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What Makes a Company Irresistible? Exploring the Power of Commercial and Corporate Reputation Across Manufacturers and Retailers

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ABSTRACT

"What Makes a Company Irresistible? Exploring the Power of Commercial and Corporate Reputation Across Manufacturers and Retailers"

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The reputation of a company is a key element in shaping its perception in the market. This reputation can take various forms, with this study focusing on two dimensions: corporate reputation and commercial reputation.

In Portugal, as in much of the world, nowadays, the decision to choose a job is influenced by more than just salary or the company's name. Factors such as workplace benefits, environment, and the relationship between employees and the company are increasingly significant. This study seeks to understand which type of reputation plays a more decisive role in shaping perceptions of employer branding.

The purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between corporate and commercial reputation within the context of employer branding, while also investigating the potential moderating effect of industry type, specifically manufacturers and retailers. An online survey targeting the Portuguese population was conducted, gathering 149 valid responses.

The insights gained from this research provide valuable contributions to understanding how companies can enhance their employer branding strategies. By exploring the influence of different types of reputation and the role of industry classification, this study offers a deeper perspective on how companies can position themselves as attractive employers in competitive markets.

Keywords

Corporate Reputation, Commercial Reputation, Employer Branding, Industry Moderation, Employment Attractiveness, Brand Credibility, Retailers, Manufacturers, Reputation Management, Employment Perception

SUMÁRIO

"O que Torna uma Empresa Irresistível? Explorar o Poder da Reputação Comercial e Corporativa entre Fabricantes e Retalhistas"

Autora: Diana Salema Garção de Albuquerque d'Orey

A reputação de uma empresa é um elemento-chave que molda a sua perceção no mercado. Esta reputação pode assumir várias formas, sendo que este estudo se foca em duas dimensões: reputação corporativa e reputação comercial.

Em Portugal, tal como no resto do mundo, atualmente, a decisão de escolha de um emprego é influenciada por mais do que apenas o salário ou o nome da empresa. Fatores como benefícios laborais, ambiente de trabalho e a relação entre colaboradores e empresa têm um peso crescente. Este estudo procura compreender qual destas dimensões reputacionais tem um papel mais decisivo no contexto do *employer branding*.

O objetivo desta investigação é explorar a relação entre a reputação corporativa e comercial no âmbito do *employer branding*, bem como investigar o potencial efeito moderador do tipo de indústria, nomeadamente fabricantes e retalhistas. Um inquérito online foi conduzido junto da população portuguesa, tendo reunido 149 respostas válidas.

Os *insights* obtidos com esta investigação contribuem para compreender como as empresas podem melhorar as suas estratégias de *employer branding*. Ao explorar a influência de diferentes tipos de reputação e o papel da classificação da indústria, este estudo oferece uma perspetiva aprofundada sobre como as empresas se podem posicionar como empregadores atrativos em mercados competitivos.

Palavras-Chave

Reputação Corporativa, Reputação Comercial, Marca Empregadora, Moderação por Indústria, Atratividade no Emprego, Credibilidade da Marca, Retalhistas, Fabricantes, Gestão de Reputação, Perceção de Emprego

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DISCLAIMERS

Artificial intelligence was employed to refine the text in this thesis, enhancing clarity, conciseness, and overall cohesion for effective communication. AI tools were utilized for summarizing content, rephrasing original material, and improving the flow of the text. The use of AI was strictly confined to processing the author's original work, ensuring the intellectual integrity of the research throughout.

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GLOSSARY

Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Corporate reputation (Corp_Rep)

Commercial reputation (Brand_Rep)

Employment attractiveness (Emplo_Attract).

Industry Type (Manipula)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Reputation, regardless of its type, has long been recognized as one of the most critical factors in ensuring the growth and competitiveness of organizations. It not only influences a company's sales, market awareness, and consumer perception but also plays a pivotal role in how individuals perceive and select potential employers. This intersection of organizational reputation and employment choices has given rise to the concept of employer branding, which explores the factors influencing an individual's decision to work for a specific organization. Understanding whether corporate or commercial reputation has a greater impact on these decisions has become a central question in both academic and managerial discussions. Organizations have consistently invested significant resources in building and sustaining their reputation to maintain positive connotations in the global market. A company's competitiveness, trust, and industry position are all improved by a strong reputation.

Two primary dimensions can be used to evaluate reputation: corporate reputation, which reflects the organization's leadership, ethics, and governance (Fombrun, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000), and a commercial reputation, which reflects consumer perceptions of brand credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability (Erdem & Swait, 2004). This study focuses on the interaction between these two dimensions and their impact on employer branding.

In recent years, employer branding has become particularly relevant, as the global community has increasingly concentrated on factors such as mental health, workplace treatment, and employee satisfaction. The comprehension of reputation's significance in this context has become more crucial for organizations that intend to attract and retain top talent, as these elements have become critical. The necessity of investigating the relationship between employer branding and reputation is made even stronger by the increasing recognition of the significance of employee well-being in determining organizational success.

Despite extensive research on corporate and commercial reputation, a significant gap remains in understanding how these reputational dimensions interact within specific industries, such as manufacturing and retail. There is a lack of consensus regarding the dimension that has the most significant impact on these sectors, underscoring the necessity of additional research. Studies frequently conduct independent analyses of corporate or commercial reputation; however, they

seldom account for the moderating influence of industry type on their relationship with employment attractiveness.

Existing literature underscores the importance of reputation management strategies in enhancing competitiveness and awareness. Such strategies can yield positive outcomes for organizations, strengthening their market presence and overall image. For example, Signaling theory (Connelly et al., 2011) and Social Identity theory (Turner et al., 1979) suggest that reputational signals play a crucial role in shaping how individuals perceive and align with organizations. However, the lack of studies incorporating specific moderators, such as industry type, into this analysis presents a research gap.

The definitions of the key constructs in this study—corporate reputation, commercial reputation, and employer branding—are grounded in prior research. Corporate reputation is widely defined as the public perception of an organization's credibility, trust, and ethical behavior (Fombrum, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000). Commercial reputation, as conceptualized by (Erdem & Swait, 2004), focuses on brand credibility and the trust consumers place in a company's products or services. Employer branding, as defined by (Highhouse et al., 2003), refers to the degree to which an organization is perceived as an attractive employer. Each of these variables has been studied extensively in the past, but their integration into a single model, particularly with industry type as a moderator, remains underexplored.

1.2 Problem Statement

The reputation of an organization plays a pivotal role in shaping its perception among both consumers and potential employees. However, the dynamics of how different dimensions of reputation—corporate and commercial—impact employer branding remain underexplored, particularly in the context of varying industry types. This dissertation aims to address this gap by investigating the relationship between corporate reputation, commercial reputation, and employer branding, with a focus on the moderating role of industry type—manufacturers versus retailers.

The central problem that this study seeks to explore is summarized in the following problem statement:

"What Makes a Company Irresistible? Exploring the Power of Commercial and Corporate Reputation Across Manufacturers and Retailers"

To further investigate this overarching problem, three key research questions have been established:

RQ1: “Is there a difference between corporate and commercial reputation in terms of how they impact employment attractiveness?”

RQ2: “How do corporate reputation and commercial reputation drive employment attractiveness?”

RQ3: “Does the type of industry moderate the impact of corporate and commercial reputation on employment attractiveness?”

These questions aim to unravel the nuanced ways in which reputational dimensions influence an organization’s appeal as an employer and whether these effects differ based on the industry type. By addressing these questions, the research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how companies can strategically leverage their reputation to enhance their employer branding and adapt to the specific demands of their industry.

1.3 Relevance

Corporate and commercial reputation has long been recognized as critical components in shaping organizational success, influencing everything from consumer behavior to employee perceptions. A company's reputation capital is very important in reaching both short - and long-term objectives as it tries to create and maintain competitive advantages (Fomburum, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000); (Erdem & Swait, 2004). Especially in recent years, as employer branding has become more important, knowledge of how reputation influences organizational attractiveness has attracted major managerial and scholarly attention. Companies are investing significantly in strategies to improve their reputations, both at the corporate and commercial levels, to differentiate themselves in markets that are becoming increasingly competitive from a managerial perspective. Not only are these efforts designed to enhance their reputation among consumers, but they also aim to attract and retain top talent, which is essential for the continued development and innovation of the organization. Nevertheless, the obstacle is in determining the dimension of reputation—corporate or commercial—that has the most significant impact on the attractiveness of employment and how this relationship may differ across industries such

as manufacturing and retail. Organizations can more effectively allocate resources and develop targeted employer branding strategies by comprehending these dynamics.

While there is an abundance of research on corporate and commercial reputation from an academic perspective, there is an absence of studies that investigate their correlation with employer branding. Even fewer studies have investigated the moderating influence of industry type on this relationship. This study addresses these gaps by concentrating on the extent to which employment attractiveness is influenced by corporate and commercial reputation, and whether these effects are distinct for manufacturers and retailers. The research utilizes established frameworks, including Signaling Theory and Social Identity Theory, to examine these relationships (Ashforth & Mael, 1989);(Connelly et al., 2011). Additionally, this dissertation contributes to the existing body of literature by employing a nuanced perspective on the influence of reputation on employer branding. In contrast to previous research that has primarily investigated the impact of reputation on financial performance or consumer behavior, this study focuses on employment attractiveness, providing an original perspective on the ways in which reputational factors influence the perceptions of potential employees. The study offers a more comprehensive understanding of the contextual factors that influence these dynamics by incorporating the moderating variable of industry type.

The findings of this research are expected to have practical implications for organizations seeking to enhance their employer branding strategies. Companies can more effectively construct messaging and customize their recruitment strategies to align with their industry context by comprehending the relative significance of corporate and commercial reputation in driving employment attractiveness. Furthermore, this investigation will offer valuable insights into the ways in which organizations may build on their reputational assets to establish more robust relationships with prospective employees, thereby establishing themselves as the preferred employers.

In conclusion, this study not only addresses a critical gap in the literature but also provides actionable insights for managers and scholars alike, enhancing the understanding of the interplay between reputation and employer branding in the context of industry-specific differences.

1.4 Research Methods

Primary data was used to adequately address the research questions proposed in this study. To develop a comprehensive literature review and gain a robust understanding of the variables, an extensive search was conducted across academic sources focusing on corporate reputation, commercial reputation, employer branding, and the moderating role of industry type, particularly for manufacturers and retailers. The literature search primarily involved peer-reviewed journals in the fields of organizational behavior, reputation management, and employer branding.

Primary data were collected through an online survey designed to quantitatively examine the relationships among the study's variables. The survey data were analyzed using SPSS, employing various statistical techniques to test the proposed hypotheses. Key analyses included descriptive statistics to characterize the sample, linear regression to explore relationships among variables, and Hayes' PROCESS macro (Model 1) to assess the moderating effect of industry type on the relationship between corporate and commercial reputation and employment attractiveness.

This methodological approach ensured the use of both theoretical insights from existing literature and empirical evidence from the survey, providing a comprehensive analysis of the research questions.

1.5 Dissertation Outline

This dissertation is structured as follows. Chapter 2 presents the literature review and the development of the hypotheses. It provides a theoretical framework on corporate reputation, commercial reputation, employer branding, and the moderating role of industry type, focusing on manufacturers and retailers. Chapter 3 details the methodology, including the pre-survey, main survey, data collection process, and data analysis approach. Chapter 4 showcases the results and analysis, discussing the findings in relation to the proposed hypotheses. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes the study, highlighting the main findings, the managerial and academic implications, and outlining the limitations and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This review investigates how corporate reputation, commercial reputation, and employment attractiveness interrelate within the consumer goods sector in Portugal. Notably, it distinguishes corporate reputation from commercial reputation, assessing how each contributes to perceived employer attractiveness across industry types, namely consumer goods manufacturers and retailers.

2.1 Corporate Reputation

Corporate reputation is the collective perception that stakeholders, including customers, employees, investors, and the public, hold of a company's capability to meet its expectations (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000). As an intangible asset, corporate reputation influences customer loyalty, investor confidence, and employment attractiveness (Walsh & Beatty, 2007). This study adopts a corporate brand perspective, viewing corporate reputation as the organization's overall standing, shaped by governance, leadership, and credibility (Fame and Fortune: How Successful Companies Build Winning Reputations, 2004).

Various models conceptualize corporate reputation, each offering distinct perspectives and limitations. The RepTrak Model by Ponzi, Fombrun, and Gardberg measures reputation through emotional and functional dimensions such as financial performance, social responsibility, and emotional appeal. However, its general applicability across sectors can introduce biases, as industry-specific attributes may differ substantially (Agarwal et al., 2015). For instance, manufacturers and retailers place differing emphasis on aspects like quality or customer service. The Personification Model by (Davies et al., 2001) uses human traits such as reliability to make companies relatable to stakeholders, fostering emotional connections. While innovative, this model can oversimplify the complex dimensions of reputation, particularly in sectors where operational performance, such as manufacturing efficiency, is crucial. Corporate reputation is deeply connected to perceptions of stability, governance, and long-term value (Walsh & Beatty, 2007). Temporal Perspective Models, such as RepTrak, frequently depend on assessments conducted at a particular time point, hence lacking longitudinal insights into the dynamic nature of reputation. A long-term perspective may more accurately represent the

changing character of reputation (Fame and Fortune: How Successful Companies Build Winning Reputations, 2004).

Generalized models of Sample Scope and Bias often exhibit a deficiency in respondent diversity, neglecting distinct viewpoints in emerging economies where adaptability and innovation may be prioritized over conventional metrics such as financial stability (Ponzi et al., 2011). Finally, Emotional and Rational Separation in certain models seeks to differentiate these dimensions; however, not all offer attribute weighting, which could improve understanding of stakeholder-specific motivators (Agarwal et al., 2015).

To minimize bias, this study uses a model allowing independent brand assessment without direct competitive comparison, aligning with the objective of understanding reputation without biases from competitor proximity.

2.2 Commercial Reputation

Commercial reputation encompasses how consumers and other stakeholders perceive a brand's reliability, consistency, and credibility. As a distinct yet complementary aspect to corporate reputation, commercial reputation centres on consumer-centric qualities that reflect directly on a brand's market position. (Aaker, 1995) pioneered the Brand Equity Model, identifying brand loyalty, perceived quality, and associations as foundational components that shape brand reputation. While widely adopted, Aaker's model has been critiqued for prioritizing consumer-based metrics and for not fully accounting for the broader corporate actions that contribute to a brand's reputation (Keller, 1993).

In contrast, Keller's CBBE model delves into the emotional connections consumers form with brands, positing that these bonds foster loyalty and positive engagement. Although Keller's CBBE model addresses consumer loyalty extensively, it lacks a comprehensive view of how brand reputation influences employment attractiveness, leaving gaps in understanding how brand perception affects potential employees. For instance, a well-regarded brand may signal reliability and quality through its products or services, thus indirectly shaping perceptions of the organization as an employer (Erdem & Swait, 2004).

Brand credibility is a core of commercial reputation, defined as the extent to which a brand is perceived as trustworthy and consistent in fulfilling its promises, and it is a central pillar of

brand reputation. According to (Erdem & Swait, 2004), credibility reduces perceived risks for consumers by signalling that a brand will reliably meet quality standards and provide consistent experiences. This perception of reliability fosters consumer loyalty and commitment, as individuals tend to favour brands they trust to deliver on their promises without frequent surprises or uncertainties. Erdem and Swait also highlight that credible brands minimize information costs for consumers by reducing ambiguity about what to expect from a product or service. This clarity further strengthens brand loyalty, as consumers prefer to engage with brands that provide stability and transparency, reducing the cognitive and emotional load involved in purchasing decisions. Consequently, brand credibility not only influences consumer behavior but also extends to employment contexts, where prospective employees view credible brands as stable and reliable employers.

The link between brand credibility and employment attractiveness is further supported by (Lau et al., 1999), who argue that brand credibility cultivates a perception of value alignment and dependability, essential qualities for potential employees evaluating prospective employers. A brand perceived as credible signals to job seekers that the organization upholds integrity, consistency, and respect for its promises, fostering an environment where employees feel secure and aligned with organizational values. Thus, credible brands are likely to attract talent seeking stability and long-term growth opportunities, as brand reliability indirectly signals a supportive and predictable workplace. Through its emphasis on trustworthiness and consistency, brand credibility plays a dual role—enhancing both consumer loyalty and employment attractiveness. This study examines the effect of brand credibility on organizational appeal, particularly within sectors where brand reputation serves as a proxy for quality and reliability, such as manufacturing.

Emotional connections are integral to brand reputation, extending beyond product quality to shape deeper, relational bonds with consumers. These emotional bonds, encompassing factors such as admiration, relevance, consideration, trust, preference, and recommendation, can significantly influence consumer loyalty and perceptions of brand credibility. (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001) argue that such connections foster brand loyalty, suggesting that consumers are likely to form enduring affiliations with brands they perceive as relevant, trustworthy, and admirable. (Keller, 1993) similarly posits that these bonds create long-lasting loyalty, rooted in emotional resonance rather than merely functional attributes. This emotional attachment can also extend to prospective employees, who may view emotionally resonant brands as more appealing employers, perceiving them as organizations that align with their values and ideals.

For instance, a brand that earns high admiration and trust from consumers can signal a reliable and respectable employer image to job seekers. However, the role of emotional connections in employment attractiveness, particularly in distinguishing the impact on different sectors, remains underexplored.

Visual identity, while distinct from commercial reputation, plays a foundational role in how a brand is initially perceived. Elements such as logos, colours, and design styles serve as visual cues, creating immediate brand recognition and establishing an aesthetic connection with consumers. (Melewar et al., 2017) highlight the importance of visual identity in shaping early perceptions of a brand, suggesting that while logos and design can create initial associations, it is ultimately product quality and corporate responsibility that sustain brand reputation over time.

In employment contexts, a strong visual identity may attract potential employees by signalling an organized, cohesive brand that values its market image. However, unlike emotional connections, visual identity alone is unlikely to sustain long-term perceptions of brand credibility or trustworthiness among employees. Therefore, while visual identity is essential for brand visibility, it must be supported by the underlying reputation built through emotional connections and consistent product quality to positively impact organizational attractiveness.

2.3 Corporate reputation and Commercial reputation

Corporate reputation and Commercial reputation are distinct yet interconnected constructs that together shape an organization's overall image among stakeholders. Corporate reputation reflects an organization's governance, leadership, and ethical standards, while commercial reputation focuses on consumer-centric qualities like trust, reliability, and emotional appeal (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000); (Erdem & Swait, 2004). Despite their differences, they share common foundations of trust, credibility, and perceived quality.

A strong corporate reputation enhances brand credibility by signalling stability and ethical practices, while a highly regarded brand bolsters corporate reputation by demonstrating product quality and consumer trust (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000); (Walsh & Beatty, 2007). Some companies demonstrate how brand performance feeds into a corporation's overall reputation as reliable and innovative (Ailawadi et al., 1995). The Reputation Quotient (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000) and the brand credibility model (Erdem & Swait, 2004) highlight this synergy, showing

how consistent messaging across these reputational dimensions fosters stakeholder trust and loyalty. Misalignment between the two can create cognitive dissonance, potentially undermining perceptions of the organization (Davies et al., 2001).

In summary, corporate and commercial reputation are mutually reinforcing, building a cohesive narrative of reliability and trust. Together, they enhance stakeholder perceptions and form the foundation for understanding their collective impact on organizational outcomes such as employment attractiveness.

2.4. Employment Attractiveness

Employment attractiveness, often referred to as organizational attractiveness, is defined as the extent to which individuals perceive an organization as a desirable workplace. It encompasses the positive attitudes and evaluations job seekers form about an organization based on its characteristics, values, and reputation (Highhouse et al., 2003). This construct captures the appeal of an organization to potential employees, influenced by factors such as perceived opportunities for professional growth, ethical practices, and alignment with personal and social values. High employment attractiveness positions organizations to secure competitive advantages in the labour market by attracting top talent. It reflects not only the functional aspects of a workplace, such as job security and compensation, but also intangible elements like cultural alignment, inclusivity, and the perception of an inspiring and supportive environment. These perceptions are integral to how organizations are evaluated by job seekers.

Two theoretical frameworks commonly underpin employment attractiveness. The Social Identity Theory (Turner et al., 1979) posits that individuals derive a sense of self-worth and belonging through affiliation with groups or organizations that align with their identity. Organizations perceived as prestigious or well-regarded offer job seekers a positive sense of association, reinforcing their personal and professional identity (Greening & Turban, 2000). Employment attractiveness thus becomes closely tied to how job seekers perceive an organization's alignment with their values and aspirations. On the other hand, the Signaling Theory (Connelly et al., 2011) (Ferris, 2009) highlights the importance of the signals that organizations emit about their values, culture, and work environment. Actions such as corporate social responsibility initiatives, ethical governance, and transparent communication serve as indicators for potential employees about what to expect from an organization. These signals

help reduce uncertainty for job seekers, making organizations that emit strong, positive signals more attractive as potential employers.

Highhouse developed a widely recognized framework to assess employment attractiveness. Their model evaluates how desirable an organization appears to potential employees based on attributes such as organizational reputation, perceived work environment, and alignment with individual career aspirations. The validated scale to measure employment attractiveness, provides a robust and reliable means of assessing how organizations are perceived as employers. By grounding employment attractiveness in these theoretical and measurement frameworks, this study seeks to explore its role as a critical factor in organizational success, particularly in understanding its dynamics within the consumer goods sector.

2.5 Interconnection between Corporate Reputation and Commercial Reputation on Employment Attractiveness

Corporate and commercial reputation are critical drivers of employment attractiveness, with each playing a distinct yet interconnected role in shaping how potential employees perceive an organization. This section explores the relationships between these variables, supported by theoretical insights and empirical findings, and explains the hypotheses guiding this research. Corporate reputation refers to the collective perception of an organization's integrity, governance, and ability to meet stakeholder expectations (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000). A strong corporate reputation signals organizational stability, ethical practices, and leadership excellence, attributes that significantly enhance its appeal as an employer. (Greening & Turban, 2000) demonstrated that organizations with robust CSR initiatives are more attractive to job seekers who prioritize ethical alignment and social values. This aligns with Social Identity Theory (Turner et al., 1979), which posits that individuals are drawn to organizations that reflect their personal and professional values, further solidifying the link between corporate reputation and employment attractiveness. (Highhouse et al., 2003) emphasized that intangible factors such as corporate reputation heavily influence perceptions of organizational desirability, often serving as indicators of a stable and ethically sound work environment. These signals reduce uncertainty for job seekers and highlight an organization's long-term reliability, making it more appealing to top talent. Given the broad scope of corporate reputation in conveying organizational values and governance, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Corporate reputation has a stronger positive effect on employment attractiveness compared to commercial reputation.

This hypothesis builds on the notion that corporate reputation provides a more comprehensive signal of organizational stability and ethical alignment, which are highly valued by job seekers. Brands with strong commercial reputations are often associated with trustworthiness, product consistency, and emotional connections, all of which can indirectly influence employment attractiveness (Keller, 1993) highlighted that positive brand associations enhance loyalty and foster trust, traits that extend to the employer brand by signalling reliability and alignment with consumer values. Furthermore, (Erdem & Swait, 2004) emphasized that brand credibility reduces perceived risks and enhances stakeholder trust, making the organization appealing not only to consumers but also to potential employees. Although the impact of commercial reputation on employment attractiveness may not be as extensive as corporate reputation, its role remains significant. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Commercial reputation positively influences employment attractiveness.

This hypothesis recognizes that while commercial reputation primarily reflects market-specific attributes, its emphasis on trust and quality also contributes to shaping perceptions of the organization as an employer. The interplay between corporate and commercial reputation creates a comprehensive picture of an organization's attractiveness as an employer. While corporate reputation conveys ethical governance and long-term stability, commercial reputation emphasizes consumer trust and product quality. Together, they form a synergistic framework that enhances employment attractiveness by addressing both organizational credibility and market performance. The hypotheses proposed—H1 and H2—provide a foundation for investigating how these variables interact and contribute to shaping organizational attractiveness within the consumer goods sector. This framework offers valuable insights into employer branding strategies, highlighting the importance of integrating corporate and commercial reputational elements to attract top talent effectively.

2.6 The Moderating Role of Industry Type: Consumer Goods Manufacturers vs. Retailers

In the consumer goods sector, manufacturers are organizations primarily focused on the production of goods. Their reputation hinges on product quality, innovation, and consistency. According to (Ailawadi et al., 1995), manufacturers build trust and loyalty by consistently delivering high-quality products and investing in research and development to drive innovation. For example, strong brand associations rooted in product excellence often serve as proxies for reliability and credibility, shaping perceptions not only among consumers but also among potential employees (Erdem & Swait, 2004).

Retailers, on the other hand, operate at the consumer interface, facilitating the sale of goods and emphasizing customer service and operational efficiency. Their reputation relies heavily on factors such as reliability, accessibility, and the overall shopping experience (Ailawadi et al., 1995). Unlike manufacturers, whose reputations are deeply tied to the products they create, retailers gain trust through their ability to provide value, foster relationships, and ensure operational excellence. This emphasis on service quality makes corporate reputation particularly vital in the retail context, as it reflects organizational stability and ethical standards (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000)

2.7 Interconnection Between Corporate Reputation and Industry Type

The roles of corporate reputation and commercial reputation differ significantly between manufacturers and retailers, with industry type acting as a critical moderator. This study aims to assess how these reputational dimensions interact with employment attractiveness, offering insights into the distinct reputational mechanisms within the manufacturing and retail sectors. Corporate reputation, encompassing elements such as governance, ethical behavior, and long-term stability plays a more substantial role in employment attractiveness for retailers. Retailers rely on corporate reputation to signal trustworthiness and operational reliability, especially given their direct interactions with consumers. As (Ailawadi et al., 1995) highlight, a strong corporate reputation reflects a retailer's ability to maintain ethical standards, provide quality service, and deliver consistent value.

H3: The effect of corporate reputation on employment attractiveness is moderated by industry type, such that corporate reputation is more influential for retailers than for manufacturers.

Retailers, due to their focus on customer relationships, leverage corporate reputation to project stability and ethical leadership. These qualities resonate with job seekers, who perceive such attributes as indicators of a positive and secure work environment (Greening & Turban, 2000). Conversely, while corporate reputation is still relevant for manufacturers, it may not hold the same level of influence, as manufacturing employees often prioritize technical innovation and product quality.

2.8 Interconnection Between Commercial Reputation and Industry Type

Commercial reputation, characterized by brand-specific qualities such as reliability, consistency, and emotional resonance (Erdem & Swait, 2004), is often more influential for manufacturers. For manufacturers, brand reputation serves as a proxy for product excellence, fostering trust and loyalty among consumers and employees alike. A strong brand reputation signals not only high-quality products but also organizational reliability, which appeals to job seekers in the manufacturing sectors (Keller, 1993).

H4: The effect of commercial reputation on employment attractiveness is moderated by industry type, such that brand reputation is more influential for manufacturers than for retailers.

In the retail sector, while commercial reputation remains important, it often plays a secondary role to corporate reputation. Retailers depend more on operational and service-oriented qualities, which are better captured through corporate reputation metrics. On the other hand, manufacturing organizations benefit from a strong commercial reputation, as it reinforces perceptions of quality and innovation, which are critical for employee attraction in product-focused industries.

2.9 Conceptual Framework

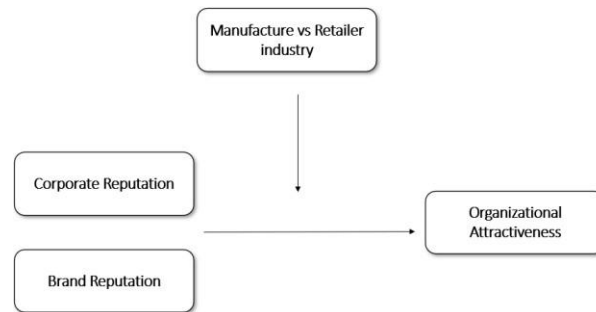


Figure 1-Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this dissertation to address the research questions and test the proposed hypotheses. The methodology encompasses the research design, data collection strategies, and analytical techniques employed.

3.1 Research Approach

The primary objective of this dissertation is to investigate the relationship between corporate reputation, commercial reputation, and employment attractiveness, while examining whether industry type (manufacturers vs. retailers) moderates these relationships. The study aims to identify which reputational dimension has a stronger influence on employer attractiveness and how industry type shapes this relationship.

To address these objectives, the research process began with exploratory research, involving a review of existing literature to clarify concepts and formulate hypotheses. A pre-survey and focus group were conducted to refine the study design. The pre-survey identified the brands representing manufacturers and retailers, while the focus group ensured that the stimuli used in the main survey were relevant and unbiased.

A quantitative approach was adopted for the empirical phase, as it allows for statistical testing of hypotheses and generalization of results. Data was collected through an online survey, which measured corporate and commercial reputation using validated scales (Fombrun, Gardberg, &

Sever, 2000); (Erdem & Swait, 2004) and employment attractiveness (Highhouse et al., 2003). Statistical analyses, including regression and moderation tests using Hayes' PROCESS macro, were performed to examine the hypothesized relationships.

This combined approach ensures a solid foundation for understanding how reputational dimensions influence employer branding and offers valuable insights for both academic research and practical applications.

3.2 Primary Data

Primary data was collected using an online survey and distributed via social media platforms and email. This quantitative approach allowed for a larger reach, greater response speed, and cost-effectiveness, while also ensuring timeliness and convenience (Duffy et al., 2005); (Evans & Mathur, 2005). Before the main survey, a pre-survey was conducted to identify and select brands that would represent manufacturers and retailers, ensuring the relevance of the stimuli. Additionally, a focus group was organized to refine and finalize the visual representations of the brands, ensuring clarity and alignment with the study's objectives. This structured process enhanced the reliability and validity of the data collection, addressing potential biases and ensuring robust results for analysis.

3.2.1 Pre-survey and Data Collection

To ensure the relevance of the brands selected for the main study, a pre-survey was conducted. The primary aim of the pre-survey was to identify which brands would best represent manufacturers and retailers for the thesis analysis. The survey assessed respondents' familiarity with eight selected brands: Aldi, Lidl, El Corte Inglés, IKEA, Delta Cafés, Super Bock Group, Nestlé, and Sumol Compal. This step ensured that the brands chosen for the main survey were well-recognized and representative of their respective industries.

The pre-survey was conducted online over five days and a total of 58 valid responses were gathered. Respondents evaluated their familiarity with each brand and their perceptions of corporate and brand reputation using a 5-point Likert scale.

3.2.2 Data Analysis

The pre-survey results were analyzed using SPSS, focusing on familiarity, corporate reputation, and brand reputation scores for each brand. The descriptive statistics provided insights into how respondents perceived each brand, enabling the selection of two manufacturers and two retailers.

From the analysis, Nestlé and Super Bock Group were identified as the manufacturers to include in the main study. Nestlé demonstrated high familiarity (mean = 4.17) and positive corporate and brand reputation scores (3.8 and 4.1, respectively). Similarly, Super Bock Group exhibited strong familiarity (mean = 4.00) and the highest brand reputation score (4.6). These findings positioned them as representative and contrasting examples within the manufacturer category.

For retailers, Lidl and Aldi were chosen. Lidl stood out with high familiarity (mean = 4.1) and balanced corporate and brand reputation scores (4.0 for both). On the other hand, Aldi was selected for its lower corporate and brand reputation scores (3.2 and 2.7, respectively), providing a contrasting perspective. Including a retailer with lower reputation scores was crucial to introducing variation in the analysis and ensuring robust testing of the research hypotheses.

This thorough pre-survey process ensured that the brands selected for the main survey were both representative and diverse, laying a solid foundation for the subsequent stages of the research.

3.2.3 Focus Group

A focus group was conducted to ensure the clarity and relevance of the stimuli presented in the main survey. The session, lasting approximately 45 minutes, involved the participation of seven individuals from different age groups. Its primary objective was to determine the most effective way to present the selected brands—Lidl, Aldi, Super Bock, and Nestlé—while minimizing any potential biases and ensuring the clarity of the stimuli.

The session began with an introduction, where the purpose of the focus group was explained. Participants were informed that their feedback would guide the selection of the images to be used for each brand in the main survey. This involved evaluating three different types of stimuli

for each brand: logos, product images, and store images (for retailers) or characteristic product images (for manufacturers).

For Lidl and Aldi, participants reviewed whether the logo, store image, or product image best represented each brand as a retailer. After individual reflection, participants anonymously voted, and the store image was selected for both brands as the most representative and least confusing stimulus.

For manufacturers like Super Bock and Nestlé, participants evaluated the logo and product images. Following the same process, the product image was chosen as the best representation for both brands, as it was perceived to convey the essence of each company more effectively than the logo alone.

This focus group provided critical insights into how the stimuli should be presented in the main survey, ensuring that the selected images were both representative and unbiased.

3.2.4 Data Analysis

The focus group results highlighted clear preferences for the stimuli and for retailers (Lidl and Aldi), participants overwhelmingly favored the store images as the most effective representation of the brands. These images were deemed to provide a clearer association with the retailer's identity compared to logos or product images, and for Manufacturers (Super Bock and Nestlé), the characteristic product images were chosen over logos. Participants indicated that these images better captured the essence of the brands and their association with their respective industries.

The unanimous selection of the store image for retailers and the product image for manufacturers ensured that the main survey would use stimuli that were both representative and easily understood by participants. This careful selection process contributes to the validity and reliability of the overall study findings.

3.3. Main Survey

3.3.1 Data Collection

An online survey was design and implemented to the impact of corporate and commercial reputation on employment attractiveness and to explore potential differences between industry types. The survey was shared via social media platforms, such as WhatsApp and LinkedIn, and through email, from 26 November to 12 December 2024, allowing for a broad reach and timely responses. A total of 334 responses were collected, of which 149 were valid after applying inclusion criteria to ensure data quality.

The data collection process followed a structured three-phase approach to ensure relevance and reliability, and a pre-survey was conducted to identify and select brands representing the retail and manufacturing sectors. This step ensured the chosen brands were familiar to participants and aligned with the study's objectives, providing a strong foundation for subsequent phases. Then, a focus group was conducted to refine and finalize the stimuli used in the survey. Participants provided valuable feedback on the visual and descriptive representations of brands, ensuring that the stimuli were clear, unbiased, and accurately reflected the brand attributes being studied, and lastly the main survey was designed to measure participants' perceptions of corporate reputation, brand reputation, and employment attractiveness using validated scales. This phase allowed for the collection of data necessary to analyze the relationships between variables and to test the moderating role of industry type.

The target population for this study was Portuguese individuals aged 18 or older who had lived in Portugal for at least one year. To ensure this premise, the first question of the survey required participants to confirm their current place of residence. Respondents who indicated they did not live in Portugal were automatically excluded from proceeding with the survey.

The survey employed a non-probability convenience sampling technique, a method chosen for its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. While this technique does not guarantee a fully representative sample of the Portuguese population, it allowed for quick and accessible data collection from individuals who met the study's inclusion criteria.

This methodical approach to data collection ensured that the study was based on relevant and high-quality data. The combination of pre-survey validation, focus group refinement, and the structured implementation of the main survey ensured that the findings accurately addressed

the research questions and hypotheses, providing meaningful insights into the role of reputation in employment attractiveness.

3.3.2 Research Design

This study employed a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial design to explore the relationships between corporate reputation, commercial reputation, and employment attractiveness, as well as the moderating role of industry type. While the factorial design facilitates an in-depth analysis of interactions between these variables, the use of a 7-point Likert scale introduces flexibility in treating variables as continuous, allowing for a more nuanced examination of both main effects and interaction effects.

To clarify the integration of Hypothesis 4 within the broader model, this research adopts a comprehensive framework to investigate the direct effects of corporate reputation (Corp_Rep) and commercial reputation (Brand_Rep) on employment attractiveness (Emplo_Attract) while also assessing the moderating influence of industry type. The research framework considers direct effects: Corp_Rep \rightarrow Emplo_Attract and Brand_Rep \rightarrow Emplo_Attract, and moderating effect: Industry type moderates both relationships (Corp_Rep x Industry and Brand_Rep x Industry).

By employing PROCESS by Andrew Hayes (Model 1) in SPSS, the study evaluates the extent to which industry type influences these relationships, enabling a deeper understanding of how reputational factors may differ across sectors.

The survey structure was divided into three main sections to ensure clarity and relevance while enabling the collection of robust data.

The first section required respondents to indicate the country in which they currently reside. Those who selected a country other than Portugal were automatically excluded. This ensured that the sample was composed of individuals familiar with brands operating in the Portuguese market, a crucial factor for meaningful analysis.

In the second section, respondents were introduced to control stimuli developed and refined through a prior focus group. This focus group ensured that the visual and descriptive representations of brands were unbiased and accurately reflected their attributes. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four scenarios, each corresponding to a specific brand. For

manufacturers (Nestlé and Super Bock), characteristic product images were used as stimuli, reflecting their brand identity and market positioning. For retailers (Lidl and Aldi), store images were selected to accurately represent their operations. After viewing the stimuli, participants answered questions on corporate reputation, commercial reputation, and employment attractiveness, using validated scales. Each stimulus involved 17 questions, with nine related to Corp_Rep and ten addressing Brand_Rep and Emplo_Attract. An attention check question within the Corp_Rep section ensured data quality, and respondents failing this check were excluded from further analysis.

The final section gathered demographic data, such as age, gender, education level, and occupation, to contextualize the findings and control for potential confounding factors.

This research design, supported by a robust factorial framework, ensured systematic and relevant data collection aligned with the study's objectives. The integration of pre-survey brand selection, focus group feedback, and random allocation of stimuli strengthened the validity of the study while minimizing bias. By explicitly addressing both the direct effects of reputational variables and the interaction effects moderated by industry type, this design provided a solid foundation for testing the hypotheses, including Hypothesis 4, and understanding the nuanced relationships within the full model.

3.3.3 Measurement

The survey used in this study was designed to measure three key constructs: Corporate Reputation, Commercial Reputation and Employment Attractiveness. Each of these constructs was operationalized through validated scales, ensuring the reliability and validity of the data collected.

Corporate reputation was measured using the Reputation Quotient (RQ) developed by (Fombrum, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000). This scale evaluates multiple dimensions of how stakeholders perceive a company, including trust, admiration, ethical standards, and innovation. Respondents rated 16 items using a 7-point Likert. This comprehensive scale ensures that all facets of corporate reputation—such as leadership, governance, and social responsibility are captured, providing a holistic view of how the organization is perceived.

Commercial reputation was measured using items adapted from (Erdem & Swait, 2004) model, which focuses on brand credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability. The scale included 9 items, each rated on a 7-point Likert scale asking them to state the level of agreement with the sentences. This scale was selected for its strong alignment with the study's focus on how consumer-facing brand attributes contribute to employment attractiveness. The measurement captures the clarity, reliability, and perceived competence of the brand, which are critical factors in employer branding.

Employment attractiveness was assessed using the (Highhouse et al., 2003) organizational attractiveness scale. This scale evaluates how desirable respondents find an organization as an employer. It comprises 10 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale. The scale captures multiple dimensions of organizational attractiveness, such as job desirability, prestige, and value alignment, which are pivotal in understanding how reputation influences potential employees.

The internal consistency of the scales was verified using Cronbach's alpha, ensuring their reliability ($\alpha > 0.7$ for all constructs). For example, corporate reputation achieved an alpha of 0.945, indicating excellent reliability. For constructs with multiple items, the mean score was computed to create a single composite variable for each construct. This process simplifies the analysis while preserving the integrity of the data. The use of composite scores is a common approach in quantitative research, as it allows for easier interpretation and statistical testing of relationships between variables.

The use of validated scales such as the RQ, Erdem & Swait's brand credibility model, and Highhouse et al.'s organizational attractiveness scale ensures the robustness of the measurement process. These scales were chosen for their widespread acceptance in the academic literature and their relevance to the study's objectives. By capturing multiple dimensions of reputation and employment attractiveness, the survey provides a comprehensive dataset for testing the proposed hypotheses.

Overall, the combination of well-established scales, a robust survey design, and rigorous reliability testing supports the validity of the measures used in this study, allowing for meaningful insights into the relationships between corporate reputation, brand reputation, and employment attractiveness.

Framework	Measure	Items	Scale	Reference	Cronbach α
Corporate Reputation	Second-Order Reflective Model	16 items	7 -Point Likert Scale	Reputation Quotient (RQ) by Fombrun, Gardberg, and Sever (2000)	>0,7
Commercial Reputation	Brand Trust Scale	9 items	7 -Point Likert Scale	Erdem & Swait's (2004)	>0,7
Moderator	Manufacturer vs. Retailer	Stimuli	-	N/a	N/a
Employment Attractiveness	Organizational Attractiveness Scale	10 items	7 -Point Likert Scale	Highhouse et al. (2003)	>0,7

Table 1-Operational Model

3.3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected from the official survey was analyzed using SPSS statistical software to test the hypotheses and evaluate the relationships between (Corp_Rep), (Brand_Rep), and (Emplo_Attract).

The initial step involved cleaning the dataset to ensure its quality. Responses were removed if participants failed to answer key questions, such as the attention-check question, or if they left significant portions of the survey incomplete. This resulted in the exclusion of several incomplete or unreliable responses, ensuring a more robust dataset for analysis. Outliers, although less significant for categorical data given the pre-established minimum and maximum limits, were reviewed. Visible anomalies and participants with missing values in multiple questions were also removed. The cleaned dataset was then used to calculate average scores for each construct by summing up the responses for each dimension and dividing by the number of items. The internal consistency of the constructs was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The results confirmed high reliability for all constructs, with values exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.7. For example, Corp_Rep achieved Cronbach's alpha of 0.945, indicating excellent internal consistency. Similarly, Brand_Rep and Emplo_Attract also demonstrated robust reliability, validating the measurement scales used.

Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the data and provide an overview of the responses. For instance, the mean score for Corp_Rep was 9.06 (SD = 1.12), while Emplo_Attract had an average score of 8.32 (SD = 1.61). These results were further segmented by sector (manufacturing vs. retail) to explore potential differences.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was performed to assess the normality of the data. The results indicated that Corp_Rep and Brand_Rep did not follow a normal distribution ($p < 0.05$). Skewness and kurtosis values also exceeded acceptable thresholds, confirming the need for non-parametric tests for further analysis. Given the non-normality of the data, non-parametric tests, such as the Mann-Whitney U test, were applied to compare responses between the manufacturing and retail sectors. For example, significant differences were found in items like "This company is innovative," where participants rated manufacturers higher than retailers. Spearman's correlation tests revealed the following relationships, a strong positive correlation between Corp_Rep and Brand_Rep ($r = 0.776, p < 0.001$), a strong positive correlation between Corp_Rep and Emplo_Attract ($r = 0.714, p < 0.001$) and a moderate positive correlation between Brand_Rep and Emplo_Attract ($r = 0.527, p < 0.001$).

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the impact of Corp_Rep and Brand_Rep on Emplo_Attract. The model was statistically significant ($F = 54.318, p < 0.001$) with an adjusted R^2 of 0.428, indicating that 42.8% of the variance in Emplo_Attract was explained by the independent variables. Corp_Rep had a stronger influence ($\beta = 0.558, p < 0.001$) compared to Brand_Rep ($\beta = 0.112, p = 0.319$).

Moderation analysis using PROCESS by Andrew Hayes (Model 1) tested whether the type of company (retail vs. manufacturing) moderated the relationship between Corp_Rep and Emplo_Attract. While the overall model was significant ($R^2 = 0.4699, p < 0.001$), the interaction term was not statistically significant ($p = 0.381$), indicating a minimal moderating effect.

By employing robust statistical methods and referencing validated scales, such as those by (Fomburum, Gardberg, & Sever, 2000), Erdem & Swait (2004), and Highhouse et al. (2003), the analysis ensured a thorough investigation of the research questions.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents an overview of the sample utilized in this study, based on data collected from the online survey. The sample characteristics are described in detail, considering demographic information, group allocation, and response validation criteria. This ensures the robustness of the dataset for answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses.

4.1 Sample Characterization

The survey yielded a total of 334 responses, of which only 149 were deemed valid. Responses were excluded based on, participants not residing in Portugal for the minimum required period, incorrect responses to control and stimulus validation questions.

Most respondents (85.9%, N=128) reported living in Portugal their entire lives, with a consistent distribution across the four brands analyzed. Notably, a small percentage (11.4%, N=17) indicated residing in Portugal for more than 10 years. Most respondents were aged 18–24 years (45.0%, N=67), followed by 25–34 years (27.5%, N=41). The distribution varied slightly by brand. For example, Super Bock respondents were slightly older, with 43.3% in the 18–24 age group and 23.3% aged 45–54 years. The sample was predominantly female (56.4%, N=84), with males comprising 43.6% (N=65). Gender representation was balanced across brands, maintaining consistency. Most participants were employed full -time (54.4%, N=81), followed by students (30.2%, N=45). Employment trends varied slightly across brands, with higher proportions of full-time employees responding about Lidl and students predominating for Aldi. The highest level of education achieved by respondents was primarily a master's degree (45.6%, N=68), followed by a bachelor's degree (38.3%, N=57). This trend was consistent across all brands, with minor variations.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four brands: Lidl, Aldi, Super Bock, or Nestlé. This ensured an even distribution for data analysis, retailers: Lidl (N=42) and Aldi (N=41), accounting for 55.7% of respondents and manufacturers: Super Bock (N=30) and Nestlé (N=36), accounting for 44.3% of respondents.

The survey was carefully structured to capture perceptions of corporate and brand reputation, as well as employment attractiveness. Participants were exposed to stimuli designed to ensure unbiased evaluations, followed by a control question to confirm their attentiveness. Sequential questions then assessed familiarity, trust, and perceptions of the brand's appeal as an employer.

Each brand had a balanced response distribution across key questions, ensuring representative data, retail brands (Lidl and Aldi) had slightly higher familiarity and trust ratings among younger participants, and manufacturer brands (Super Bock and Nestlé) exhibited stronger perceptions of corporate reputation, particularly among older and full -time employed participants.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents align well with the study’s objectives. The balanced representation across genders, age groups, employment statuses, and educational levels provides a robust dataset for further analysis. Additionally, the accurate classification of brands into retail and manufacturing categories strengthens the study’s foundation for exploring the moderating effects of industry type.

4.2 Measure Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha test was employed to assess the reliability of the constructs in this study. This test evaluates the internal consistency of items within each variable, with higher values indicating stronger reliability (Cronbach, 1951).

Corporate Reputation consisted of 16 items and achieved a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.945, indicating excellent internal consistency across the construct. Brand Reputation, composed of 9 items, showed a high-reliability score of 0.926, reflecting strong consistency between its items. Employment Attractiveness, consisting of 10 items, demonstrated a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.916, confirming the variable's high reliability.

As all constructs surpassed the acceptable threshold of 0.7, no items were removed for further analysis. These results ensure the robustness of the measurement scales utilized in this study.

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Corporate Reputation	0.945	16
Commercial Reputation	0.926	9
Employment Attractiveness	0,916	10

Table 2-Cronbach’s Alpha

4.3 Results from the Hypothesis Test

This section presents the analysis conducted to test the hypotheses outlined in Chapter 2. The analyses employed include multiple linear regression models, moderation analysis using

PROCESS in SPSS, and correlational analysis to assess relationships between the variables. The primary goal is to evaluate the hypotheses concerning the influence of corporate and brand reputation on employment attractiveness and the moderating role of industry type. Detailed results are provided below.

4.3.1 Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1: "Corporate reputation has a stronger positive effect on employment attractiveness compared to commercial reputation."

To test this hypothesis, a multiple linear regression model was performed with (Emplo_Attract) as the dependent variable and (Corp_Rep) and (Brand_Rep) as independent variables. The model demonstrated statistical significance ($Z = 54.318$; $p < 0.001$) and a good fit ($R^2 = 0.428$). The Z-value of 54.318 represents the overall test statistic for the multiple linear regression model, indicating the strength of the relationship between the independent variables (corporate and commercial reputation) and the dependent variable (employment attractiveness). A higher Z-value suggests that the predictors in the model significantly explain the variance in the dependent variable. With a p-value less than 0.001, this result is highly statistically significant, meaning there is less than a 0.1% chance that these results occurred due to random error. This supports the reliability of the relationship identified in the model. The R^2 value of 0.428 indicates that 42.8% of the variability in employment attractiveness can be explained by the combined effects of corporate and commercial reputation. This is a moderately strong value in the context of social sciences, where R^2 values between 0.3 and 0.5 are generally considered meaningful. This suggests that corporate and commercial reputation together are significant predictors of how attractive an organization is perceived as a potential employer.

The regression coefficients revealed that corporate reputation ($\beta = 0.558$; $p < 0.001$) had a stronger and statistically significant impact on employment attractiveness compared to commercial reputation ($\beta = 0.112$; $p = 0.319$), which was not significant. The regression coefficients (β values) provide insight into the strength and direction of the individual contributions of each independent variable to employment attractiveness. The β value for corporate reputation is 0.558, meaning that for every unit increase in corporate reputation, employment attractiveness is expected to increase by 0.558 units, holding all other variables constant. This result is statistically significant with a p-value < 0.001 , confirming the robustness

of corporate reputation as a predictor. In contrast, the β value for brand reputation is 0.112, which indicates a much weaker contribution to employment attractiveness. Moreover, the p-value of 0.319 for brand reputation exceeds the threshold of 0.05, signifying that its effect is not statistically significant in this model. By interpreting these values collectively, the results validate the hypothesis. Corporate reputation, as a measure of an organization's ethical standards, leadership quality, and operational stability, significantly influences perceptions of employment attractiveness. This lack of significance reinforces the hypothesis that corporate reputation has a stronger positive effect on employment attractiveness compared to commercial reputation.

4.3.2 Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2: "Commercial reputation positively influences employment attractiveness."

The relationship between (Brand_Rep) and (Emplo_Attract) was analyzed using the Spearman correlation test. This test was chosen due to the data's lack of normality, as established in the normality analysis. The Spearman test is a non-parametric measure well-suited for datasets that deviate from normal distribution, as it evaluates the strength and direction of monotonic relationships between variables.

The analysis revealed a positive and moderate correlation between Brand_Rep and Emplo_Attract, with a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.527. This indicates that improvements in perceptions of commercial reputation are associated with increased employment attractiveness. Although the correlation is moderate rather than strong, it highlights that Brand_Rep plays a meaningful role in shaping how organizations are viewed as potential employers. The corresponding p-value was less than 0.01 ($p < 0.01$), confirming the statistical significance of the results. This low p-value demonstrates that the observed relationship is unlikely to be due to random chance, underscoring the robustness of the findings.

These results validate Hypothesis 2, demonstrating that Brand_Rep positively influences Emplo_Attract. While the impact of commercial reputation is not as strong as that of corporate reputation, it remains significant. This finding underscores the importance of commercial reputation in employer branding strategies, as it contributes to the overall perception of an organization's desirability as a workplace. For companies aiming to attract top talent, investing

in their brand's image and maintaining positive consumer-facing attributes can enhance their appeal to potential employees.

4.3.3 Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3: "The effect of corporate reputation on employment attractiveness is moderated by industry type, such that corporate reputation is more influential for retailers than for manufacturers."

To evaluate this hypothesis, a moderation analysis was performed using the PROCESS macro in SPSS. This approach is well-suited for investigating interaction effects between an independent variable (Corp_Rep) and a moderator (Manipula) on a dependent variable (Emplo_Attract).

The overall moderation model was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.428$), indicating that corporate reputation significantly predicts employment attractiveness, accounting for 48% of the variability in Emplo_Attract. The high R^2 value reflects a robust relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable. However, the specific interaction term (Corp_Rep x Manipula), which captures the moderating effect of industry type, was not statistically significant ($p = 0.381$). This suggests that the difference in the effect of corporate reputation on employment attractiveness between retailers and manufacturers is not meaningful. The change in adjusted R^2 attributable to the moderation effect ($\Delta R^2 = 0.0028$) was minimal, contributing only 2.8% to the explained variance. This negligible increase indicates that industry type has an almost imperceptible influence on the strength of the relationship between corporate reputation and employment attractiveness. While the moderation model demonstrates that corporate reputation significantly impacts employment attractiveness, this effect is largely consistent across industry types, with little distinction between retailers and manufacturers. While the hypothesis was partially supported, the minimal moderation effect implies that corporate reputation's influence on employment attractiveness is universal and not significantly shaped by the context of the industry. These results suggest that corporate reputation is a critical determinant of employment attractiveness regardless of whether an organization operates as a retailer or manufacturer. The minimal moderation effect indicates that factors such as governance, ethical practices, and leadership associated with corporate reputation are equally

valued across these sectors. This finding highlights the universal importance of corporate reputation in attracting potential employees, suggesting that organizations across industries should prioritize building and maintaining a strong corporate reputation to enhance their appeal as employers.

4.3.4 Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4: "The effect of commercial reputation on employment attractiveness is moderated by industry type, such that commercial reputation is more influential for manufacturers than for retailers."

Hypothesis 4 examines the moderating role of industry type on the relationship between Brand_Rep and Emplo_Attract, forming a critical component of the full model, which integrates both direct and interaction effects. The moderation analysis aimed to determine whether the influence of Brand_Rep on Emplo_Attract differs significantly between manufacturers and retailers.

To assess this hypothesis, a moderation analysis was conducted using PROCESS by Andrew Hayes (Model 1), focusing on the interaction between (Brand_Rep) and (Industry Type) in predicting (Emplo_Attract). The analysis revealed that the overall model was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.385$), indicating that Brand_Rep explains 38.5% of the variance in employment attractiveness. This demonstrates a meaningful relationship between commercial reputation and employment attractiveness in the overall model. However, the specific interaction term (Brand_Rep x Industry Type) was not statistically significant ($p = 0.169$), suggesting that the relationship between Brand_Rep and Emplo_Attract does not vary substantially across industry types. The ΔR^2 value of 8.2%, attributed to the moderating effect, reflects only a marginal change in the model's explanatory power. This minimal percentage indicates that industry type contributes very little to explaining the variance in employment attractiveness beyond the direct effects of Brand_Rep. The findings suggest that while Hypothesis 4 is theoretically grounded, it was not supported in the context of this study. The lack of statistical significance in the interaction term highlights that the influence of commercial reputation on employment attractiveness is consistent across industries, with no substantial distinction between manufacturers and retailers. This finding

reinforces the idea that the attributes associated with brand reputation—such as reliability, competence, and consistency—are valued similarly by potential employees, regardless of the organization’s sector.

While the hypothesis posited that Brand_Rep would be more influential for manufacturers than for retailers, the results suggest that commercial reputation operates as a universal factor influencing employment attractiveness. Organizations in both sectors can benefit from investing in their commercial reputation to enhance their appeal as employers. The minimal moderator effect further emphasizes that industry-specific strategies may not significantly enhance this relationship, advocating for a more generalized approach to employer branding that prioritizes trust, transparency, and quality.

By including this analysis within the full model, the study underscores the importance of investigating potential sector-specific variations. Although the moderation effect was minimal, its consideration adds to the robustness of the overall model, reflecting the value of examining nuanced relationships between reputational dimensions and employment attractiveness. Hypothesis 4, as explained by the PROCESS model presented in Appendix 16, did not demonstrate a significant moderating effect, as previously described.

Component	Description	Type of Relationship
Corp_Rep → Emplo_Attract	Direct effect of corporate reputation on employment attractiveness.	Direct Effect
Brand_Rep → Emplo_Attract	Direct effect of commercial reputation on employment attractiveness.	Direct Effect
Corp_Rep x Industry→Emplo_Attract	Interaction between corporate reputation and industry type affecting employment attractiveness.	Moderating Effect
Brand_Rep x Industry→Emplo_Attract	Interaction between commercial reputation and industry type affecting employment attractiveness.	Moderating Effect

Table 3-Visual Representing of the Full Model

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This last chapter will present the main conclusions and insights about the study and the managerial and academic implications associated with the findings. Lastly, it will suggest some limitations and provide recommendations for further research.

5.1 Main Findings & Conclusions

RQ1: Is there a difference between corporate and commercial reputation in terms of how they impact employment attractiveness?

The study revealed that there is a significant difference in how corporate reputation and commercial reputation influence employment attractiveness. Corporate reputation has a much stronger and statistically significant impact on employment attractiveness compared to commercial reputation. The multiple regression analysis demonstrated that corporate reputation ($\beta = 0.558$; $p < 0.001$) explains a substantial portion of the variance in employment attractiveness, confirming its dominant role. Conversely, commercial reputation, while positively correlated, showed a weaker and statistically insignificant direct effect ($\beta = 0.112$; $p = 0.319$). These results indicate that potential employees place greater emphasis on a company's ethical practices, stability, and governance than on its consumer-facing attributes when assessing its appeal as an employer.

This distinction highlights the importance of corporate reputation in shaping employment attractiveness, positioning it as a more critical driver in the decision-making process of prospective employees.

RQ2: How do corporate reputation and commercial reputation drive employment attractiveness?

Both corporate and commercial reputation positively influence employment attractiveness, albeit to different extents. Corporate reputation emerged as the primary driver, showcasing a significant and direct positive effect on employment attractiveness. This finding aligns with Social Identity Theory, as job seekers are drawn to organizations that align with their personal values and provide a stable, ethical, and well-managed environment.

Commercial reputation, assessed through the Spearman correlation test, showed a moderate positive relationship with employment attractiveness ($r = 0.527$; $p < 0.01$). This suggests that

while brand credibility, reliability, and consumer trust enhance perceptions of an organization's appeal, they are secondary to corporate reputation in terms of influence. The findings underline the complementary role of commercial reputation, which supports the employer brand by reinforcing trust and quality, but its impact is less pronounced than the corporate reputation.

RQ3: Does the type of industry moderate the impact of corporate and commercial reputation on employment attractiveness?

The moderation analysis investigated whether the industry type (retailers vs. manufacturers) alters the effects of corporate and commercial reputation on employment attractiveness. While the overall models for both corporate and commercial reputation were statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), the moderation effects were minimal. For corporate reputation, the interaction term was not significant ($p = 0.381$), and the ΔR^2 attributable to moderation was only 2.8%, suggesting that industry type has a negligible effect. Similarly, for commercial reputation, the interaction term was also not significant ($p = 0.169$), and the ΔR^2 was 8.2%.

These results indicate that corporate and commercial reputation influence employment attractiveness similarly across both retailers and manufacturers. The lack of substantial moderation suggests that industry-specific differences do not significantly alter the perception of these reputational dimensions as they relate to employment attractiveness.

5.2 Managerial and Academic Implications

From a managerial perspective, this study provides critical insights for organizations aiming to enhance their employment attractiveness. The findings highlight that a strong corporate reputation—defined by ethical governance, transparency, and leadership excellence—is the most significant factor in influencing prospective employees' perceptions of an organization as a desirable workplace. Employers should prioritize corporate social responsibility initiatives, sound leadership, and foster a stable organizational environment to stand out in a competitive job market.

Although commercial reputation plays a secondary role, it remains relevant by signaling trust, reliability, and product quality, which indirectly support the organization's image as a reliable and attractive employer. Organizations, especially those in retail and manufacturing sectors,

should adopt a holistic approach to reputation management, ensuring alignment between corporate and consumer-facing elements to strengthen their overall brand perception.

For retailers, corporate reputation should remain a primary focus given their close consumer interactions and the need to project trustworthiness and operational stability. Manufacturers, however, can leverage their commercial reputation by emphasizing product quality and innovation, which appeal to employees seeking long-term reliability and growth opportunities. These tailored strategies enable organizations to attract and retain top talent across different industry contexts.

From an academic perspective, this research advances the understanding of how corporate and commercial reputation influences employment attractiveness, providing empirical evidence of their distinct and combined effects. By exploring the moderating role of industry type, the study addresses an underexplored area, offering a nuanced perspective that complements existing literature. The findings validate the theoretical frameworks of Social Identity Theory and Signaling Theory, demonstrating their relevance in explaining how reputational signals influence prospective employees' perceptions of organizations.

This study also highlights the minimal moderating effect of industry type, challenging assumptions about the sector-specific dynamics of reputation management. Future research can explore additional moderators—such as organizational size, cultural factors, or job roles—to deepen our understanding of the interplay between reputational dimensions and employment attractiveness.

In conclusion, the findings offer actionable recommendations for practitioners and contribute to the theoretical development of employer branding research, emphasizing the importance of an integrated approach to reputation management in fostering organizational success.

5.3 Limitations and Further Research

This study, while offering valuable insights into the relationship between corporate and commercial reputation and employment attractiveness, has several limitations. These stem primarily from methodological choices, sample characteristics, and scope restrictions. Additionally, opportunities for further research are identified to expand and refine the findings.

One of the key strengths of this study lies in the randomization applied during the survey distribution. When participants accessed the survey, they were randomly assigned to respond to one of the brands, ensuring that the data collected was not influenced by participant selection bias. This randomization adds robustness to the study by minimizing potential biases in brand-related responses. While the sample size of 149 valid responses provided sufficient data for analysis, it is important to note that the overall sample is not representative of the broader Portuguese population. For instance, the demographic composition was skewed toward certain age groups and employment statuses, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should consider employing randomized or stratified sampling methods to achieve a more diverse and representative sample. Additionally, increasing the sample size would further enhance the robustness of the analysis and provide more generalizable results.

Another limitation lies in the survey's distribution method. The survey was disseminated exclusively online through social media platforms (e.g., Facebook and LinkedIn) and email, which restricted participation to individuals with internet access and familiarity with these platforms. This digital focus may have excluded certain demographics, such as older populations or those less active online. Future studies could benefit from combining online and offline data collection methods, such as in-person surveys or telephone interviews, to reach a wider audience and mitigate digital exclusion bias.

A significant methodological constraint involves the focus on industry types. The study examined only two industry categories: retail and manufacturing. While these sectors were appropriate for exploring the moderating effects of industry type, the findings may not be directly applicable to other industries, such as technology or healthcare, where reputation dynamics may differ significantly. Future research could expand the scope to include a broader range of industries, enabling comparisons and deeper insights into how industry context influences the relationship between reputation and employment attractiveness.

Furthermore, this study focused exclusively on corporate and commercial reputation as predictors of employment attractiveness. While these factors were found to be influential, employment attractiveness is a multifaceted construct likely influenced by other variables, such as organizational culture, career development opportunities, and work-life balance (Ferris, 2009); (Highhouse et al., 2003). Future research could incorporate these additional variables into the analysis to provide a more comprehensive understanding of what drives employment attractiveness.

In terms of theoretical limitations, this study primarily employed Social Identity Theory (Turner et al., 1979) and Signaling Theory (Connelly et al., 2011) to interpret the findings. While these frameworks are well-suited for examining reputation's impact on employment attractiveness, other theoretical perspectives, such as the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991) could provide complementary insights into how organizations leverage intangible assets like reputation to attract talent. Future studies could integrate multiple theoretical lenses to enrich the analysis and enhance its academic contribution.

The moderating effect of industry type, as explored in Hypotheses 3 and 4, was found to be minimal, with ΔR^2 values of 2.8% and 8.2%, respectively. While these results suggest limited moderation, the findings may have been influenced by the operationalization of industry type and the limited number of brands examined. Future research could explore alternative moderators, such as organizational size, market positioning, or cultural dimensions, to better understand the contextual factors that influence reputation's impact on employment attractiveness.

Lastly, this study's reliance on cross-sectional data limits its ability to capture the dynamic nature of reputation and its long-term effects on employment attractiveness. A longitudinal design would enable researchers to examine how changes in corporate and brand reputation over time influence organizational attractiveness and employee retention. This approach could provide valuable insights into the sustainability of reputation as an employer branding strategy.

In conclusion, while this study contributes to understanding how corporate and commercial reputation influences employment attractiveness, addressing the limitations outlined above would further strengthen its findings and practical relevance. Future research should aim for broader sampling, diverse industry coverage, and a more holistic theoretical and methodological approach to build on the insights generated by this study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Pre-survey

Thank you for participating in this survey.

The purpose of this study is to better understand how people perceive various brands, whether they consider them as manufacturers or retailers, and their opinions about the corporate and brand reputation of these companies. Your responses are valuable in helping us determine which brands will be used in a larger study on corporate and brand reputation and their impact on organizational attractiveness. Please note that your answers will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes. The survey will take approximately 3 minutes to complete. Thank you for taking the time to make a difference!

If you are ready, click **Next** to begin.

Please categorize the following brands based on whether you perceive them as primarily a **MANUFACTURE** or a **RETAILER**, **THE FAMILIARITY AND THE CORPORATE AND BRAND REPUTATION** with the brand:

(the same was done for the other 7 brands)

IKEA:

Manufacture

Retailer

Unsure

How familiar are you with IKEA? (5-point Likert scale)

1 = Not familiar at all

2 = Slightly familiar

3 = Moderately familiar

4 = Very familiar

5 = Extremely familiar

Please rate the following statements about the **Reputation of the Company IKEA**.

I trust this company.

I admire and respect this company.

I have a good feeling about this company.

This company offers high-quality products and services.

This company is innovative.

This company stands behind its products/services.

This company has a clear vision for its future.

This company is well-managed.

This company is a leader in its industry.

This company is a good place to work.

This company treats its employees well.

This company is financially strong.

This company has strong prospects for future growth.

This company is environmentally responsible.

This company supports good causes.

This company maintains high ethical standards.

Please rate the following statements about **IKEA's Brand**.

This brand delivers what it promises.

This brand's claims about its products/services are believable.

This brand is trustworthy.

This brand is skilled in what it does.

This brand has expertise.

This brand has a reputation for being competent.

This brand provides clear information about its products/services.

This brand avoids making misleading claims.

This brand communicates openly.

Demographic Questions:

What is your age?

Less than 18

18–24 years

25–34 years

35–44 years

45–54 years

55–64 years

65 years and above

How long have you lived in Portugal?

Less than 1 year

1–3 years

4–6 years

7–10 years

More than 10 years

I have lived in Portugal my entire life

Please indicate your gender:

Male

Female

APPENDIX 2: Pre-survey answers

Estatísticas Descritivas

	N	Mínimo	Máximo	Média	Desvio padrão
How familiar are you with IKEA? (5-point Likert scale)	10	3	5	3,70	,823
How familiar are you with LIDL? (5-point Likert scale)	10	2	5	4,10	,876
How familiar are you with El Corte Inglés? (5-point Likert scale)	9	3	5	4,33	,866
How familiar are you with Delta Cafés? (5-point Likert scale)	9	1	5	3,00	1,414
How familiar are you with Super Bock Group? (5-point Likert scale)	7	2	5	4,00	1,155
How familiar are you with Nestlé? (5-point Likert scale)	6	3	5	4,17	,753
How familiar are you with Sumol Compal? (5-point Likert scale)	11	2	5	3,82	1,168
How familiar are you with ALDI? (5-point Likert scale)	10	2	5	3,10	1,101
N válido (de lista)	0				

Estímulo	% Manufacture	% Retailer	% Unsure	Familiarity	Corporate Reputation	Brand Reputation
Ikea	50	40	10	3,7	3,841666667	3,5125
Lidl		100		4,1	4,008333333	4,025
El Corte Ingles		100		4,33	3,856666667	3,83125
Delta Cafés	55,55555556	44,444444		3	3,3525	3,625
Super Bock Group	85,71428571	14,285714		4	3,906666667	4,5725
Nestlé	83,33333333		16,666667	4,17	3,831666667	4,06125
Sumol Compal	54,54545455	18,181818	27,272727	3,82	3,629166667	3,84
Aldi		100		3,1	3,241666667	2,7375

Estímulo	% Manufacture	% Retailer	% Unsure	Familiarity	Corporate Reputation	Brand Reputation
Ikea	50	40	10	3,7	3,8	3,5
Lidl		100		4,1	4,0	4,0
El Corte Ingles		100		4,3	3,9	3,8
Delta Cafés	56	44		3,0	3,4	3,6
Super Bock Group	86	14		4,0	3,9	4,6
Nestlé	83		17	4,2	3,8	4,1
Sumol Compal	55	18	27	3,8	3,6	3,8
Aldi		100		3,1	3,2	2,7

APPENDIX 3: Focus Group- Participants Characterization

Name	Age	Gender	Nationality
Mónica Salema	56	Female	Portuguese
Inês Lobo	23	Female	Portuguese
Carolina Matos	24	Female	Portuguese
Vera Rodrigues	23	Female	Portuguese
Maria do Mar d'Orey	25	Female	Portuguese
José Maria Martins	25	Male	Portuguese
Domingos d'Orey	18	Male	Portuguese

APPENDIX 4: Focus Group Procedure

The following steps outline the methodology of the focus group conducted for the study:

1. Introduction:

- Participants were welcomed and informed about the purpose of the focus group.
- The facilitator explained that the session would focus on determining the best way to visually represent the selected brands (Lidl, Aldi, Super Bock, and Nestlé) in the main survey.

2. Evaluation of Retailer Brands (Lidl and Aldi):

- Three types of stimuli were presented for each retailer:
 - Logo
 - Store image
 - Product image
- For each stimulus type, participants were asked:
 - Does this image clearly identify the brand as a retailer?
 - Which of these images do you believe best represents the brand?
- Participants anonymously wrote their answers on paper to ensure unbiased responses. After discussion, participants cast their final votes anonymously by selecting one stimulus.

3. Evaluation of Manufacturer Brands (Super Bock and Nestlé):

- Two types of stimuli were presented for each manufacturer:
 - Logo
 - Product image
- Participants answered similar questions regarding the clarity and representativeness of each image type.
- Final votes were cast anonymously after individual reflection.

4. Voting and Results:

- For Lidl and Aldi, the store image was selected as the most representative stimulus.
- For Super Bock and Nestlé, the product image was unanimously chosen.

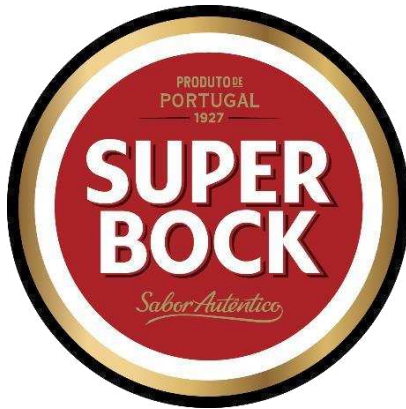
5. Concluding Remarks:

- Participants were thanked for their time and valuable contributions.
- Their feedback was used to finalize the stimuli for the main survey.

This focus group ensured that the stimuli used in the main survey were the most representative and unbiased, thereby improving the quality and reliability of the research findings.

APPENDIX 5: Presentation of the Stimulus





APPENDIX 6: Main Online Survey

Part 1: Introduction

Dear Participant,

This research study is being conducted as part of the thesis for the McS in Management with Specialization in Strategic Marketing. All data collected through this survey will be used solely for academic purposes within the scope of the MSc thesis. Analysis will concentrate on identifying trends and patterns across groups rather than individual responses. Your responses will remain completely anonymous. No personal identifying information will be collected, and results will be reported in aggregate form only, ensuring individual anonymity. The estimated time to complete the survey is 5 minutes. Thank you for your time and valuable contribution to this research!

Part 2: Control Questions

1. Where do you live?

(if the answer was not Portugal, the person was automatically excluded from the survey)

2. How long have you lived in Portugal?

Less than 1 year

1–3 years

4–6 years

7–10 years

More than 10 years

I have lived in Portugal my entire life

(if the answer was “Less than 1 year”, the person was automatically excluded from the survey)

Part 3: Presentation of the stimuli

(Each participant will be presented with 1 brand of the 4 that we have)

3. Please take a moment to look at the image below. After viewing it, you will be asked a question about the XXX:

Based on the image you just saw; would you classify XXX as a:

1. Manufacture

2. Retailer

(if the person answered manufacture or retailer and was wrong according to the stimuli they were shown, they were automatically excluded from the survey)

Part 4: Corporate Reputation

Please state your level of agreement with the sentences below with considering XXX, from strongly disagree to strongly agree (7 Point-Likert scale):

I trust this company.

I admire and respect this company.

I have a good feeling about this company.

This company offers high-quality products and services.

This company is innovative.

This company stands behind its products/services.

This company has a clear vision for its future.

This company is well-managed.

This company is a leader in its industry.

This company is a good place to work.

This company treats its employees well.

This company is financially strong.
This company has strong prospects for future growth.
This company is environmentally responsible.
This company supports good causes.
This company maintains high ethical standards.

Part 4: Commercial Reputation

Please state your level of agreement with the sentences below with considering XXX, from strongly disagree to strongly agree (7 Point-Likert scale):

This brand delivers what it promises.
This brand's claims about its products/services are believable.
This brand is trustworthy.
This brand is skilled in what it does.
This brand has expertise.
This brand has a reputation for being competent.
This brand provides clear information about its products/services.
This brand avoids making misleading claims.
This brand communicates openly

Part 5: Employer Attractiveness

Please state your level of agreement with the sentences below with considering XXX, from strongly disagree to strongly agree (7 Point-Likert scale):

For me, this company would be a good place to work.
This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.
I am interested in learning more about this company.
A job at this company would be very appealing to me.
I would accept a job offer from this company.
I would make this company one of my first choices as an employer.
If this company invited me for a job interview, I would go.
This company has a reputation as being an excellent employer.
This company is known as a great company to work for.
I would find working for this company to be very prestigious

Part 6: Demographic Questions

What is your age?

Less than 18

18–24 years

25–34 years

35–44 years

45–54 years

55–64 years

65 years and above

Please indicate your gender:

Male

Female

What is your current employment status?

Employed full-time

Employed part-time

Self-employed

Unemployed

Student

Retired

What is your highest level of education?

High school or equivalent

Some college

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

Doctorate or higher

Thank you for participating in the survey!

APPENDIX 7: SPSS-Demographics:

How long have you lived in Portugal?		
	N	%
1–3 years	1	0,7%
4–6 years	3	2,0%
More than 10 years	17	11,4%
I have lived in Portugal my entire life	128	85,9%

What is your age?

	N	%
18–24	67	45,0%
25–34	41	27,5%
35–44	9	6,0%
45–54	18	12,1%
55–64	13	8,7%
65 and above	1	0,7%

What is your gender?

	N	%
Female	84	56,4%
Male	65	43,6%

What is your current employment status?

	N	%
Employed full-time	81	54,4%
Employed part-time	8	5,4%
Self-employed	7	4,7%
Unemployed	5	3,4%
Student	45	30,2%
Retired	3	2,0%

What is your highest level of education?

	N	%
High school or equivalent	13	8,7%
Some college	9	6,0%
Bachelor's degree	57	38,3%
Master's degree	68	45,6%
Doctorate or higher	2	1,3%

Estatísticas

Brand		How long have you lived in Portugal?	What is your age?	What is your gender?	What is your current employment status?	What is your highest level of education?
LIDL	N	Válido	42	42	42	42
		Omisso	0	0	0	0
ALDI	N	Válido	41	41	41	41
		Omisso	0	0	0	0
NESTLE	N	Válido	36	36	36	36
		Omisso	0	0	0	0
SUPER BOCK	N	Válido	30	30	30	30
		Omisso	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX 8: SPSS Output – Measure Variables:

Escala: Corp_Rep

Resumo de processamento de casos

Brand			N	%
LIDL	Casos	Válido	42	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	42	100,0
ALDI	Casos	Válido	41	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	41	100,0
NESTLE	Casos	Válido	36	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	36	100,0
SUPER BOCK	Casos	Válido	30	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	30	100,0

a. Exclusão de lista com base em todas as variáveis do procedimento.

Estatísticas de confiabilidade

Brand	Alfa de Cronbach	N de itens
LIDL	,869	16
ALDI	,882	16
NESTLE	,973	16
SUPER BOCK	,866	16

Escala: Brand_Rep

Resumo de processamento de casos

Brand			N	%
LIDL	Casos	Válido	42	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	42	100,0
ALDI	Casos	Válido	41	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	41	100,0
NESTLE	Casos	Válido	36	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	36	100,0
SUPER BOCK	Casos	Válido	30	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	30	100,0

a. Exclusão de lista com base em todas as variáveis do procedimento.

Estatísticas de confiabilidade

Brand	Alfa de Cronbach	N de itens
LIDL	,824	9
ALDI	,873	9
NESTLE	,976	9
SUPER BOCK	,763	9

Escala: Corp_Rep

Resumo de processamento de casos

		N	%
Casos	Válido	149	100,0
	Excluídos ^a	0	,0
	Total	149	100,0

a. Exclusão de lista com base em todas as variáveis do procedimento.

Estatísticas de confiabilidade

Alfa de Cronbach	N de itens
,945	16

Escala: Brand_Rep

Resumo de processamento de casos

		N	%
Casos	Válido	149	100,0
	Excluídos ^a	0	,0
	Total	149	100,0

a. Exclusão de lista com base em todas as variáveis do procedimento.

Estatísticas de confiabilidade

Alfa de Cronbach	N de itens
,926	9

Escala: Empló_Attract

Resumo de processamento de casos

Brand		N	%	
LIDL	Casos	Válido	42	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	42	100,0
ALDI	Casos	Válido	41	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	41	100,0
NESTLE	Casos	Válido	36	100,0
		Excluídos ^a	0	,0
		Total	36	100,0
SUPER BOCK	Casos	Válido	29	96,7
		Excluídos ^a	1	3,3
		Total	30	100,0

a. Exclusão de lista com base em todas as variáveis do procedimento.

Estatísticas de confiabilidade

Brand	Alfa de Cronbach	N de itens
LIDL	,920	10
ALDI	,658	10
NESTLE	,967	10
SUPER BOCK	,945	10

Escala: Empló_Attract

Resumo de processamento de casos

	N	%	
Casos	Válido	148	99,3
	Excluídos ^a	1	,7
	Total	149	100,0

a. Exclusão de lista com base em todas as variáveis do procedimento.

Estatísticas de confiabilidade

Alfa de Cronbach	N de itens
,916	10

Tabela 11. Consistência interna dos 3 grupos de questões.

		Alfa de Cronbach	N de itens
Corp_REP	Total	,945	16
	Retailer	,891	16
	Manufacture	,967	16
	LIDL	,869	16
	ALDI	,882	16
	NESTLE	,973	16
	SUPER BOCK	,866	16
Brand_Rep	Total	,926	9
	Retailer	,870	9
	Manufacture	,954	9
	LIDL	,824	9
	ALDI	,873	9
	NESTLE	,976	9
	SUPER BOCK	,763	9
Empló_Attract	Total	,916	10
	Retailer	,854	10
	Manufacture	,957	10
	LIDL	,920	10
	ALDI	,658	10
	NESTLE	,967	10
	SUPER BOCK	,945	10

APPENDIX 9: SPSS Output – Stimulus:

**Based on the image you just saw,
would you classify Lidl as a:**

	N	%
Manufacture	66	44,3%
Retailer	83	55,7%

APPENDIX 10: SPSS Output – Teste de normalidade de Kolmogorov-Smirnov:

Testes de Normalidade

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Estatística	gl	Sig.	Estatística	gl	Sig.
Corp_Rep	,133	148	,000	,779	148	,000
Brand_Rep	,108	148	,000	,789	148	,000
Emplo_Attract	,056	148	,200*	,950	148	,000

*. Este é um limite inferior da significância verdadeira.

a. Correlação de Significância de Lilliefors

APPENDIX 11: SPSS Output- Multiple linear regression model

Resumo do modelo

Modelo	R	R quadrado	R quadrado ajustado	Erro padrão da estimativa
1	,654 ^a	,428	,420	1,22797

a. Preditores: (Constante), Brand_Rep, Corp_Rep

ANOVA^a

Modelo		Soma dos Quadrados	df	Quadrado Médio	Z	Sig.
1	Regressão	163,812	2	81,906	54,318	,000 ^b
	Resíduo	218,647	145	1,508		
	Total	382,459	147			

a. Variável Dependente: Emplo_Attract

b. Preditores: (Constante), Brand_Rep, Corp_Rep

Tabela 13. Modelo de regressão linear múltipla

Modelo		Soma dos Quadrados	gl	Quadrado Médio	Z	p	r	r ²
1	Regressão	163,812	2	81,906	54,318	,000	,654	,428
	Resíduo	218,647	145	1,508				
	Total	382,459	147					

Legenda: gl – graus de liberdade; Z – valor distribuição normal; r – coeficiente de correlação; r² – coeficiente de ajustamento; p – probabilidade de significância.

APPENDIX 12: SPSS Output- Coefficients of the regression model

Coeficientes^a

Modelo		Coeficientes não padronizados		Coeficientes padronizados	t	Sig.
		B	Erro Erro	Beta		
1	(Constante)	-,508	,895		-,567	,571
	Corp_Rep	,802	,161	,558	4,969	,000
	Brand_Rep	,166	,166	,112	1,000	,319

a. Variável Dependente: Emplo_Attract

APPENDIX 13: SPSS Output- Linear Regression Hypothesis

Resumo do modelo

Modelo	R	R quadrado	R quadrado ajustado	Erro padrão da estimativa
1	,654 ^a	,428	,420	1,22797

a. Preditores: (Constante), Brand_Rep, Corp_Rep

ANOVA^a

Modelo		Soma dos Quadrados	df	Quadrado Médio	Z	Sig.
1	Regressão	163,812	2	81,906	54,318	,000 ^b
	Resíduo	218,647	145	1,508		
	Total	382,459	147			

a. Variável Dependente: Emplo_Attract

b. Preditores: (Constante), Brand_Rep, Corp_Rep

Coeficientes^a

Modelo		Coeficientes não padronizados		Coeficientes padronizados	t	Sig.
		B	Erro Erro	Beta		
1	(Constante)	-,508	,895		-,567	,571
	Corp_Rep	,802	,161	,558	4,969	,000
	Brand_Rep	,166	,166	,112	1,000	,319

a. Variável Dependente: Emplo_Attract

APPENDIX 14: SPSS Output- Non-Parametric Correlation

Correlações

			Corp_Rep	Brand_Rep	Emplo_Attract
rô de Spearman	Corp_Rep	Coefficiente de Correlação	1,000	,776**	,714**
		Sig. (2 extremidades)	.	,000	,000
		N	149	149	148
	Brand_Rep	Coefficiente de Correlação	,776**	1,000	,527**
		Sig. (2 extremidades)	,000	.	,000
		N	149	149	148
	Emplo_Attract	Coefficiente de Correlação	,714**	,527**	1,000
		Sig. (2 extremidades)	,000	,000	.
		N	148	148	148

** . A correlação é significativa no nível 0,01 (2 extremidades).

APPENDIX 15: SPSS Output-Process 1 SPSS

Using the SPSS Process tool, we aimed to verify whether the company's classification moderates the influence of Corp_Rep on Emplo_Attract.

It was found that the estimated moderation model was significant ($p = .000$) and well-adjusted ($R^2 = .428$).

However, the interaction term “Int_1 = Corp_Rep x Manipula” is not statistically significant ($p = .3810$) and explains very little of Emplo_Attract (R^2 change = .0028). In other words, although significant differences were observed in the mean summed scores of Corp_Rep on Emplo_Attract between retail and manufacturing companies, the company classification accounts for only 2.8% of the model's adjustment, indicating that its moderating effect is minimal.

Run MATRIX procedure:

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.1 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model : 1
Y : Emp_Att
X : Corp_Rep
W : Manipul

Sample
Size: 148

OUTCOME VARIABLE:
Emp_Att

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
,6855	,4699	1,4080	42,5456	3,0000	144,0000	,0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3,3681	2,4591	1,3696	,1729	-1,4925	8,2286
Corp_Rep	,6634	,2671	2,4837	,0142	,1355	1,1914
Manipul	-2,2372	1,7848	-1,2535	,2121	-5,7650	1,2906
Int_1	,1731	,1971	,8787	,3810	-,2164	,5627

Product terms key:
Int_1 : Corp_Rep x Manipul

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):

R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p	
X*W	,0028	,7720	1,0000	144,0000	,3810

Focal predict: Corp_Rep (X)
Mod var: Manipul (W)

Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

```
DATA LIST FREE/  
  Corp_Rep Manipul Emp_Att .  
BEGIN DATA.  
  8,3650 1,0000 8,1288  
  9,1563 1,0000 8,7907  
  9,9375 1,0000 9,4443  
  8,3650 2,0000 7,3400  
  9,1563 2,0000 8,1389  
  9,9375 2,0000 8,9278  
END DATA.  
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=  
Corp_Rep WITH Emp_Att BY Manipul .
```

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95,0000

----- END MATRIX -----

APPENDIX 16: SPSS Output

We also aimed to verify whether the company's classification moderates the influence of Brand_Rep on Empl_Attract.

It was found that the estimated moderation model was significant ($p = .000$) with a moderate fit ($R^2 = .385$).

However, the interaction term "Int_1 = Brand_Rep x Manipula" is not statistically significant ($p = .1686$) and explains very little of Empl_Attract (R^2 change = .0082). In other words, although significant differences were observed in the mean summed scores of Corp_Rep on Empl_Attract between retail and manufacturing companies, the company classification accounts for only 8.2% of the model's adjustment, indicating that its moderating effect is minimal.

```

Run MATRIX procedure:
***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.1 *****
      Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.      www.afhayes.com
      Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3
*****
Model : 1
  Y : Empl_Attract

  X : Brand_Rep
  W : Manipula

Sample
Size: 148

*****
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
  Empl_Att

Model Summary
      R      R-sq      MSE      F      df1      df2      p
,6204    ,3849    1,6336    30,0417    3,0000    144,0000    ,0000

Model
      coeff      se      t      p      LLCI      ULCI
constant    -1,6759    2,8230    -,5937    ,5537    -7,2558    3,9039
Brand_Rep     1,1753    ,2941    3,9965    ,0001    ,5940    1,7566
Manipula     2,9777    1,9503    1,0141    ,3122    -1,8771    5,8326
Int_1        -,2855    ,2063    -1,3838    ,1686    -,6934    ,1223

Product terms key:
  Int_1 = Brand_Rep x Manipula

Covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates:
      constant      Brand_Rep      Manipula      Int_1
constant    7,9692    -,8238    -5,1921    ,5412
Brand_Rep    -,8238    ,0865    ,5412    -,0572
Manipula    -5,1921    ,5412    3,8035    -,3999
Int_1        ,5412    -,0572    -,3999    ,0426

Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):
      R2-chng      F      df1      df2      p
X*W    ,0082    1,9149    1,0000    144,0000    ,1686
-----
      Focal predict: Brand_Rep (X)
      Mod var: Manipula (W)

Data for visualizing the conditional effect of the focal predictor:
Paste text below into a SPSS syntax window and execute to produce plot.

DATA LIST FREE/
  Brand_Rep Manipula Empl_Att =
BEGIN DATA.
  8,6489    1,0000    7,9973
  9,5556    1,0000    8,8041
  10,3333    1,0000    9,4961
  8,6489    2,0000    7,6056
  9,5556    2,0000    8,0535
  10,3333    2,0000    8,5234
END DATA.
GRAPH/SCATTERPLOT=
  Brand_Rep WITH Empl_Att BY Manipula .

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
95,0000

----- END MATRIX -----

```
