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EMPLOYEE PENSION PROGRAMMES IN THE EMPLOYERS' BRANDING STRATEGY

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the inefficiency of pension systems has become a pressing problem in numerous countries. With the decreasing number of professionally active people, the problem of the lack of full coverage of expenditures on pension benefits from the state retirement systems is growing, due to the decreasing budget income of resources for these payments. The fact that these benefits, as predictions show, will be relatively low in comparison with incomes during occupational activity, draws workers' attention to the possibility of making additional, individualized provisions for their retirement. Many examples of solutions pertaining to the building and management of pension systems can be found in the literature;¹ nevertheless, the problem is more and more perceptible in pay-as-you-go parts of retirement security systems (of a public character), as well as capital-based ones.

The issue of financial safety for old age has been discussed in the literature for decades, from different approaches – at the institutional and individual levels. The theoretical foundations on the subject of household savings have been created by many authors.² Transferring the literature on macro-level concepts to the sphere of behaviours of individual entities, a significant diversity of attitudes associated with saving for old age and the justification for saving, or not saving at an appropriate time, can be noticed.³

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¹ Clark, Urwin (2010); Novy-Marx, Rauh (2009).

² Modigliani, Brumberg (1954); Friedman (1957); Ando, Modigliani (1957); Wärneryd (2004); Shefrin, Thaler (1981).

³ Thaler, Benartzi (2001).

However, there are not many deliberations in the literature that focus on the management tools that human resources departments can use to encourage workers to save for old age. There are case studies focused on evaluating the following issues: the impact of education provided by employers on participation in voluntary pension systems,⁴ the influence of employees' health on their retirement decision,⁵ the conditions of the working place,⁶ the influence of gender on retirement decisions,⁷ and the motivations for taking retirement.⁸ Furthermore, the subject of voluntary pension systems tends to be analysed by researchers from the perspective of investment funds, costs or the risk related to the investment of savings.⁹ Therefore it seems especially interesting to additionally refer these theories to the management of human resources in organizations and to the strategy of the employer's brand creation. Thus, the discussions referred to above constituted the premise for viewing employee pension plans in a different way than previously, as a tool for the creation of the employer's brand. As a result of the literature review, the main objective of the article is to indicate the significance of the employee's pension plans in the employer's branding strategy, and to provide empirical verification of the relationship between them. The article uses, among other things, the results of the research that was conducted among 71 deliberately selected human resources department managers and 80 employees in Poland. The direct semi-structured interview method was applied.

II. EMPLOYER BRANDING – THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The notion of employer branding (EB) has a considerably shorter history than that of product branding.¹⁰ The evolution of the notion shows that the idea was developed extensively in the 1980s and 1990s in the context of international corporations.¹¹ This is because managers dealing with staff management noticed that in recruitment processes, or while organizing and supervising employees, a number of models and techniques applied in the process of brand creation can be referred to. As a result of the observations of an organization's experiences in the sphere of staff management, the following definition was formulated: the employer brand can be defined as 'the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment

⁴ Clark, McDermet (2006).

⁵ Büsch et al. (2010); Hipp (2020); Micheel, Roloff, Wickenheiser (2010).

⁶ Wang, Schultz (2010).

⁷ Adams, Rau (2004); Jacobs-Lawson, Hershey, Neukam (2004).

⁸ Flynn (2008).

⁹ Bikker, De Dreu (2009); Clark, Strauss, Knox-Hayes (2012).

¹⁰ Bastos, Levy (2012); Gardner, Levy (1995); Kotler, Keller (2012); Aaker (1996); Keller (1993), (2009); Theurer et al. (2016).

¹¹ Barrow, Mosley (2005).

and identified with the employing company'.¹² For others¹³ EB is 'a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm', or it means distinguishing the unique aspects of a firm as an employer from those of its competitors in the same area. In the context of recruitment, EB is the package of psychological, economic and functional benefits that potential employees associate with employment with a particular company.¹⁴ Knowledge of these perceptions can help organizations to create an attractive and competitive employer brand. Finally, employer brand loyalty results in moving employees from an employment contract to a psychological contract.¹⁵

Just like in the case of product branding, defining the distinctive features of EB, namely the description of the attributes and benefits that will be communicated in the process of employer positioning in the awareness of future and current employees, seems vital. This represents the need to identify Employee Value Propositions (EVPs): 'a set of benefits, values and principles related to working in a given organization',¹⁶ which confirm the unique human resources management policy, processes, tools and programmes that demonstrate the company's orientation on employee satisfaction and engagement. EVPs bring, among other things, such benefits as: organizational identity, attraction and retention of employees, and a reduction of engagement costs.¹⁷

The policy of creating EB in an organization is focused on two target groups: future employees and those currently employed. Studies conducted in the first group are now focused on communication channels and the use of the Internet, especially social media.¹⁸ In the case of current employees, it supports building loyalty, commitment or the motivation to work, career¹⁹ and talent management;²⁰ but it also discourages changing the workplace. It also allows workers to stay active for longer periods on the labour market.²¹

Depending on the goals and the addressees, HR departments have to reach for the spectrum of tools that enable them to be achieved in indicated groups. The perception of EB may vary across different dimensions, such as age, gender, experience and so on,²² also in terms of such values as interest, social, application, economic improvement and development.²³ The tools indicated in the form of the 'employer brand wheel' include a very broad spectrum of activity that strongly refers to the organizational culture of an enterprise.²⁴ They

¹² Ambler, Barrow (1996).

¹³ Sullivan (2004); Backhaus, Tikoo (2004).

¹⁴ Wilden, Gudergan, Lings (2010).

¹⁵ Chhabra, Sharma (2014).

¹⁶ Hill, Tande (2010).

¹⁷ Mandal, Krishnan (2013).

¹⁸ Chhabra, Sharma (2014); Sivertzen, Nilsen, Olafsen (2013); Wilkinson (2009).

¹⁹ Backhaus, Tikoo (2004).

²⁰ Maurya, Agarwal (2018).

²¹ Loretto (2010).

²² Bruschi, Bruschi, Kozłowski (2018); Kashive, Khanna (2018).

²³ Reis, Braga (2016).

²⁴ Barlow, Mosley (2005).

comprise: vision and leadership, policies and values, fairness and cooperation, corporate personality, external reputation, communication, recruitment and induction, performance management, development, the working environment, the reward system, and post-employment. The issues of what tools, how they are applied, and with reference to which groups of employees they would bring the most desirable results, are therefore they are of great significance, but still not recognized.

Previous research²⁵ shows that the key factors determining the choice of workplace and not considering a change of the place of employment are long-term and systematic saving and the system organized in the workplace (Table 1). Access to the latest technologies, social diversity and inclusion, as well as giving back to society, are among the least important factors, even though, as trends show, their significance is growing.²⁶

Table 1

Factors influencing employees' decision to take the job and promoted by organizations (EVP)

Factors important for employees	Factors promoted by employers (EVP)
1. salary and benefits	1. financially healthy
2. job security	2. uses latest technologies
3. work-life balance	3. very good reputation
4. work atmosphere	4. job security
5. career progression	5. career progression
6. financially healthy	6. salary and benefits
7. interesting job content	7. work atmosphere
8. very good reputation	8. interesting job content
9. gives back to society	9. work-life balance
10. uses latest technologies	

Source: Employer Brand Research Global Report (2018); Randstad Report (2018): 11.

Specific solutions, for example offering health care, creches or kindergartens for employees' children, sports vouchers or voluntary pension systems, are not indicated among the above-mentioned tools. However, it should be noticed that in 2005 in Britain's Top Employers report, a number of non-material factors contributing to building a positive image were introduced in the evaluation of employers. They included: pay and benefits, opportunities for promotion, training and development, opportunities for travel and international work, the company culture, the firm's ability to innovate, diversity and equal opportunities, social responsibility, corporate governance, and the company's environmental record.²⁷

²⁵ Employer Brand Research Global Report (2018); Randstad Report (2018): 11.

²⁶ Randstad Report (2018): 14.

²⁷ Barlow, Mosley (2005).

III. EMPLOYEE PENSION PROGRAMMES

Financing pension benefits is a great challenge to many states all over the world.²⁸ While searching for the best solutions, operating pension systems are reformed, often leading to growth in the financing pension benefits from outside the public system – from the funds accumulated by working people in their workplace. Employee pension programmes (EPPs) are one of the offered solutions enabling the creation of such savings. Therefore EPPs are:

- 1) a part of the pension system,
- 2) and they constitute an element of the personnel policy in organizations.

In the first case – as one of the elements of the pension system, EPPs enable group saving, the aim of which is to provide additional benefits to employees – future pensioners. The initiator, and often organizer of saving within these programmes, can be an employment enterprise – in this case they have the nature of a private pension plan, or one run by the state – in this case participation in these programmes can be obligatory or voluntary. It should be emphasized that saving is aimed at ensuring security in old age, therefore accumulated funds can only be used after the retirement age is reached. Furthermore, it is a typical feature of this solution that the benefits obtained by pensioners from the EPPs usually have a complementary character with respect to the basic benefits obtained from the state system. What is more, in EPPs there is often support from the state for companies that offer benefits to employees (e.g. through tax reductions or the possibility to reduce labour costs).²⁹ Therefore, according to the OECD definition, access to EPPs is possible only in connection with an employment agreement between the participant in the EPPs (employee) and the entity that establishes the programme (employer, group of employers or employees' organization, for example, professional associations or trade unions), whereas a company can entrust the management of the funds to a specialized financial institution while creating such a programme.³⁰

Apart from the fact that EPPs constitute one of the elements of the pension system, these programmes are also an element of personnel policy in organizations. This is because while offering and using EPPs, a company can achieve specific goals associated with the recruitment of new employees: employment stability or shaping their brand as an employer in the social environment. Companies with the most developed innovative human resources management policies offer more training, more social benefits and incentives, and what's more – they are also the most likely to implement

²⁸ Barr, Diamond (2006); Chen, Beetsma (2014); Saunders, Wong (2011).

²⁹ OECD (2005).

³⁰ Here, one more issue should be indicated. As Carmen-Pilar Martí-Ballester (2015) shows, 'Pension funds are demanding increasingly more information about the levels of corporate social responsibility achieved by companies through the use of corporate social responsibility reports to select which firms' stocks to invest in.'

EPPs.³¹ The beneficiaries of EPPs have higher levels of satisfaction and are less likely to change their job, often regardless of the position held or salary.³² Luchak and Gellatly³³ also discovered that higher pension accruals were associated with longer service and lower staff turnover, or a higher so-called continuance commitment. They noticed that if the organization had not had a pension programme, the workers with a lower affective commitment would have eventually left; long-service employees were those most likely to have genuinely strong emotional ties to the employer and its staff. It can be also located in CSR policy and tools.³⁴ According to Cadbury,³⁵ 'the manner in which companies discharge their responsibilities towards society affects their public reputation and their ability to recruit and retainable and committed employees'.

The studies conducted among employees³⁶ show that 'the role of an occupational pension in employees' psychological contracts is related to age, and that they play a much greater role in the psychological contracts of older employees. The provision of an occupational pension was found to be more successful in promoting the retention rather than the recruitment of staff'. However, as Taylor³⁷ states, EPPs reduce the retention of mainly elderly people. Furthermore, the results of research conducted by Hales and Gough³⁸ show that despite, to a high degree, the automatic accession of employees to EPPs, they perceive these funds 'more as contingent private transactions than as part of long-term stable commitments by and to an employer'. However, the quoted authors show that if an employer is perceived by the employees as the only entity that is responsible for pension provision, the relationship between the pension benefit received from the EPPs and an employee's engagement or loyalty will be insufficient. They also found that, because of that transactional view of pensions, employees generally only perceive the employer as having an intermediary role. So it is not a case of employer benevolence which leads to the creation of reciprocal behaviours or positive feelings among employees.

The perception of EPPs by employers and employees is limited and can vary significantly.³⁹ For employees (more often than for employers) immediate financial and non-financial benefits are the most important, especially if the free disposition fund remains small. Research indicates that deferring consumption in time is not particularly preferred, and saving requires this, therefore employees are rather reluctant to voluntarily give up immediate consumption in favour of retired consumption (unless associated with addi-

³¹ Garcés-Galdeano, García-Olaverri, Huerta (2016).

³² Dulebohn et al. (2009).

³³ Luchak, Gellatly (2001).

³⁴ Olejnik, Stefańska (2020).

³⁵ Cadbury (2006).

³⁶ Gough, Hick (2009).

³⁷ Taylor (2000).

³⁸ Hales, Gough (2003).

³⁹ Mastin (1998); OECD (2002).

tional benefits such as tax relief). On the other hand, employers offering EPPs to employees indicate that the main reason for launching the retirement programme (in approx. 40%) is the concern for retirement protection of employees and the desire to keep employees in the company.

The positive experiences of companies that have developed such employee programmes are an important factor influencing employees' decision to participate in EPPs and employers' decision to offer them to employees. This leads to the conclusion that EPPs are located among other EB tools offered by organizations. However, not much is known about their strength as HR tools and the differences in the perception of EPPs by employees and employers in the context of EB.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Since the perception of EB tools differs between employees and employers (Table 1), differences in the perception of EPPs as an element of EB may also be observed. On the basis of the presented literature review and logic-based analysis, the following hypothesis were formulated:

H1: There is a difference in the perception of EPPs as an element of the EB between employees and employers.

H2: The perception of the relationship between EPPs and EB depends on whether or not the organization offers EPPs.

In order to determine the significance of EPPs in building EB, a quantitative study was performed.

Among 300 respondents who were invited to the research, 190 questionnaires returned, but after evaluating their quality 151 fully completed questionnaires were used in the analysis. The sample selection was purposeful. The companies that participated in the research were actively engaged in the process of recruiting new employees. The first group of respondents consisted of managers from HR departments (71 respondents from 80 companies). The second group of respondents consisted of employees (80 respondents from the same companies as the managers). The size of the sample, though limited, is similar to other research conducted in the area on EB.⁴⁰ The research was conducted with the use of the direct interview method and CAWI (the method was chosen for the convenience of each respondent). Since both groups filled out the same questionnaire, all the answers could be analysed together, as well as separately, in the form of comparative analysis.

In characterizing the respondents participating in the study, it must also be added that 56% of the respondents were women and 44% men, and in terms of age – the youngest person participating in the study was 23 and the oldest 57. The period of professional experience (in the company represented by the respondents) ranged between the minimum of 1 year to the maximum

⁴⁰ Tumasjan et al. (2020).

of 37 years. In turn, while analysing the obtained sample in terms of the type of companies participating in the studies, it should be indicated that slightly over half of the entities (56%) represented service-providing companies, 26% were respondents representing production companies, and 18% commercial enterprises. Considering the size of the companies participating in the study (measured by the number of employees), it can be noticed that the average number of workers was 4,300 people (including the median of 130 people, a minimum of 3 people and a maximum of 315,000 people; as far as the size of the organization is concerned, 35% represent micro and small companies, 23% – medium-size and 42% – large organizations). It is also worth adding that EPPs were offered to workers by every fifth company participating in the study.

The survey data were entered into the IBM SPSS Statistics and were analysed with selected descriptive statistics, Chi-square statistics (also called Pearson's chi-square test) and Cramer's V test. The latter two tests are most often used in practice: Chi-square statistics is used in particular to discover if there is a relationship between two categorical variables – two variables should be measured at an ordinal or nominal level, while Cramer's V is a test of the strength of the association. In order to ascertain the association between the perception of EPPs as part of the employer branding, the Pearson Chi-square test was used, utilizing a 2-tailed test at 5% level of significance.

V. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to evaluate the importance of the EPPs offered by employers for shaping a company brand, first the respondents indicated the entity that in their opinion should take responsibility for the security of the employees' financial pension. And so, while analysing the obtained results, almost half of respondents (48%) indicated that the *state* is the main operator that should be responsible for pension provisions, 42% indicated the *workers themselves*, and only 10% indicated the *employers*. Both the employers (here representatives of HR departments), as well as employees have very similar opinions in this respect (i.e. there are no statistically significant differences between them). This may result from two reasons: firstly, there is a number of models on EPPs which strongly differ in the area of state involvement in EPPs;⁴¹ and secondly, trust has crucial importance in the evaluation of who should take responsibility for retired persons.⁴² However, as far as only employees and employers are concerned, Wood at al.⁴³ noticed in their qualitative research that the size of the organization may have some significance in the evaluation. Employers who saw pension provision as the responsibility of both the employee and em-

⁴¹ Esping-Andersen (1990).

⁴² Titmuss (1974).

⁴³ Wood at al. (2010).

ployer tend to be larger in size, with many employees earning higher wages or salaries than those who did not feel the employer should take responsibility. Employers with no current pension provision in place were generally small companies of one to four employees. They did not generally believe that employees would value a workplace pension, as their staff were often lower paid, non-permanent or seasonal, or had their own personal pension arrangements.

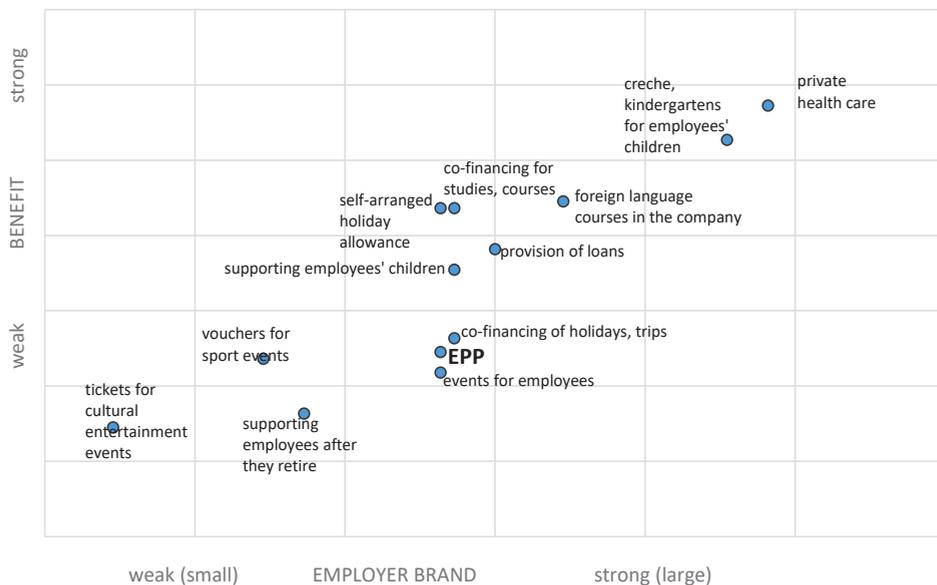
In our research, the perception of EPPs was contrasted with other benefits offered by companies. Two aspects were taken into consideration (in each case: on a scale from 10 – very strong impact, to 1 – no impact):

- employer brand,
- profits from a given benefit for the employee.

The perception of benefits in the context of the relationships between them and the company brand is shown in Graph 1. In comparison to other determinants shaping the employer's brand, EPPs are found in a way in the centre – both with respect to their impact on the attractiveness of the company as an employer and while considering the significance of this benefit. Offering employees private medical care, and access to a company kindergarten for children, proved to be clearly more important in this hierarchy. It is interesting that considering both the brand attractiveness of the company as an employer and the power of benefits, the actions associated with supporting former workers, as pensioners, are perceived relatively poorly.

Graph 1

The power of benefits and attractiveness of the employer brand – a perceptual map



Source: the authors' own field data.

As far as the relation between EPPs and EB in the context of employers or employees is concerned, no matter who is asked, the study shows that the most important benefits from EPPs include *building a positive brand* (61.3% indications). The second most important benefit is connected with the influence on *staff turnover* (49.1% of indications). It is interesting that in the case of staff turnover, the representatives of companies that do not offer EPPs to their employees clearly more often show that the pension programme allows them to reduce employment turnover (53.3%; whereas in the companies that offer such a programme it is only 33.1% of indications; that difference is statistically valid).

Analysing the meaning of other benefits mentioned in the research, the building a *positive external image* (30.2% of indications) and the *possibility to acquire new workers* (29.6% of indications) are slightly less important, but still rather significant. Representatives of companies definitely less frequently indicated other benefits, such as for example the possibility of reducing the costs of remuneration or the sense of accumulating savings that enables employees – in other words, future pensioners – to feel they have *achieved financial security*.

According to the research, the relationship between EPPs and EB is perceived as weaker by employers than it is by employees: the former (here representatives of HR departments) describe it as weak (47.3% assess this relationship as ‘rather weak’), while the latter express the opposite view (51.2% assess this relationship as ‘rather strong’). However these differences between their opinions are not statistically significant (the values of Chi-square Pearson is 8.051 and Cramer’s V is 0.231, asymp. sig (2-tailed) 0.153). The explanation maybe connected with the seniority and their experience with the organization. Employers emphasize that offering an EPP shapes a company’s image in a positive way, but only for a short time – while it is something new. Then, over time, according to employers, people cease to notice the system and thereby it is no longer appreciated. Secondly, the shaping of the EB starts from those benefits for workers that are experienced almost immediately, whereas those associated with EPPs not only tend to be introduced at later stages of the company development, but additionally tangible benefits from them only become apparent after the employees’ retirement. Therefore, as is mainly emphasized by the representatives of HR departments, the employer’s brand image is affected by many other determinants (e.g. non-breaking of employees’ rights, health insurances, the offer of courses and training sessions, other benefits), that bring benefits that are immediate and quickly noticed by employees. In this context, the perception of tangible, immediate benefits coming from the EPPs in companies offering such solutions seems problematic. This leads to the conclusion that EPPs should be perceived as a long-term, strategic element of socially responsible HR policy, not just an operational tool, and should, we believe, be clearly communicated. Since we cannot confirm that there is a difference in the perception of EPPs as an element of the EB between employees and employers, we have to reject hypothesis 1.

As far as organizations with EPPs or without are concerned, the conducted study shows that a stronger relationship between offering EPPs and EB is more frequently noticed by representatives of the companies that do not offer their workers such programmes (56.3% of them assess this relationship as 'rather strong' or 'strong') rather than by those in which such a scheme is functioning (45.1% of them assess this relationship as 'rather strong' or 'strong'). However, the difference is not statistically significant; the value of Chi-square Pearson is 7.330 and Cramer's V is 0.221, asymp. sig (2-tailed) 0.197). This leads to the conclusion that hypothesis 2 also has to be rejected.

At the end it is worth mentioning the main barriers to the implementation of EPPs. They include *financial issues* (51.7% of indications) and the *low level of employees' knowledge* on this topic (49.7% of indications). And while analysing employees and employers' perception of barriers, there are statistically significant differences in the opinions of these two groups of respondents (the value of Chi-square Pearson is 12.334, asymp. sig (2-tailed) 0.044). Furthermore, while analysing the opinions concerning another barrier – *the lack of employers' interest in starting an EPP* (27.2% indications in total), it can be noticed that it is differently perceived by employers and employees. This is because the former perceive it as a minor problem (only 10.0% of indications), whereas for the latter the barrier seems to be significant (33.6% of indications).

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Previously obtained knowledge and the presentation of the research results allows the formulation of several conclusions. Firstly, the studies conducted among employees and employers show that EPPs can be included in the group of tools that have an impact on future employees or those currently employed. Through offering EPPs, employers show that they care about their employees' future, until the end of their lives, and this always builds an employer brand. The impact of this factor is smaller in the case of recruitment, while it grows among those who are currently employed. What decreases the impact of this instrument is the generally low level of workers' awareness concerning individual, voluntary pension provisions, but also employers who do not fully realize the potential of this tool for building the brand image of the employer. Pension-related education conducted by the employer can be an element of EB in the context of pension systems.⁴⁴ It can also constitute an element of the non-financial motivation for employees and building of their loyalty. This is because while communicating, for example, the specific benefits that accrue from having additional pension provisions, the employer shows an interest in employees' well-being also after they finish their professional work.⁴⁵ It is also worth adding that due to deferred benefits for the employee from participating

⁴⁴ Olsen, Whitman (2007).

⁴⁵ Bayer, Bernheim, Scholz (2008); Bernheim, Garrett (2003).

in EPPs compared to other social packages, it seems necessary to implement an appropriate communication policy in the organization and build awareness about the benefits to employees from joining such programmes.

The results of the conducted research have the character of a pilot study. Their goal was to determine whether EPPs can be included at all in the set of tools that can build an employer's brand, and what the current barriers in this sphere are. If it was possible to answer these questions, the following issues are still open: the extent to which this tool will be taken into consideration at the recruitment stage, the impact of EPPs on decisions to change employment, and the ways of encouraging employees to participate in the programmes.

Employees' age structure is an important issue demanding further investigation in research on the impact of pension plans on the employer's brand. In the case of the younger group of employees, this solution is not attractive, due to the long and distant time horizon in which they will be able to benefit. Pension plans will be perceived as a strong element in building the image of especially those enterprises in which older workers are predominant in the age structure. In the authors' opinion, this issue should constitute the subject of further research, including other criteria, especially those associated with belonging to different generations.

It seems that the knowledge on the relationships between EPPs and EB, as well as the significant potential associated with using EPPs in building a long term company image, is still insufficient. This is because this solution is relatively rarely offered to employees in Polish enterprises, and therefore only a few of them realize what a valuable benefit it is. At the same time, this indicates the low level of awareness of the advantages of EPPs and a vital need for education in this sphere. That's why, considering the lack of enthusiasm among employees for voluntary saving to provide for their old age observed in Poland and in other countries, legal regulations which ensure employees join pension programmes through automatic enrolment are being introduced with increasing frequency.⁴⁶

Summing up, the presented research results suggest that EPPs can be one of the arguments used in the creation of the EB. The lack of a larger number of case studies in this matter suggests further studies in the directions recommended by the authors need to be conducted. The research revealed an existing gap in knowledge on EPPs in EB strategy. The future directions of research could include how HR departments can increase the power of EPPs in their EB strategy and recruitment processes.

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EMPLOYEE PENSION PROGRAMMES IN THE EMPLOYERS' BRANDING STRATEGY

Summary

Demographic changes taking place in many countries are contributing to deteriorating pension systems. In the near future, these systems may become insufficient in many countries, and may lead to a reduction in the amount of pension benefits. One way to reduce the risk of poverty for future retirees is for them to save for retirement in employee pension programmes (EPPs). In developed countries, EPPs have become an HR policy and are included in the employer branding strategy (EB). The main objective of the article is to indicate the place and relationship between the EB and EPPs. We assume that the perception of the relation between EPPs and EB differs as far as employers or employees are concerned. Another factor which may have significance in that evaluation is whether or not the organization offers an EPP to its employees. The results of research conducted among 151 respondents allowed the formulation of a few conclusions which may suggest the need for a different approach to work by employees and to recruitment policy by employers. According to the research, EPPs are perceived as a benefit offered to employees, and at the same time they are a part of the EB strategy. However, that perception depends on whether we ask employees or employers, or whether the company offers EPP programmes or not.

Keywords: employee pension programme; employer branding; EPP benefits and barriers; RM

