice board</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp chat</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The communication channels normally used to engage employees concerning internal branding at KP are notice boards 143(89.4%) and memos 62(38.8%). The company also uses emails 55(34.4%), letters 54(33.8%), internal telephone calls 31(19.4%), and WhatsApp 6(3.8%) in communicating with the employees about internal branding.
Channels for communicating new changes at KP are as illustrated in Figure 4.4.

![Figure 4.4: Learning about New Changes in the Company](image)

To learn about new changes in the company, employees mainly depend on the emails (39%), newsletters (20%), team meeting (15%), and trainings (9%).

**Direction of Information Flow at KP**

Table 4.4 indicates the direction of the flow of information at KP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information flow</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 160)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director to staff</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff to directors</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff to staff</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapevine/Rumors</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The top-down approach is mainly used while discussing the core values related to service delivery at KP, mainly flowing from director to staff 117(73.1%). The bottom-up approach is hardly used, flowing from the staff to director 8(5.0%).

Table 4.5 shows the duration of the staff at KP and their opinion on information flow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information flow</th>
<th>Less than 1</th>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-20</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>Above 30 yrs.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director to staff</td>
<td>13 (11.5%)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff to directors</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 (42.9%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff to staff</td>
<td>1 (4.5%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8 (36.4%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapevine/Rumors</td>
<td>2 (14.3%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 (28.6%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (10.0%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further analysis (see Table 4.5) showed that majority of the staff who served the organization between 6-10 years are of the opinion that top-down communication approach is commonly used at the company 40(35.4%), while those who served between 11-20 years at KP recognized that there is information flow from staff to directors 3(42.9%) and from staff to staff 8(36.4%) respectively. These are possibly the senior people in the organization who are consulted in decision making.

Frequency of Team Meetings

The objectives of the team meetings normally centre on operational procedures, improving employee work skill, new product, and processes in other departments and company values. The frequency of the team meetings is displayed in Figure 4.5.
As shown in Figure 4.5, majority of the employees (54.4%) have team meetings once a month while (18.1%) hold team meetings more than once a month, and around 8.8% said they never hold meetings.

The focus of team meetings in KP is outlined in Table 4.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of team meetings</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 160)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New product and process in other departments</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company value</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational procedures related to job and departments</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving employee work skill</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-committal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As demonstrated in Table 4.6, the main focus of team meetings is on operational procedures related to employee job and departments 104(65%). However, sometimes the meetings focus on new products and process in other departments 15(9.4%), improving employees work skills 23(14.4%), company value 3(1.9%), and other issues 4(2.5%) in the company. 11(6.9%) of the meetings focus was non-committal.
Attendance of Organization Training by Employees

It was important to find out about the attendance of organizational trainings by employees as indicated by Figure 4.6.

![Figure 4.6: Time Employees Attended Organization Training](image)

It was clear that while some employees had attended company training a month ago (31.3%), the same number had attended a year ago (31.3%). Only 9.4% had attended training a week ago (prior to this study) while 5.0% of the employees stated they had never attended any training.

The focus of training in the company is as presented in Table 4.7.

### Table 4.7: Focus of Training in the Company

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of training</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 160)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New products and processes in other departments</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to realize company values, mission, and vision</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational procedures related to your job and department</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving your work skills</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-committal</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The focus of training in the company was on operational procedures related to an employee’s job and department 61(38.1%) and improving work skills 39(24.4%). The other focus of training was on new products and processes in other departments 20(12.5%) and how to realize company values, mission, and vision 25(15.6%).
Preferred Learning Method of New Company Product

Employee’s preferred method of learning about new company products was established and is shown by Figure 4.7.

![Preferred Method of Learning about New Company Product](image)

**Figure 4.7: Preferred Method of Learning about New Company Product**

Majority of the employees prefer to learn about new products in the company through emails 81(50.6%) and through trainings 79(49.4%), followed by team meetings 62(38.8%). Other methods like newsletters 22(13.8%), intranet 11(6.9%), posters 8(5%), and colleagues 6(3.8%) ranked low as shown in Figure 4.7. However, as indicated earlier, what is currently being used is emails (39%), followed by newsletters (20%), team meeting (15%), and trainings (9%) in that order.

In seeking to find out the communication tools used for carrying out internal branding during the external branding of KP in 2011, the interviews (qualitative data) emphasized the need to change organization culture. During the interviews with the senior managers in the selected departments, one of the officers from the customer service department stated as follows:
Mostly it was about the organizational culture and how we need to change the way we conduct business even though then, most of us thought we were just changing the logo. During rebranding, all employees were taken through a course which was branded ‘Unlocking your Potential’ and it was mandatory for all employees to attend. It was basically to change employees’ attitude towards customers; knowing that KP is a business and how each employee performs affects the customer as well as the company profits. Another emphasis was to also change the employee work ethic which was the core of the brand (Participant KP-1).

The Participant (KP-1) concluded below:

Change was based on the individual and if you are rotten you will still remain rotten no matter what you learnt from the training. There are some people who changed willingly at individual level. However, real change and staff attitude is dependent on the individual (Participant KP-1).

During the rebranding process, the KP company colours were changed. However, the staff was not involved in the colour change as this was only limited to the management. Sharing messages was also key in the internal branding campaigns which was basically achieved through emails, barazas, and team talks. The messages shared were mainly about the vision, mission, and core values of KP. Every branch head and departmental heads were tasked with ensuring that every staff under them became conversant with the new mission, vision, and core values.

A participant from the operations and maintenance department stated as follows:

The tools used for internal communication during the rebranding were mostly emails, memos, and notice boards. There were also team talks and it was mainly from the regional managers and customer service officers, who were the ones holding the talks with their members of staff. Communication campaign slogan, used to spearhead the new brand, was dubbed as “MV Mwangaza” where employees got new T-shirts, caps, and work clothes with the branded new logo (Participant KP-2).

In addition, the interviews further revealed that the management, including the Chief Executive Officer and managing director at KP, took time to educate the staff on the new brand. This was done through going to different regions where they held
team meetings and introduced the brand to the employees in all the KP offices country wide. From the ICT department, Participant KP-3 described the process as:

*The branding information was cascaded from the managing director to the general managers, then to the chief managers which continued to the regional managers. Sometimes people in central office (headquarters) would go to other regions to cascade the information but at some point the regional management assumed the role of trainers and they would also go to other parts of the country to cascade the same information to the regional management and then the regional management would now talk to their staff* (Participant KP-3).

To effectively communicate the new brand internally, it was made mandatory for all employees to attend any kind of training that was taking place during the internal rebranding process. In all the trainings and forums, emphasis was laid on the vision, mission, and core values of the company. However, the internal rebranding process did not continue after its inception. This was confirmed by the participants who emphasised that internal rebranding at the company is one of the processes that had no follow up after it was started during the rebranding of KP in 2011. As a result, new employees have not gained from concerted efforts of intense training on the company brand and they are left to learn by themselves.

Commenting on the same, a design and construction department participant shared as follows below:

*You know they have changed over time and comparing the strategy that was used then and now, I think the past strategy was more effective. I cannot compare what is being done today to what was done eight years ago; now we are going back to team talks. There is failure on how communication of the mission, vision, and core values is being carried* (Participant KP-4).

Four participants (80%) that were interviewed felt that whereas internal branding is critical, some roles in the company require in-depth knowledge about the company than others.
In the regional offices there are employees who rarely work out of the office and therefore their needs in terms of internal rebranding are less as compared to employees who interact with the customer’s one on one (Participant KP-1).

However, another gap in internal branding was noticed. There are KP employees who never go to the office since they are field based and others are picked up on their way to their designated assignments or job sites by their team leaders. Considering that communication about the mission and vision of the company is done through emails and notice boards, these said employees might not receive the message.

Challenges Faced by KP in Internal Branding

The second objective investigated the challenges experienced during internal branding. Here, the participants were asked to state their level of agreement with the way the mission and vision of KP is communicated to them; if they feel competent to share KP vision and mission with other people; and if adequate trainings have been set aside for employees to understand KP mission, vision, and core values. The participants were also asked if there are efforts made by the company to assist its staff in comprehending the company’s logo as well as symbols and if they are satisfied with the communication channels used to engage employees.

Table 4.8 demonstrated the challenges experienced during internal branding at KP.
### Table 4.8: Challenges Experienced During Internal Branding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Mean response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The way KP mission and vision is communicated helps me to practice it</td>
<td>51 (31.9%)</td>
<td>52 (32.5%)</td>
<td>36 (22.5%)</td>
<td>16 (10.0%)</td>
<td>5 (5.1%)</td>
<td>2.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The management involves the employees in execution of KP core values</td>
<td>31 (19.4%)</td>
<td>54 (33.8%)</td>
<td>31 (19.4%)</td>
<td>31 (19.4%)</td>
<td>13 (8.1%)</td>
<td>2.628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are trainings that have been set for employees to understand KP mission, vision and core values</td>
<td>36 (22.5%)</td>
<td>56 (35.0%)</td>
<td>30 (18.8%)</td>
<td>25 (15.6%)</td>
<td>13 (8.1%)</td>
<td>2.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are efforts that have been made to help me understand and appreciate KP logos and symbols</td>
<td>28 (17.5%)</td>
<td>53 (33.1%)</td>
<td>43 (26.9%)</td>
<td>29 (18.1%)</td>
<td>7 (4.4%)</td>
<td>2.587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel emotionally connected to KP mission and values</td>
<td>33 (20.7%)</td>
<td>50 (31.3%)</td>
<td>48 (30%)</td>
<td>18 (11.3%)</td>
<td>11 (6.9%)</td>
<td>2.519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel competent to share KP vision and mission to other people</td>
<td>34 (21.3%)</td>
<td>59 (36.9%)</td>
<td>46 (28.8%)</td>
<td>14 (8.8%)</td>
<td>7 (4.4%)</td>
<td>2.365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The KP management sets time aside to discuss with employees’ internal changes taking place within the organization</td>
<td>24 (15.0%)</td>
<td>43 (26.9%)</td>
<td>41 (25.6%)</td>
<td>36 (22.5%)</td>
<td>16 (10.0%)</td>
<td>2.856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the communication channels that are used to engage employees at KP</td>
<td>35 (21.9%)</td>
<td>48 (30.0%)</td>
<td>37 (23.1%)</td>
<td>27 (16.9%)</td>
<td>13 (8.1%)</td>
<td>2.593</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About 64.4% of the respondents pointed out that the way KP mission and vision are communicated helps them to practice it, whereas about 37.6% per cent were not of the same opinion as shown in Table 4.8. In addition, whereas about 53.2% strongly agreed and agreed that that the management involves employees in the execution of KP core values, the study showed that the rest do not feel involved. In terms of the efforts made to help employees understand and appreciate KP logos and symbols, whereas 50.6% felt such efforts were being made, about 49.4% did not hold the same opinion.
The respondents, when asked about their emotional attachment to the company, 33(20.7%) strongly agreed and 50(31.3%) agreed that they feel emotionally attached to the KP mission and values. However, 48(30%) were neutral while some did not feel emotionally attached. In terms of competence to share the KP mission and vision to other people, only 34(21.3%) felt strongly that they could share while 59(36.9%) just agreed with the rest being neutral or did not feel competent at all.

When asked if the KP management sets time aside to discuss with employee’s internal changes taking place within the organization, 43(26.9%) of the respondents agreed to that and 24(15.0%) agreed strongly, however, 41(25.6%) were neutral while 36(22.5%) disagreed and 16(10%) strongly disagreed. It means that only 41.9% of respondents felt that KP set time aside to discuss with employees on the changes taking place, which agrees with qualitative data. In terms of satisfaction with the communication channels used to engage employees at KP, 51.9% were satisfied, 23.1% were neutral and 25% were not satisfied.

Management Support

The level of support by the management to the employees is displayed in Figure 4.8.
Figure 4.8: Support by the Management

When asked about the level of support to employees by the management, 22.50% of the respondents strongly agreed that the management is supportive of their initiatives, 60% were neutral, and 17.50% indicated not supportive as shown in Figure 4.8.

However, as much as the quantitative data showed that to some extent employees were proud to be associated with KP, the qualitative data showed that the employees generally do not understand the brand promise and do not work together as one team to deliver the customers’ needs. Since employees are busy in their departments, there is lack of inter-departmental sharing of information as each department keeps information to itself.

*Sometimes it looks like there is no need of sharing the information. Each person does their own work and finish and if they do not inquire, then I will not share the information I have* (Participant (KP-4).

*Understanding, they do understand but the synergy is wanting. The synergy that is needed for us to fully work as a team, we still have a lot to do. The silos between departments still exist and the flow of work from one department to another is wanting. In fact, we should work towards a seamless kind of workflow between these departments and really there should be no walls as to who is doing what because at the end of the day, we are serving the same*
customer. Whether its procurement, human resources, call centre or operations we should get to a level where we are seamless. The synergy and the cohesiveness are a bit wanting (Participant KP-2).

When asked if there is deliberate withholding of information from one department to another specially to staff in direct contact with the customers, the respondent (KP-2) insisted that it is the communication flow that is not effective as shown below:

In my opinion internal communication within KP is wanting (participant KP-2).

Further, it was felt that internal communication should not be left to the communication department alone, everyone should be involved. It was an all-inclusive initiative starting from all managers and department heads. They should ensure that information flow is cascaded both ways; top-down and bottom-up or rather vertical and horizontal communication.

On what should be done to improve communication at the company, the respondents suggested the need of having morning briefs and to go back to team talks. Participant KP-5 in the finance department stated below:

The departmental heads need to organize for occasional meetings to discuss issues affecting service delivery while also it is critical to have several cross departmental meetings so that we can always have a synergy (Participant KP-5).

In a different statement the Participant stated as follows:

The customer experience department only works with the top management and in my opinion, it should be passed on to the lower level like the branches and all other KP offices. Occasionally, branch meetings for the employees should be introduced and that is how all employees can have one voice and not through emails as it’s done now (Participant KP-5).

It also emerged that the management does not continuously engage the employees while coming up with policies and ways of improving customer service which ultimately affects the service delivery.
When they are coming up with new policies, they should involve the people on the ground. Like now there is a new customer service charter which was made by top management, but they don’t seat with lower ranking employees to know of the challenges that will be expected on implementing such policies. Talking about the same policy, an example was shared where the policy states that a meter will be replaced after three days, however, the participant felt that is not the reality on the ground and they said it is impractical (Participant KP-5).

The study showed that there is a gap between external stakeholders and the internal reality facing the KP employees.

The staff changing meters will tell you that it cannot be done within three days because there are challenges in the stock and procurement, amongst other challenges. So, they should involve the staff that actually do the work to come up with the new service charter (Participant KP-3).

The Relationship Between Internal Branding and Employees’ Service Delivery

To establish the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery, statements about the staff comprehension of the organization’s activities, employee knowledge, and employee job satisfaction were evaluated. The findings are portrayed in Table 4.9.
### Table 4.9: Internal Branding and its Relationship to Service Delivery at KP (Quantitative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Mean response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully understand the mission of KP and it influences me in my work duties</td>
<td>53 (33.1%)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4 (2.5%)</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully understand core values of KP</td>
<td>54 (33.8%)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3 (1.9%)</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For me to do my job well I need to share the same values with the organization</td>
<td>60 (37.5%)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have enough knowledge of the organizational core values in order to deliver them to the customer</td>
<td>45 (28.1%)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1 (0.6%)</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more knowledge I have about the organization as a brand the bigger are my chances I will do a better job</td>
<td>72 (45.0%)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have clear understanding of what I need to do at work in order to reach the overall objective of KP</td>
<td>60 (37.5%)</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 (0.6%)</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the organizational core values and I use them to ensure the organizational promises are delivered to its customers</td>
<td>54 (33.8%)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vision of KP is a driving force when it comes to my interactions with customers</td>
<td>46 (28.8%)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am proud to be associated with KP</td>
<td>72 (45.0%)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel internally motivated to serve KP customers</td>
<td>55 (34.4%)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2 (1.3%)</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The internal communication flow of information within KP helps me do my job well</td>
<td>29 (18.1%)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3 (1.9%)</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The promises the organization gives externally to customers also applies to me as an employee</td>
<td>31 (19.4%)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10 (6.3%)</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We regularly have meetings to help in improving customer service</td>
<td>36 (22.5%)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6 (3.8%)</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify myself with the organization and what it stands for</td>
<td>43 (26.9%)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take it personally if someone comments negatively about the organization</td>
<td>39 (24.4%)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18 (11.3%)</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

71
The average responses of the 160 employees on the statements on a scale of 1-5 - 1-Strongly agreed, 2-agreed, 3-neutral, 4-disagreed, 5-strongly disagreed - were computed. The results indicated that, in this organization, the employees consented that the more knowledge they have about the organization as a brand, the bigger their chances of doing a better job. The respondents indicated that they have clear understanding of what they need to do at work in order to reach the overall objective of KP (mean response 1.78). Therefore, they were proud to be associated with KP (mean response 1.75).

Furthermore, this study carried out a correlation analysis to establish the employees’ biodata and their association with KP internal branding and the results are documented in Table 4.10. Pearson moment correlation analysis was used to establish employees’ biodata and their views on internal branding.

Table 4.10 shows the correlation of employees’ biodata and KP internal branding statements.
Table 4.10: Correlation Table of Employee’s Biodata and KP Branding Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stated Outcome</th>
<th>r-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>r-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>r-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully understand the mission of KP and it influences me in my work duties</td>
<td>-.071</td>
<td>.380</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.376</td>
<td>.243**</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully understand core values of KP</td>
<td>-.142</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.277**</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vision of KP is a driving force when it comes to interactions with customers</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.445</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.681</td>
<td>.271**</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proud to be associated with KP</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.554</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>.166*</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel internally motivated to serve KP customers</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>.181*</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For me to do my job well I need to share the same values with the organization</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.965</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.963</td>
<td>.202*</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vision of KP is a driving force when it comes to interactions with customers</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.355</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.535</td>
<td>.177*</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify myself with the organization and what it stands for</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.195</td>
<td>.239**</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have enough knowledge of the organizational core values in order to deliver them</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>.622</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>.835</td>
<td>.170*</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have clear understanding of what I need to do at work in order to reach the overall objective of KP</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.531</td>
<td>.134</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.227**</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the organizational core values and use them to ensure organizational promises delivery to customers</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.907</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>.217**</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We regularly have meetings to help in improving customer service</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.642</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>156</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: *indicate a significant p-value at 95% CI; same as the above table

Employees’ duration of service at the company and the academic qualification did not have any significant association with the company branding (P > 0.05). This means that employees’ academic qualification and duration at the company does not impact on the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery at KP. However, significant associations were established in branding with the employee at ages P > 0.05 as presented in Table 4.10. Based on these results (P > 0.05) it clearly means that at KP the age of employees was a determining factor in the...
successful implementation of rebranding. Therefore, it can be stated that at the company, employees’ age has influence on the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery.

From interviews of KP participants, a relationship between internal branding and customer service delivery during the rebranding processes in 2011 emerged.

_During rebranding all employees were taken through a course known as unlocking your potential and it was mandatory for all employees to attend. It was basically, changing our attitude towards our customers knowing that KP is a business and how each employee performs affects the customer as well as the company profits_ (Participant KP-3).

This study indicates that the approach used during the internal branding process was holistic and emphasised on the relationship between the overall organization perception by the customers and the implications on the business part of KP.

_Emphasis on the training was to also change the employee attitude towards the customers, work ethic and this was the core of the brand to change how we do business and how we treat the customers_ (Participant KP-5).

Participant KP-5 also stated that during the financial years following the rebranding, the company recorded high profits clearly showing that empowering the employees with internal branding had significantly improved the business part of KP. This also helped in establishing the relationship between service delivery and internal branding.

_Currently internal branding is not being carried out like it was done in the past and I feel this is a failure on the management. For the first time KP reported losses in the financial year of 2018-2019 and this has led to major financial constraints in the organization. Continuation of internal branding as experienced in 2011 should have propelled the organization to a better image, organizational culture as well as inculcating new employees with the same culture_ (Participant KP-5).

The interviews further showed that currently, employees at KP learn about new products and services via email. They also access information from both the
mainstream media and social media and in some cases from customers. Some employees get to know about the organization’s products via media as opposed to internal communication processes. It was noted that this approach caused delayed service delivery because when new products are introduced, customers learn about them at the same time as employees. Participant (KP-3) added as stated below:

There is a gap in that the information of new products is provided to the customers before the employees have a chance to access the information. For example, front line employees get to learn about the new products and services at the same time with the customers or in some cases they learn from the customers before the company informs them on the new product (Participant KP-3).

The current study showed that this affects service delivery in that there is a new product and the customer service representative is not aware of the product, but they have a customer who is inquiring about the product. In that kind of scenario, KP front line employees are left without information to provide to the customer concerning the inquiry. In turn, this leaves the customer wondering how an employee of KP would not be aware of a product that is already present in the media hence losing trust with the organization. Participant KP-3 also mentioned that the employees should be given information on the new product first before it’s passed on to the customers.

An ICT manager said that it was important for employees to receive information before the customers. Participant (KP-3) added below:

For any product, even before it is sent out to the public, we should have internal communication and the most effective method to communicate such information is through team talks or morning briefs or at least a meeting with those expected to implement. We should let all employees get to know about our products through those channels before even letting the public know. It looks odd for the public to know more of our products than our own employees (Participant KP-3).
In terms of communication at the company, it was noted that more emphasis is on customer education as compared to the staff education. This is because communication is mainly through the media without the staff being informed first. For example, a new product called 95551 or Mulika Mwizi was put out on the mainstream and social media, before majority of the staff learnt about the product and they learned about it from the customers.

For example, the Last Mile project, most of the staff learnt it through the President’s launch in the media and majority of the frontline employees, like call centre staff and customer service representatives received a lot of inquiries on the same but they did not have any information to provide to the customers (Participant KP-4).

Participant KP-2 interviewed from operations and maintenance department indicated that information flow in the organization is wanting. He went on to state that internal branding educates the employees on the brand values and expectations and at the same time it creates an emotional attachment with the organization.

Summary of Key Findings

The first objective of the study was to establish the communication methods employed to educate employees about the brand at KP.

The study showed that employees mostly hear about the KP mission, vision, core values, logo, and symbol discussed mainly through trainings (50.0%) and internal meetings (49.4%).

In terms of meetings, slightly more than half of the employees noted that they have team meetings more than once in month while the rest either had a meeting in a month or none. However, the most used communication channel to engage employees is through notice boards (89.4%) and memos (38.8%).
The formal communication, as opposed to informal communication is mainly used; while top-down approach is highly used while discussing the core values related to service delivery at KP - mostly from the director to staff.

However, the interviews with KP departmental heads showed that in 2011 when KP was engaged in rebranding, several internal strategies were also employed. The strategies included changing company colours and educating the staff on the new brand through meetings and trainings to improve employee skills. The interviews also indicated that emails and newsletters are mostly used as a mode of communication.

The second objective sought to investigate the challenges encountered in internal branding for KP. The qualitative data showed that there are three key challenges that have been encountered. The first challenge is that the concerted efforts of internal branding employed during the external branding in 2011 were not sustained as soon as the campaign was over. The second challenge is that new changes and initiatives are normally announced externally to the consumers before the employees are informed internally, which has resulted to a crisis in some instances. For example, the customer service department has received calls about products they are not aware of. Lastly, internal communication between departments is weak and as a result, there is a lack of synergy between departments.

To establish the relationship between internal branding and employee service delivery, statements about employee understanding of the company activities, employee knowledge, and employee job satisfaction were evaluated.

First, the employees consented that; the more knowledge they have about the organization as a brand, the higher their chances of doing a better job. Majority of the respondents indicated that they have a clear understanding of what they need to do at work in order to reach the overall objective of KP. Therefore, they were proud to be...
associated with KP (mean response 1.75). Significant associations were established between branding and the ages of employees. The age of employees, based on this study’s findings, was a determining factor in the successful implementation of rebranding at the company. This has influenced the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery.

Secondly, for service delivery to be effective, continuous internal branding process should be implemented. For instance, after the rebranding of KP in 2011, internal branding stopped immediately and in turn it affected the service delivery in the organization which led to KP experiencing losses.

Thirdly, employee education should be more emphasised than customer education. Having customers more informed than the employees is a risk as they may need additional information from the staff at KP and in turn the staff may not have information on the same. For service delivery to be effective employee education on the company brand and its products should be emphasised.

Summary

In this chapter, the research data, its analysis, as well its interpretation has been presented. The data has been presented in the form of figures and tables through descriptive statistics. The qualitative data from the interviews was also analysed thematically. The process of organizing and analysing the data was done through SPSS, version 22.0. The next chapter delves into the discussion of the study findings, the study recommendations, conclusions, and finalizes with suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the study’s key findings which was guided by the following objectives: to establish the communication methods employed to educate employees on the brand at KP; to evaluate the challenges encountered during internal branding at KP; and to determine the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery at KP.

In addition, the chapter provides the conclusion, recommendations, and the suggestions for further research based on this study’s findings.

Discussions of Key Findings

The Communication Methods Employed to Educate Employees on the Brand

The study revealed that most employees get information about the KP mission, vision, core values, logo, and symbol through discussions during trainings (50.0%) and internal meetings (49.4%). Other communication methods used were departmental meetings and external meetings. These communication strategies are an important part of internal branding as they aid in the employees education about the brand promise. This in turn leads to improved customer service delivery by the employees as they are more informed on the brand promise.

According to the existing theories of internal branding communication is a key component of internal branding in an organization (Santos-Vijande, del Río-Lanza, Suárez-Álvarez, & Díaz-Martín, 2013; Vallaster & De Chernatony, 2006). The theories posited that the mission, vision, core values, logo, and symbol of a company
should be made part of the employees’ lives. Thus, this suggests that the KP brand message should further be adapted in all the employees’ channels of communication.

Based on the in-depth interviews carried out, the inception of branding messages in the company has changed a lot of things; at least the employees know the company vision and the direction they are supposed to take in the company. However, this study further stated that the perception of the brand being communicated is based on the individual employee. The interviewed respondents emphasized that no matter what one learns from the trainings and meetings, real change and attitude about the brand depends on the individual employee.

Du Preez and Bendixen (2015); and Punjaistri and Wilson (2017) stressed on the importance of communication in the concept of internal branding and its link to the employees’ perception of the company brand. For proper internal branding, employees should have congruent perceptions about the organization’s brand. In view of this, similar perceptions concerning the company brand at KP may be fundamental to the success of internal branding in positively influencing customer service delivery.

The communication approach that is normally used at KP was stated by most of the employees (55.6%) as very formal in the form of staff meetings or information boards. However, 31.9% of the employees noted that it is somehow formal while to 6.3% of the employees the communication is very informal in the form of daily conversations or staff events. As reviewed by Mone and London (2018), increased employee engagement in the company by means of communication impacts on their understanding and commitment in fulfilling their roles within the company. Communication as an aspect of internal branding is meant to strengthen employees’ commitment to the company’s brand and facilitate the comprehension of the
company’s values, mission, and vision now and in the future (Piha & Avlonitis, 2018).

The approach used to communicate the brand could affect how employees deliver services to customers. In this study, 88% of the respondents agreed that formal type of communication approach is mostly used at KP and it reflects on the imbalance in communication approaches which can impact the brand image. This observation is supported by Castillo (2017) who acknowledged that through internal communications, employees can either “make or break a brand”.

At KP, notice boards (89.4%) and memos (38.8%) are the most used communication channels in engaging employees. The company also uses emails, letters, internal telephone calls, and WhatsApp in communicating with the employees. This was confirmed by the in-depth interviews that were conducted in this study. The respondents stated that the rebranding message has been communicated using various channels. The way internal branding message is disseminated influences customer service delivery so long as the methods of dissemination are appealing to internal customers (Baker, Rapp, Meyer, & Mullins, 2014). These sentiments are supported by Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2012) who stated that all channels of communication at work are important when creating a strong brand image among the employees.

The information flow while discussing the core values that would help in terms of service delivery at KP was mostly from director to staff (73.1%) and from staff to staff (13.8%). Similar observations were echoed by respondents during the interviews in this current study. Respondents revealed that during the 2011 company rebranding, information was cascaded from the managing director to general managers to chief managers who would then pass it to the regional managers. The
regional management would then assume the role of trainer and would go to other branches of the company country wide to cascade the same information to their staff.

Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2012) believed that if employees are to be a part of the brand, the company should involve them through a two-way communication. When it is possible for employees to share goals and values in their work, they become loyal to the internal brand (Gelb & Rangarajan, 2014). In internal branding, top-down and bottom-up communication within the company result in brand development activities that are more efficient in improving customer service delivery.

Apparently, there was some kind of disparity on the flow of information between the employees at KP. Employees who have worked for 11-20 years said that both downward and upward communication flow takes place while the employees who have served the company for a less duration state that the communication flow is downward. Being in the managerial position, the former group of employees found that communication flow is both downward and upward since they are involved in the executing and implementation process in KP.

Sharma and Kamalanabhan (2012) established that internal communications, by use of mainstream media in addition to word-of-mouth, has a positive impact on employees’ brand identification, commitment, and on service delivery to external customers. In collaboration, this study showed that during the rebranding of KP, word-of-mouth communication was used to educate the staff on the new brand. The new brand values were first introduced to the top management. They were then tasked with distribution of the information regarding the new brand values to all the company offices in their respective regions. This was done by having team meetings in all the KP offices where the information was passed by word-of-mouth. It was further observed by Grace and O’Cass (2005) that word-of-mouth communication is
an important influential factor in creating awareness and attitudes of the brand as perceived by internal customers.

Majority of the employees (54.4%) noted that they often have team meetings once in a month. To other employees (18.1%), the team meetings occur more than once a month while to 8.8% of the employees, they do not have team meetings. This study indicated that clear, consistent, and honest internal branding communication is indeed an imperative management tool for employees in delivering services to customers. Consistent internal communication encourages employees in service delivery by keeping the workforce energised, focused, and productive (Smith & Mounter, 2008).

In contrast, as mentioned by Lockwood (2007), lack of consistence in communication or poorly communicated internal branding message can lead to distrust, dissatisfaction, scepticism, cynicism, and poor service delivery to customers. In the current study, the focus of the team meetings held at the company is on operational procedures related to employee job and department (65.0%). These results are opposed by a study done by Punjaisri and Wilson (2017) who observed that an organization should always focus on educating its employees on its mission, culture, values, and vision. Moreover, Ferdous (2008) believed that internal branding is a critical tool that must be managed to create an alignment between the internal and external customers, and this must begin with the organization’s mission and vision.

Most of the employees attended training in the company either a month ago (31.3%) or a year ago (31.3%). Only 9.4% attended training merely a week ago. Although 5.0% of the employees stated that they had never attended any training. The focus of the training was on operational procedures related to employee job and department (38.1 %) and on how to improve work skills (24.4 %). Most of the
respondents revealed that the rebranding process is not on going at the company. The new employees are left to learn about the brand by themselves. The respondents emphasised that internal branding at the company is one of the events that had no follow up after its inception.

For internal branding to positively impact on customer service delivery, Khan (2009); and To et al. (2015) believed that employees should manage to fulfil and deliver the company’s brand promise. For this reason, the company needs to implement the concept of internal branding through consistent communication of brand value messages that have an influence on employees’ behaviours (Punjaisri et al., 2009a). Emphasis must be put on communication so as to deliver a consistent message which is associated with the overall company brand.

On analysing the interview transcripts of this study, it was shown that employees’ preferred method of learning about new company products is through emails (50.6%) and trainings (49.4%). Other methods include team meetings, newsletters, internet, posters, and colleagues. In communication, it is important for any message that is communicated to be packaged from the point of view of the audience (Foreman & Argenti, 2005). This approach keeps employees informed on what is going on in the company. Altogether, the identified internal branding tools provide employees with essential information and knowledge that enables them to effectively follow the standards of the brand and deliver quality service to customers.

Past literature has revealed the significance of communication practices in internal branding and customer service delivery in organizations (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2013; Du Preez & Bendixen, 2015; Mishra, Sharma, & Kamalanabhan, 2016). Internal brand communication has been profiled as a critical element of improving employees’ performance and customer service delivery.
More research works on internal branding have supported the role of communication on employees’ attitude towards the brand and employees’ brand performance (Du Preez & Bendixen, 2015; Gelb & Rangarajan, 2014; Mazzei, 2010). These studies, just like the current study, postulate that there is a strong relationship between communication and employees’ brand performance. Therefore, communication is a critical tool for internal branding that when well implemented promotes employees’ positive attitude towards the brand and provision of quality services by the employees.

The Challenges Encountered During Internal Branding

This study required to evaluate the challenges encountered at KP during internal branding. In evaluating the challenges, respondents were required to answer several statements which included among others: the way the mission and vision of KP is communicated to them; if they feel competent to share KP vision and mission with other people; and if there are adequate trainings that have been set up for employees to understand KP mission, vision, and core values. Most of the employees (31.9%) strongly agreed and agreed (32.5%) that the way the KP mission and vision is communicated helps them to practice it. This was represented by a mean response of 2.20. Wheeler (2017) pointed out that the more profoundly a company’s mission, vision, and values are communicated to employees, the more supportive they will be of the company’s promises in regard to the brand, and the more they will implement the promises into their service delivery to customers.

At the response mean of 2.628, the respondents strongly agreed 31(19.4%) that the management involves employees in the execution of KP core values while 54(33.8%) also agreed to this statement. With 53.2% of the respondents supporting this statement, it is a sign that KP recognises how critical employees are in building a
powerful service brand. Employees, especially those who interact with customers, have a crucial role since their vital function is to deliver the brand promise and fulfil the customers’ expectations. They become the face of the brand as they meet and assist the customers on acquiring the services offered by the company. Punjaisri and Wilson (2017) have echoed similar sentiments.

On the other hand, at a mean of 2.518 it was strongly agreed (22.5%) and agreed (35.0%) that there are trainings that have been set up for employees to understand the mission, vision, and core values of KP. Also, at a mean of 2.587 it was strongly agreed (17.5%) and agreed (33.1%) that there are efforts that have been made to help employees understand and appreciate KP’s logo and symbol. With about 50% of the respondents remaining neutral and disagreeing with these statements, it can be concluded that some employees at KP do not understand and embrace the company’s logo and symbol.

Previous research works have shown that most employees do not believe in or understand their company’s brand promise (King & Grace, 2008). In a study carried out among the Swedish companies regarding their employees’ insight on the companies’ visions and values, it was found that 31% of the employees did not believe in the visions and values of the companies (Davies, Mete, & Whelan, 2018).

The respondents in this study, when asked about their emotional attachment to the company, 20.7% who strongly agreed and 31.5% who agreed revealed that they feel emotionally attached to the mission and values of KP. This was demonstrated by a response mean of 2.519. Employees’ attitude and behaviour during service delivery to customers influences the customers’ perception about the brand and the delivery of quality service (Lynch & De Chernatony, 2004; Punjaisri et al, 2009a).
Employees are the service providers hence they act as a bridge between the company and its external stakeholders who are its customers. For this reason, they have a great influence on how internal branding can consequently lead to the customer’s impression towards the brand (Chong, 2007). A company should therefore work towards aligning the behaviours and attitudes of employees with the company brand and company values so that in addition to correctly demonstrating the brand they also deliver its promise at each service encounter.

In the present study, 36.9% of the respondents agreed that they feel competent to share the KP mission and vision with other people while 21.3% of the respondents agreed strongly with that statement. This was presented by a response mean of 2.365. To ensure consistency of the brand experience to customers, employees need to be able to understand their brand’s values. Consequently, they will appreciate their roles in carrying out their brand’s values and their commitment to delivering quality customer service will increase. Scholars, for example Piehler et al. (2018), have placed emphasis on internal branding to ensure staff’s appreciation of the mission and vision of their organizations and use them as a guide in service delivery to customers.

When asked if the KP management sets aside time to discuss with employees’ on the internal changes taking place within the organization, 26.9% of the respondents agreed to that while 15.0% agreed strongly at a response mean of 2.86. With only 41.9% agreeing to this statement it shows that the company has not done much to ensure that employees get to know about the internal changes taking place in the company. It is vital for the employees to be informed about the changes within the company so that they can pass on the right message to the customers concerning what the organization does (Punjaissri & Wilson, 2017).
Finally, 21.9% and 30% of the participants strongly agreed and agreed respectively, at a response mean of 2.593, that they are satisfied with the communication channels that are used to engage employees at KP. This partly means that the company is actively working with its internal communication channels in order to effectively implement internal branding and ensure that all employees feel involved. However, with over 49.0% of the respondents remaining neutral and not agreeing with this statement it is a sign that there is still a lot that needs to be done at the company in terms of satisfactory communication channels. Brand communication must speak to everyone in the organization (Chong, 2007). In this case, using multiple communication channels and mechanisms is recommended. It is crucial that all employees understand how their roles influence and contribute to service delivery.

This study further illustrated the association between the employees’ biodata and the challenges experienced during internal branding in the company. The results obtained using Chi-square test showed significant association of gender with the challenge of management’s involvement of the employees in execution of KP core values (P = 0.001); employees’ ages with availability of trainings that have been set for employees to understand KP mission, vision, and core values (P = 0.050). Based on these analyses, some of the challenges encountered during internal branding are moderated by personal variables like age and gender. Yu et al. (2018) documented how gender and age can influence implementation of some elements of internal branding.

The current study, in evaluating the qualitative aspect of the challenges encountered during internal branding, inquired to know who is more informed between the employees and customers on new products and services at the company. Based on the results, respondents unanimously believed that customers are more
informed of the new products and services at the company as compared to the employees. In terms of communication at the company, it was commonly agreed by the respondents that more emphasis is given to customer education as opposed to the staff education. This aspect as revealed in the present study is contrary to what other scholars have recommended. For instance, Davies et al. (2018) noted that ultimately companies must first communicate their brand promise to their employees before their customers. Ahmad, Iqbal, Kanwal, Javed, and Javed (2014) stated that the role of internal branding is to ensure that employees understand the company’s goals and objectives so that they have a passion for their work which translates to proper customer service delivery. Baumann, Le Meunier-FitzHugh, and Wilson (2017) further posited that if employees do not understand the brand identity, they can easily undermine customer expectations which might lead to poor service delivery.

When asked about the level of support to employees by the management, 22.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that the management is supportive of their initiatives, 60.0% were neutral and 17.50% indicated not supportive. These statistics reflect on how leadership can influence the role of internal branding in a company (Vallaster & De Chernatony, 2005). Similar results were documented by Piehler, Hanisch, and Burmann (2015) who described internal branding concept based on management and challenges.

The Relationship Between Internal Branding and Employees’ Service Delivery at KP

To establish the relationship between internal branding and employee service delivery, statements about employee understanding of the company activities, employee knowledge, and employee job satisfaction were evaluated. The findings of the evaluation indicated that the employees at KP ascertained that the more knowledge they have about the company as a brand, the bigger their chances are of
doing a better job (mean response 1.75). This result confirms earlier studies, for example, Foster et al. (2010) stated that proper internal branding equips employees with necessary knowledge which improves their potential to convey the promise of the brand to its external customers. In addition, Mosley (2007) argued that, based on the internal branding concept, engaged and satisfied employees are more knowledgeable and are likely to deliver a consistently positive service experience.

The respondents in this study ascertained that they have a clear understanding of what they need to do at work in order to reach the overall objective of KP (mean response 1.78). Therefore, they were proud to be associated with KP (mean response 1.75). A shared brand understanding among employees engender a successful practice of internal branding that creates devoted personnel who deliver on the brand values as well as the brand promise. Employees understanding of and connection with the brand is critical as they have the power to influence customers’ perceptions and knowledge of the brand. King and Grace (2008) supported this when they asserted that once employees are aligned with the brand identity, the customers will have a uniform brand experience against their actual experience with the brand’s employees.

At a response mean of 1.92, 33.8% of the respondents strongly agreed while 44.4% agreed with the statement that they understand the organization’s core values and use them to ensure the organization’s promises are delivered to its customers. These results imply that internal branding plays a role in improving customer service delivery through dissemination of the organization’s core values among the employees. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the company core values and how they are implemented internally can enhance improved customer service delivery.

Employees’ commitment to the organization’s core values exerts a mediating effect on how internal branding improves customer service delivery because it is
linked with the extent to which employees perform the delivery of the brand promise (Punjaisri & Wilson 2011). Nonetheless, these results contradict some of the qualitative findings which showed that KP staff generally do not understand the brand promise and do not work together as a team to fulfil the customers’ needs.

The statement that the vision of KP is a driving force when it comes to interaction between the employees and the customers was strongly accepted at 28.8% and agreed upon at 46.9% with a response rate of 2.0. These findings confirm the link between a company’s internal branding efforts and ultimately its employees’ ability to perform in service delivery (Punjaisri et al., 2009a). The current study results as well present a strong support for the power of internal branding concept in helping to develop positivity among staff which empowers them to execute improved services to their customers.

From the results, 45.0% strongly agreed while 38.1% agreed to the statement that they are proud to be associated with KP at response rate of 1.75. This result reflects what other literatures (Foster et al., 2010; King & Grace 2008; Punjaisri et al., 2009a; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011) have documented about employees’ behaviour and attitudes acting as a link between internal branding and service delivery. Employees’ attitudes and behaviour have a crucial impact in their contact with the customer (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2010; King & Grace, 2012). The development of consistent positive attitudes in employees and the emotional culture of their workplace in the end leads to the customer receiving high quality services (Sirianni, Bitner, Brown, & Mandel, 2013).

The respondents strongly agreed (34.4%) and agreed (37.5%) that they feel internally motivated to serve KP customers (mean response 2.05). This shows that the management can use internal branding to directly shape their employees’ behaviours
to be in line with the brand values. Du Preez and Bendixen (2015) posited that internal branding impacts on the behaviour of employees in ways that support the successful delivery of the brand promise. Another suggestion based on this finding, within the customer service delivery context, is the mediating effect of internal branding between employees and their brand performance.

The statement that internal communication flow within KP helps employees to do their job well was strongly agreed to (18.1%) and agreed to (46.3%) by respondents at a 2.30 response rate. In line with past studies, this study reveals the relationship between communication and internal branding. Brand communication positively influences employees’ commitment to the brand, suggesting that when employees are committed to the brand the company can expect improvement in the employees’ customer service delivery. De Chernatony (2010) believed that internal communications should come first in an internal branding exercise aimed at securing stakeholders’ commitment and encouraging their behavioural change to support the brand.

At a response rate of 1.81, 37.5% of the respondents strongly agreed while 48.1% agreed that for them to do their job well they need to share the same values with the organization. These findings suggest that internal branding can enable a company to influence employees’ brand identification in terms of their sense of belonging, emotional attachment, loyalty to the brand and commitment to the brand through shared company values. When employees internalize the brand values, they are likely to deliver the brand promise across all contact points between the company and its customers (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009). The respondents appreciated that they regularly have meetings and trainings to help in improving customer service delivery with 22.5% strongly agreeing and 44.4% agreeing to this statement at a
response rate of 2.33. Meetings and training that are aimed at enhancing employee performance are essential in ensuring quality service delivery.

The respondents appreciated the fact that the promises the organization gives externally to customers also applies to them as employees. This was at a response rate of 2.37, where (19.4%) of the respondents strongly agreed and (43.8%) agreed with the statement. Customers show appreciation of the services that they receive through knowledge and skills of employees by their perception of the brand promise. Therefore, this implies that a company can easily improve service provision to their customers when they consistently get it right in terms of internal branding (Asha & Jyothi, 2013).

The respondents also agreed (80.7%) at a response rate of 1.94 that they identify themselves with the organization and what it stands for. In addition, the respondents agreed (58.2%) with a response rate of 2.55, that they personally feel offended when someone comments negatively about the company. These findings reveal that emotional and commitment aspects of employees are important elements in the relationship between internal branding and service delivery (Herington, Scott, & Johnson, 2005; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2017). This study posited that internal branding could strengthen the relationship that the employees have with the brand. Although previous studies have not suggested the link between these themes, this research hypothesizes that employees’ attitudes, sense of belonging, and behaviour as influenced by internal branding have an impact on their delivery of services to customers.

The correlation analysis done to establish the employees’ biodata and its association with KP internal branding showed that employees’ duration of service at the company and their academic qualification did not have any significant association
with the company brand \((P \leq 0.05)\). However, significant associations were established between the company brand and the employees’ ages \((P \leq 0.05)\). In a related study, Davies and Chun (2012) reported the effects of age on corporate brand associations. In their study, they concluded that the symbolism of the employee to the customer due to their age can be important in creating associations with the corporate brand.

During in-depth interviews, the respondents had varied opinions. From the qualitative point of view, some opined that inter departmental sharing of internal branding information has not been established at KP since each department keeps information to itself.

Participant KP-4 mentioned below:

*In fact, we should work towards a seamless kind of workflow between these departments and really there should be no walls as to who is doing what because at the end of the day, we are serving the same customer* (Participant KP-4).

This portrays how the relationship between internal branding and employees’ service delivery can be influenced by situational variables like inter departmental communication flow.

When asked if there is deliberate withholding of information from one department to another especially to the staff in direct contact with the customer, the respondent insisted that it is the communication flow that is not effective.

*In my opinion internal communication within KP is wanting* (participant KP-4).

The respondents also opined that communication improvement at the company should not be left to the communication department alone. It should be an all-inclusive initiative starting from all the managers and departmental heads. They should ensure that information flow is cascaded both ways, top-down and bottom-up...
or rather vertically and horizontally. Internal communication is perceived as a key mechanism of internal branding. Based on the findings of the current study the effects of these internal branding mechanisms on customer service delivery are moderated by personal variables like age and education and situational variables such as relationships with colleagues and organization leaders. Similar views were shared by Punjaisri and Wilson (2011) who sought to determine the extent to which personal and job specific factors impact on the success of internal branding.

It was also revealed by the interviews done in this study that the management does not continuously engage the employees in implementing policies and ways of improving customer service.

When they are coming up with new policies they should involve the people on the ground. Like now there is a new customer service charter which was made by top management. They don’t seat with lower ranking employees to know of the challenges that will be expected on implementing such policies. For example, it states a meter will be replaced after three days, is that on paper or the reality on the ground. The staff changing meters will tell you why it cannot be done within three days because there are challenges in the stock procurement (Participant KP-1).

Burmann et al. (2009) observed that cementing a positive relationship with employees is a qualification for a good customer-organization relationship. In addition, King and Grace (2008) postulated that a good organization-employee relationship positively impacts the performance of employees in delivering customer service.

Conclusion

The study made the following conclusions:

Internal communication as a component of internal branding is one of the significant factors responsible for bringing about positive change in attitudes of employees and their performance. Therefore, internal communication influences
employees’ attitudes and behaviour towards the brand which subsequently affects service delivery. Based on the findings of this study, it is apparent that communication is an important aspect of internal branding and it significantly impacts on the organization’s functioning and subsequent customer service delivery.

Situational factors pertaining to the work environment, for instance relationships with colleagues and the management as well as personal variables such as age and gender, were found to challenge the implementation of internal branding. However, these findings did not explicitly reveal how these situational factors hamper internal branding.

Internal branding positively affects attitudes and behaviours of employees and therefore enhances customer service delivery.

Internal branding enhances brand orientation within the company, helps implement brand-building activities, and ensures that employees are familiar with the objectives and characteristics of the brand which assists them in delivering services to customers.

This research recognizes that employees’ positive perceptions toward their colleagues and leaders could enhance the effect that internal branding has on their attitudes toward the brand and their behaviours in delivering improved service to customers. However, the effects of personal variables such as age and gender on the employees’ perception should also be considered.

Recommendations

In relation to the findings of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

Brand communication methods at KP company are not completely effective as they are concerned predominantly with training sessions and team meetings. They
must be expanded to include other current communication measures that can incorporate internal branding programs which are not perceived to be time consuming. Communication of the brand within the company should be carried out quarterly in all the company offices country wide.

Internal branding is critical in the delivery of service and should be adapted as a strategy of change regarding enhancement of customer service delivery of a company.

There is need for wide publicity of rebranding exercises to create greater awareness among the internal customers. There is also need for creation of adequate awareness covering all the expected and actual dimensions of internal branding majorly to curb the challenge of unawareness among employees.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study focused on communication as a construct of internal branding. Further studies can look at a broader integrative framework of internal branding across marketing, management, and human resource disciplines.

Some organizations may have a specific culture which is not shared by others, thereby limiting the application of this study’s findings to other organizations. There is need for researchers to carry out investigations concerning internal branding in other organizations other than KP.

This study was carried out at KP in Nairobi which entails different dynamics of work environment. Therefore, in order to come up with more a robust internal branding model, this study suggests replications of the relationships tested in this study be carried out in different regions of the country.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Questionnaire for Kenya Power employees

This research is to find your opinion on the role of internal branding in provision of customer service at Kenya Power Ltd. This questionnaire is a part of Master of Arts in Communication at Daystar University and is completely anonymous. The information provided will be used for academic purpose and as such going to be confidential. Please indicate the correct option as honestly and as correctly as possible by checking a TICK (✓) on one of the options. For the questions that require your opinion, please complete the blanks. Thank you.

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Please indicate your gender [Tick where appropriate]
   - Male
   - Female

2. Please indicate your age [Tick where appropriate]
   - Below 20 Years [ ]
   - 21-30 Years [ ]
   - 31-40 Years [ ]
   - 41-50 Years [ ]
   - Above 50 Years [ ]

3. What is your highest academic qualification? [Tick where appropriate]
   - Primary School [ ]
   - High School [ ]
   - Certificate [ ]
   - Diploma [ ]
   - Higher Diploma [ ]
   - Degree [ ]
   - Masters [ ]
   - Doctorate (PhD) [ ]
   - Other [ ]

4. How long have you been employed by Kenya Power? [Tick where appropriate]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less than 1 year</th>
<th>1-5 years</th>
<th>6-10 years</th>
<th>11-20 years</th>
<th>21-30 years</th>
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</thead>
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SECTION 2 A: INTERNAL BRANDING COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES EMPLOYED

1. I mostly hear about the Kenya Power mission, vision, core values, logo and symbol discussed through the following ways (tick 2 where appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departmental meetings</th>
<th>Internal meetings</th>
<th>Trainings</th>
<th>External meetings</th>
<th>No where</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. What is the communication approach that is normally used at KP (Kindly pick one)?

[ ] Very formal
[ ] Somehow formal
[ ] Very informal
[ ] Somehow informal

3. Which communication channels are normally used to engage employees at KP? (Pick 3 which are commonly used)

[ ] Internal telephone calls  [ ] Notice boards
[ ] Emails  [ ] Letters
[ ] Memos  [ ] WhatsApp chat/chat rooms
[ ] Face to face meetings  [ ] Other

4. How does information normally flow while discussing the core values that would help in terms of service delivery at KP (Tick where appropriate)

a) From directors to staff  [ ]
b) From staff to directors  [ ]
c) From staff to staff  [ ]
d) Grapevine/Rumours  [ ]
e) Others  [ ]

5. How do you learn about new changes in the company? (You may tick 2 options)

Team meeting  [ ]  Newsletters  [ ]
6. How often do you have team meetings?

- Once a week
- More than once a week
- Once a month
- More than once a month
- Never

7. What is the main focus of the meeting?

- New products and processes in other departments
- Company values
- Operational procedures related to your job and department
- Improving your work skills
- Others (specify)

8. When is the last time you attended organisational training?

- A week ago
- A month ago
- One year ago
- More than a year
- Never

9. What was the main focus of the training?

- New products and processes in other departments
- How to realize company values, mission and vision
- Operational procedures related to your job and department
- Improving your work skills
- Others (specify)

10. What is your preferred method on learning about new company products?

   (You may tick 2 options)

   - Team meeting
   - Newsletters
   - Training
   - Customers
   - Emails
   - Intranet
   - Posters
   - Colleagues
   - Other (Specify) ____________________________

SECTION 2B: CHALLENGES TOWARDS INTERNAL BRANDING
11. The following statements are related to how you feel in regard to internal branding challenges at Kenya Power. For each statement please say whether you strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree with it. (1-Strongly Agree, 2–Agree, 3-Neutral, 4 –Disagree, 5 –Strongly Disagree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges towards how the brand is communicated internally</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The way KP mission and vision is communicated helps me to practice it</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The management involves the employees in execution of KP core values</td>
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<tr>
<td>There are trainings that have been set for employees to understand KP mission, vision and core values</td>
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<td>There are efforts that have been made to help me understand and appreciate KP logos and symbols</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel emotionally connected to KP mission and values</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel competent to share KP vision and mission to other people</td>
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<tr>
<td>The KP management sets time aside to discuss with employees’ internal changes taking place within the organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the communication channels that are used to engage employees at KP</td>
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</table>

12. The management is supportive of employee initiatives:

   - Very supportive [ ]
   - Neutral [ ]
   - Not supportive [ ]

SECTION 2C: INTERNAL BRANDING AND ITS RELATIONSHIP IN CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY

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12) Kindly rate the below statements in a scale of 1 to 5 depending on your level of agreement about their importance in service provision;

(1 - Strongly Agree, 2 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Disagree, 5 – Strongly Disagree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I fully understand the mission of KP and it influences me in my work duties</td>
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<tr>
<td>I fully understand core values of KP</td>
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<td>The vision of KP is a driving force when it comes to my interactions with customers</td>
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<td>I am proud to be associated with KP</td>
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<td>I feel internally motivated to serve KP customers</td>
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<td>In order for me to do my job well I need to share the same values with the organisation</td>
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<td>The internal communication flow of information within KP helps me do my job well</td>
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<td>The promises the organisation gives externally to customers also applies to me as an employee</td>
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<td>I identify myself with the organisation and what it stands for</td>
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<td>I take it personally if someone comments negatively about the organisation</td>
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<td>I have enough knowledge of the organisational core values in order to deliver them to the customer.</td>
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<td>The more knowledge I have about the organisation as a brand the bigger are my</td>
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<td>chances I will do a better job</td>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<td>I have clear understanding of what I need to do at work in order to reach the overall objective of Kenya Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand the organisational core values and I use them to ensure the organisational promises are delivered to its customers</td>
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<td>We regularly have meetings to help in improving customer service</td>
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Appendix B: Interview Guide

Interview Guide for KP Departmental Heads (Participant KP-1,5).

This guide seeks to understand your opinion regarding internal branding at Kenya Power

1. What are the some of the communication tools used for internal branding to educate the employees on the mission, vision and core values
   a. In the rebranding of KP that was done in 2011 what were the major messages passed through external branding (Customers)
   b. What are some of the tools used in the rebranding process and were they effective?
   c. How were the new company mission, vision and core values communicated to the employees internally? Is the process still on going?
   d. Did the management take time to educate the staff on the new brand? Were the methods used effective?
   e. How internal branding is communicated currently at Kenya Power?

2. How do you learn about the new products or services within Kenya Power?

3. Are customers more informed about what Kenya Power stands for in terms of service delivery than the members of staff? Is new information or products to be offered by Kenya Power first passed to the staff or the customers?

4. What has more emphasis in terms of communication within KP, is it staff education or customer education?

5. Do Kenya Power staffs understand the brand promise, and do you believe they work together as “one team” to deliver to the customers’ needs?

6. Do you believe that continuous employee engagement by consistently implementing the brand message will improve service delivery?
Appendix C: Oral Consent Form

Oral Consent

Hello, my name is Miriam Mbau and I am conducting a survey by administering questionnaires and interviews about “The role of internal branding in improving customer service delivery: a case study of Kenya Power.” The survey is part of research for my masters at Daystar University’s school of Communication in Nairobi, Kenya.

Are you still interested in taking part in the project? [Await confirmation]. Now I’d like to confirm some of the details of the project to make sure you understand what’s involved for you:

- If you agree to take part, I’ll need you to fill the questionnaire lasting approximately 20 minutes at your workstation.
- It is not likely that there will be any harms or discomforts associated with taking part in this study. If you should experience any adverse effects, you can stop taking part in the survey.
- I will keep the information you tell me during the interview confidential. Information I put in my report that could identify you will not be published or shared beyond the research team unless we have your permission. Any data from this research which will be shared or published will be the combined data of all participants. That means it will be reported for the whole group not for individual persons.
- I will store your information/data safely and confidentially and will keep the research data for 10 years after publication. I would like to be able to use your anonymised information/data in future studies, and to share this information/data with other researchers.
- If you have any complaints or concerns, please feel free to contact me in the first instance. My mobile is 0720-871900.

Do you have any questions?
Do you give your permission for me to interview you?
Do you give me permission to audio record you?
Do you give your permission for me to re-contact you to clarify information?
Are you happy to take part?
Kindly sign here ……………………………Date …………………………..
Ok, thanks, in which case let’s start
Appendix D: Ethical Clearance

Dear Miriam,

RE: THE ROLE OF INTERNAL BRANDING IN IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA POWER.

This is to inform you that Daystar University Ethics Review Board has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is DU-ERB-000364. The approval period is 11th October, 2019 – 10th October, 2020.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

i. Only approved documents including [informed consents, study instruments, MTA] will be used

ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by Daystar University Ethics Review Board

iii. Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to Daystar University Ethics Review Board within 72 hours of notification

iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to Daystar University Ethics Review Board within 72 hours

v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.

vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.

vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to Daystar University Ethics Review Board.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) https://oris.nacosti.go.ke and also obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

Purity Kiambi
Secretary, ERB

REF: DU-ERB/11/10/ 2019/000364

Date: 11-10-2019

TO: Miriam Wanjiiku Mbau
Appendix E: NACOSTI Research Permit

This is to Certify that Ms. Miriam Mbug of Daystar University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic:
THE ROLE OF INTERNAL BRANDING IN IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA POWER for the period ending: 24/October/2020.

License No: NACOSTI/19/2260

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

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Appendix F: Research Approval by Kenya Power

Kenya Power

The Kenya Power & Lighting Co. Ltd.
Central Office – P.O. Box 30099 – 00100, Nairobi, Kenya.
Telephone – 254-02-3201000 – Telegrams ‘ELECTRIC’
Fax No. 254-02-3514485
STIMA PLAZA, KOLOBOT ROAD

Our Ref: KP1/5BA/42D/DEO/ck

24th October, 2019

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH APPROVAL – MIRIAM WANJIKU MBAU

The above-named Masters student from Daystar University has been allowed to collect data in the Company on “The Role of internal Branding in improving customer service: A case study of Kenya Power”.

The data collection will be conducted between 25th October 2019 and 25th December 2019 within the Company.

This is with the understanding that the candidate will exercise discretion in the use of company information and that this exercise will not disrupt normal working hours and Company’s flow of work.

Yours faithfully,
For: KENYA POWER & LIGHTING CO. LTD.

DAVID EBATALA OPERO
For: MANAGER, LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

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Appendix G: Plagiarism Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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by Miriam Mbau

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