

TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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**EMPLOYER EXTERNAL BRAND IMAGE AMONGST IT
STUDENTS BASED ON NORTAL AS**

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading. The document length is 12497 words from the introduction to the end of conclusion.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	4
INTRODUCTION	5
1. LITERATURE REVIEW	7
1.1. Employer branding	7
1.1.2 Conceptual framework of employer branding.....	10
1.1.3. External and internal employer branding	12
1.1.4. Relationship between the EB and the attractiveness of the employer.....	16
2. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH SAMPLE.....	20
2.1. Overview of Nortal AS.....	20
2.1.1. Benefits and value propositions of Nortal	21
2.1.2. Nortal University	22
2.2. Methodology.....	23
2.2.1. Structure of the questionnaire.....	24
2.3. Research sample	26
3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS.....	29
3.1. Nortal AS brand awareness	29
3.2. Associating employer attractiveness scale values with Nortal AS as an employer.....	32
3.3.1. Results comparison between two universities	38
3.3. Keywords related to Nortal AS as an employer	39
3.4. Conclusions and proposals	42
SUMMARY.....	45
KOKKUVÕTE	48
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	50
APPENDICES	54
Appendix 1. Employer attractiveness scale items and corresponding factors.....	54
Appendix 2. Nortal AS value offers that coincide with the employer attractiveness scale value items.....	55
Appendix 3. Keywords associated with Nortal AS	56
Appendix 4. Questionnaire	59
Appendix 5. Non-exclusive licence.....	67

ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to find out the external employer branding image of Nortal AS as a potential employer amongst the students of the Faculty of Information. The research problem arises from the fact that there is no prior research done for Nortal AS about its attractiveness as an employer among IT students who make up a significant part of the labour market and over whom companies compete in the labour market.

A quantitative method was used to conduct the research. The survey sample consisted of 163 IT students acquiring their higher education in a field that is the field of activity of the researched enterprise.

The survey revealed that 28.2% of respondents had no previous contact with the company. Students who had heard of the company before rated highest the stability and attractiveness of Nortal as an employer. A strong connection was also created with the fact that working in Nortal would advance students career in the future perspective. The lowest ratings were given to the company's social working environment and responsibility as an employer. Keyword associated with the company were mostly neutral (55,5%), but when looking at other keywords, most of the keywords were positive (37,2%) rather than negative (7,3%). One of the most significant results of the survey is the fact that the students from the University of Tartu were less aware of the existence of Nortal and also gave lower ratings to the company's value propositions, which was surprising since the number of IT students in Tartu is smaller, making it easier to reach them than students in Tallinn.

The survey analysis shows that Nortal AS is rated among the students as an attractive employer. By focusing on the uniform communication of value propositions, a company can further strengthen its external employer's brand.

Keywords: employer branding, employer brand image, employer's attractiveness, information technology

INTRODUCTION

The information and communication technology (from now on ICT) sector is one of the fastest-growing sectors. Compared to other economic sectors, the estimated growth of the ICT sector is seven times faster. The situation where IT companies are recruiting straight from school to comply with rapid growth is not new. However, today's position has become even more complicated as companies are slowly recovering from the pandemic. The work is being reorganised to comply with the current situation we are facing. At the same time, companies grow their business vigorously again, but the world of recruitment is not yet so open, and the fight is going on in the local market for local talent, which could shortly be in short supply.

As competition between the companies is intense to find future talent in one's own company, the employer's external brand image such as work culture, development opportunities, the employer's attitude towards employees and value proposition has become one of the important factors to be assessed by prospective employees. If a company is able to offer additional values to the prospective employees, a company will be more likely to be evaluated as a potential future employer, among other career opportunities and potential employers. Strong employer brand and good communication of employer's image are crucial if the organisation wants to be visible for those employees over whom the labour market is competing. In today's world, having a strong employer brand is a significant competitive advantage in the job market to attract the local talent and ensure the sustainable growth of the company.

This dissertation examines the external employer branding strategy of Nortal AS and the image of Nortal as an employer amongst the students of the Faculty of Information Technologies. The choice of the research subject was facilitated by the fact that Nortal AS has no previous information about the attractiveness of the company among its target group. There is no prior research explicitly done for Nortal AS about its external brand image to the IT students. Author's previous work experience in a company under study contributed to the writing of this dissertation. The author had access to various contacts, data and information needed to write the dissertation.

The aim of this dissertation is to research the external employer branding image of Nortal AS and to find out company's attractiveness as an employer amongst the students of the Faculty of Information. The following research questions have been formulated to answer the research goal:

- 1) How the students studying information technology (from now on IT) associate different employer attractiveness scale values with Nortal AS?
- 2) What keywords do IT students associate with Nortal as a company and potential employer?

The dissertation will be conducted among the students who study at The University of Tartu and Tallinn University of Technology (from now on TalTech). Based on the results analysis, this dissertation will make proposals to the organisation to better display its employer brand among students studying information technology.

The dissertation will discuss the theoretical chapter, methodology, results analysis and suggestions. The theoretical chapter will give an overview of the employer branding and its conceptual framework, external and internal employer branding and the relationship between employer branding and the attractiveness of the employer. The second chapter introduces the company under study, together with the company's value propositions. The methods and sample used are also described. The third chapter focuses on the study results, the analysis and the recommendations made to the company. A quantitative research method has been used to achieve the aim of the dissertation.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the first chapter, the author gives a theoretical overview of the literature supporting the conducted study. The author gives an overview of employer branding history and its conceptual framework, external and internal employer branding and the relationship between employer branding and the attractiveness of the employer.

1.1. Employer branding

In the past, firms were primarily focusing on building a strong brand for their product or service. Today, we can talk about using and adapting branding as a tool in the management of human resources (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Next to focusing on branding their products, firms have started to focus on the strategy of keeping their existing employees and attracting new employees by standing out in the war for talents. This strategy is called employer branding.

Employer branding is a relatively new term in the management field. Based on the research on relationship marketing, the definition of employer branding was first introduced by Tim Ambler and Simon Barrow (1996, 187) as the following: “the package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company“. According to the theorists, functional benefits refer to developmental and beneficial activities offered to employees by the employer. Economic benefits are referred to as monetary rewards, for example, salary, peer bonus or other material rewards. Psychological benefits are associated with different emotions, such as a sense of belonging or knowing your purpose and value in the company. (Ambler & Barrow, 1996)

Employer brand is an intangible asset that can be measured, evaluated and analysed in the same way as any other brand. It forms an important part of the company’s value (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). There are some critical differences between the product brand and employer brand. One of the most prominent differences is that the employer brand is employment specific, illustrating the company’s identity as a current or potential employer. Secondly, with corporate branding, the

targeted audience is primarily external. Employer branding strategy targets a broader audience, including internal and external audiences. (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004)

Since the term was developed and introduced in the early 1990s, it has been put into practice by many firms. Yet, in the marketing literature, the research about employer branding term was quite limited (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). John Sullivan (2004) defined employer branding as “a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm“. A well-executed employer branding can be used in the recruitment process to drive potential employees to the firm and shape people's perceptions regarding a specific company by putting forth an image showing the organisation as a great place to work (Sullivan, 2004). Employer branding role is to provide intelligible structure for the firm's management, helping them define main focus points, enlarge efficiency and improve both recruitment and retention (Barrow & Mosley, 2005).

Every organisation practising employer branding intends to present a positive and striking image of itself to its employees. Employer reputation is one of the various factors that give a competitive advantage to the firm. (Backhaus, 2016) Then again, despite trying to own control over the employer brand, the organisations need to understand that it is not possible to do so continually. Each employee or a person interested in the company acquires their own picture of the company in their minds. (Dabirian et al., 2016) Beaumont and Graeme (2003, 15) highlighted that an extensive part of the employer branding process is to manage a “company’s image as seen through the eyes of its associates and potential hires“.

Over time, the amount of marketing literature about employer branding has increased. It has also led to derivations in defining employer brand as many researchers have tapered the definition. When Barrow and Ambler first introduced employer branding to a broader audience, its concept was developed as value-neutral. Being merely a brand identity to characterize the employer, it did not imply the firms burning need to stand out on the labour market competition and be an employer of choice for candidates. (Backhaus, 2016) In his later research, Martin *et al.* (2011, 3618-3619) redefined the employer brand as “a generalised recognition for being known among key stakeholders for providing a high-quality employment experience, and a distinctive organisational identity which employees value, engage with and feel confident and happy to promote to others”, narrowing down the general concept introduced by Barrow and Ambler.

Employer branding can be analysed from two perspectives, either the employer or the employee, respectively. Depending on the perspective, it is possible to point out the different functions of the employer brand. One of the main functions from an employer perspective is differentiation. The organisation needs to stand out in the face of intense competition and be or become an attractive employer in the labour market. The second function is to focus on emotional differentiation as a company by creating sympathy and affection. Thirdly, to reach the “employer of choice“ status, it is essential for the organisation to build preferences in favour of a company as a potential employer. (Bustamante, 2008)

On the topic of employee perspective, three main functions are orientation, trust and identification. When looking for a new career opportunity, people are often confronted with information abundance. Employer brand can give direction when choosing a company to work in by combining functional and emotional information and values. Potential employees are creating their trust towards the firm by taking into account the employer quality. A good employer brand helps build trust and reduce the risk of employee’s making the wrong choice. (Bustamante, 2008) Lastly, the employer brand carries the company values that potential employees can use to draw a comparison between their own values and presented values. A higher match between an individual and a firm’s values correlates to a higher probability that a person is positively attracted to the firm (Bustamante, 2008; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

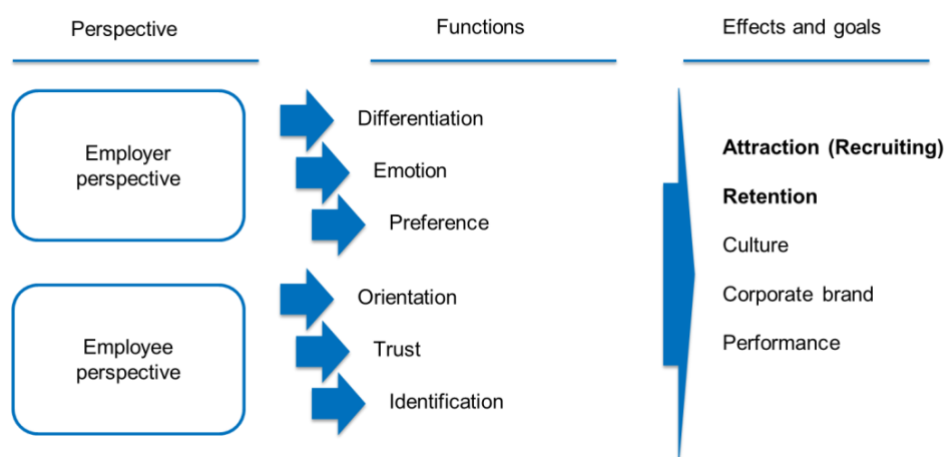


Figure 1. Functions and effects of employer branding

Source: Bustamante (2008)

There are many goals of employer branding but first and foremost of them is to attract new talent in the markets and ensuring the retention of current employees in the firm. (Bustamante, 2008)

Strong employer brands have many effects on the market. They decrease acquisition costs, improve relationships with employees, and increase loyalty, resulting in higher employee retention (Ritson, 2002). Employer brand, through its functions, also helps to build up the company culture and give a boost to a corporate brand. As a result of combining all the parts of the employer brand, a firm will enhance its corporate performance (Bustamante, 2008).

1.1.2 Conceptual framework of employer branding

Ambler and Barrow (1996, 188) pointed out the similarities between employer branding and three concepts: corporate culture and identity, internal marketing and corporate reputation. All the ideas share a similar viewpoint about the importance of the relationships between the firm and its employees. Therefore, employer brand combines them into one concept. Although all the concepts have similarities, they still differ from other corporate activities. Employer brand attaches importance to both brand marketing and human resources marketing, allowing to combine and use their functional skills effectively in both areas (*Ibid*, 190).

Human resource practitioner literature illustrated employer branding with a three-step process. The first step is to create a value proposition for your firm that stands for your brand and is applicable for current and future employees. To develop a realistic yet excellent value proposition, a firm should use or collect information about different perspectives such as organisational culture, current employees' qualities, management styles and impressions from other bodies. A strong proposition should be a true reflection of what the firm offers to its employees. As a second step, a firm should focus on marketing the previously developed value propositions among the target groups that are important to the organisation. The final stage of the three-step process focuses on internal branding, carrying value propositions into organisational culture and fulfilling the promises given to the newcomers. A well-executed internal branding results in the employees willing to commit to the firm's values and contribute to achieving organisational goals. (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004)

To better understand the employer branding concept, Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) proposed and presented the employer branding framework to a broader audience.

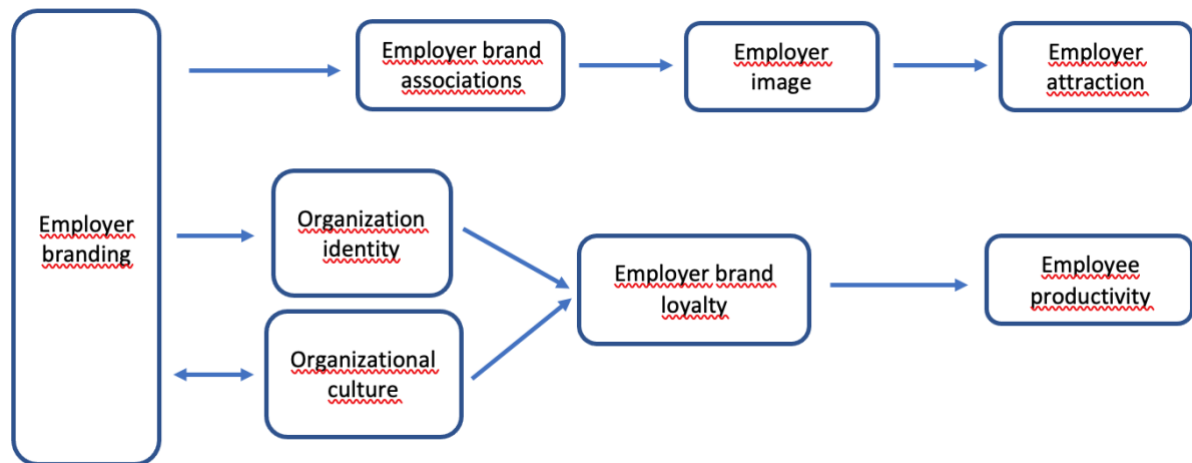


Figure 2. Employer branding framework

Source: Backhaus & Tikoo (2004)

Employer branding focuses on two primary assets, brand association and brand loyalty. The employer branding framework, therefore, illustrates different steps of employer branding and how it influences employer attraction and employee productivity. In essence, this framework is divided into two parts. The upper part of the framework is focused on employer attraction and the lower part on employee productivity. Then again, it is important to observe the concept as a whole, given that both parts are essential in the framework concept. (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004)

Based on the figure illustrated above, the attractiveness of the employer is directly related to the branding activities of the employer and is achieved through the image of the employer (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Employer image can be explained as a set of beliefs that a possible employee has about an employer and company's attributes. There are an infinite amount of ways on how to categorize the attributes that define an employer image. Nevertheless, three categories of employer image can be pointed out as the important categories for prospective employees: information about the employer, job and people working in the organisation (Cable & Turban, 2001). Employer brand image is shaped by the brand associations (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Employer brand associations are different elements and thoughts of a brand that come into a job seeker mind when the company is talked about. Brand associations are formed mainly by advertisements, word of mouth, contacts with the firm, and its current or previous employees. (Juneja, 2021) There are four modes of brand associations that can be represented: verbal, sensory, emotional and visual (Supphellen, 2000).

Employer branding has a direct influence on organisational culture and identity (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Organisational identity is a self-referential concept that seeks the answer to the questions “who are we“, “what kind of organisation is this“, and “what do we want to be“ (Corley et al., 2006; Albert & Whetten, 1985). Organisational culture, defined by Cameron and Quinn (2006, 17), is “reflected by what is valued, the dominant leadership styles, the language and symbols, the procedures and routines, and the definitions of success that make an organization unique“. As shown in the figure above, the organisational culture in the employer branding framework acts both ways. Employer branding has a direct influence on how organisational culture is shaped, but it also feeds back to the employer branding design process (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Organisational culture and identity both contribute to employer brand loyalty. Employer brand loyalty can be described as a commitment and employee’s choice to stay in a company for a longer period of time for different reasons and beliefs, even when the state of affairs might consider other employment options (Branson, 2015; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). In time, employer brand loyalty leads to increased employee productivity (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

1.1.3. External and internal employer branding

It is not a secret that companies have always cared about their reputation in their customers' eyes and potential customers. Besides that, a concern of what the firm's employees think, talk and discuss about the company has risen to an important place. Different opinions from the employees’ shape and influence the overall image of a firm. The impact of these opinions, to some extent, affect how companies can reach and attract the talent pool necessary for their company’s growth and sustainability. (Dabirian et al., 2016)

Based on the employer branding framework, it can be concluded that employer branding focuses mainly on two different perspectives, external employer branding and internal employer branding. External and internal employer branding strategies have different target audiences, but there is a synergy between the two approaches, and therefore, it is essential to keep in mind the close conceptual links between internal and external employer branding (Foster et al., 2010)

The internal marketing target audience is the company’s existing employees. The goal of internal employer branding is to build a clear and understandable corporate culture and develop personnel who is committed to the company’s goals and values (Figurska & Matuska, 2013; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Internal marketing communication shapes the behaviour and attitudes of employees, embraces the company’s culture and conveys the employer's brand promise (Figurska & Matuska,

2013). Bergstrom et al. (2002, 135) pointed out that internal branding refers to three things. Firstly, it is communicating the brand effectively to all the employees, no matter their position in the firm. Secondly, convincing employees of a brand's relevance and worth. Lastly, internal branding is about successfully linking every job in the organisation to the delivery of the brand essence.

A strong internal employer's brand helps a firm retain its employees (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). The most valuable asset to the organisation is its employees. If the employee is able to draw a parallel with the employer brand and sees the relationship with the firm as a positive one, then the probability of employees' commitment towards the organisation increase. Therefore, a high employee commitment correlates to how the employee can identify itself with the company's brand (King & Grace, 2008). A higher psychological attachment to the brand influences employees and increases their willingness to place extra effort towards reaching goals set by the company (Burmam et al., 2009).

Figurska and Matuska visualised seven benefits that internal employer branding has in the organisation (2013, 40):

- 1) Increase in employee engagement
- 2) Higher level of trust in the company
- 3) Lower rate of absence from the work
- 4) Higher level of loyalty among the employees
- 5) Good relations with current and former employees
- 6) Decrease in employees' fluctuation
- 7) Increase in talent's retention rate

External employer branding is targeting the people outside of the organisation who could become potential future employees of the company (Figurska & Matuska, 2013). External branding is directly related to the organisational image, and that image establishes the organisation as an employer of choice. Employer branding will allow the company to attract the finest labour force in the market and employ the newcomers that will benefit the company. When the recruits are interested in a firm, they build up particular assumptions in their mind about the company, which they later take into the company with themselves. In doing so, new employees enhance their commitment to the company. (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004)

The goal of external employer branding is to establish the organisation reputation among prospective employees and other stakeholders. By influencing the organisation's reputation, employer branding's ultimate goal is to position the firm as the employer of choice to stand out in the intense labour market competition. (Reiners, 2020).

Stuss and Herdan (2017, 204-205) stated that external employer branding has mainly two functions. Firstly, it has an image-creating function. This means that through external branding, a company should aim to increase the awareness of the company's brand, bring the job seekers and key stakeholders up-to-date of the advantages associated with working in a specific company and display their company's competitive advantage. In addition, as part of creating an organisational image, a company should implement the corporate social responsibility principles. The second function of the external employer branding is linked to the recruitment perspective. It aims to find the right talents and win the prospective employees over to apply for the available job openings.

In the same way as Figurska and Matuska pointed out internal employer branding benefits to the organisation, they wrote down six benefits that external employer branding has in the organisation (2013, 41):

- 1) Greater number of received applications for the job
- 2) Faster access to the candidates
- 3) Attracting talents
- 4) Lower recruitment costs
- 5) Easier access to the candidates
- 6) Better matching job candidates

It is important to develop a brand that the organisation can live up to. A successful employer brand is based on the developed value propositions that convey the company's main message about its values and benefits, which then is communicated through external employer branding to the prospective employees. However, it is essential to point out that before communicating established values to the outside world, a company should test their veracity. The statements about the company's values, culture and people should be tested in advance among existing employees to see if they believe the organization can actually live up to its words. (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Sullivan, 2002)

We live in an era where people like to share. For that reason, the most detrimental that can happen for the organisation is when the company cannot live up to the communicated promises and when the employer's internal brand does not match the external branding. This will result in a situation where new employees will likely feel deceived and share their thoughts with a wider audience (Iannucci, 2014). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the importance of both external and internal employer branding. The external employer brand should reflect the daily life of the company, not just be the mere fictional promises to attract and employ talent. Thus, it is wise to target the attainable and be honest with the external employer marketing. (Sullivan, 2002)

Researchers have conducted many studies about the characteristics of successful employer brands and their influence on job seekers. Moroko and Uncles (2008) concluded, based on the conducted research, that a successful employer brand carries within itself the following characteristics: known, noticeable, relevant, resonant and differentiated. A thriving employer branding is known and noticeable if the company is embracing the employer brand as a whole and places equal effort into internal and external branding. An employer brand is perceived successful if the company's value propositions are resonant and relevant to the current and future employees, which results in the commitment and contribution to fulfilling the organisational goals. In order to differ in the market and attract the attention of prospective employees, an organisation should focus on the identity, uniqueness and character when displaying itself as a potential employer (*Ibid.*) Prospective employees are more interested in company-based attributes than job-based attributes (Collins & Stevens, 2003). Therefore, the company needs to use external employer branding to communicate relevant and resonant information about the company, rather than only about the specific job opening.

Internal and external employer branding are two different sides of one card. A key factor in retaining current employees is to focus on internal branding. If executed correctly, the company can benefit from internal branding by having a higher level of loyalty among the employees, increased employee engagement, and decreased employee fluctuation. As the current employees are the face of the company, they have a considerable role in creating an employer brand image that is directly related to the external employer brand. Recruitment research suggests that word-of-mouth has a strong effect on how prospective employees perceive the company (Collins & Stevens, 2003). Therefore, it is important to appreciate existing employees and create the employer brand central message that can live up to its promises.

1.1.4. Relationship between the EB and the attractiveness of the employer

Berthon et al. (2005, 156) defined employer attractiveness as following “the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation“. Researchers claim that if the prospective employees perceive the employer as an attractive company and possible future employer, it shows a substantial employer brand equity (*Ibid.*).

The attractiveness of the employer is directly related to the employer brand image. Achieving the “employer of choice“ status is highly dependent on the value propositions that a company presents to prospective employees and correlates directly to the attractiveness of the employer. When the presented value propositions match the expectations of future employees, then the probability of a person applying for the job opening is significantly higher (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

Organisational reputation, together with employers' brand attractiveness, affects how many prospective employees react to the company's job openings and take the step further to apply for a vacant job position (Arachchige & Robertson, 2011). Perceived initial impressions are considered as strong predictors of applicants' attraction after the interview rounds. This, in turn, is related to whether the job offer is accepted or declined by the potential employee (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003).

Lievens and Highhouse (2003) claimed that there is a connection between the company's attractiveness as an employer and the instrumental-symbolic framework used in employer brand marketing. Instrumental attributes describe the organisation in terms of objective concrete and factual attributes inherent to the organisation. Instrumental attributes include characteristics such as working conditions, pay, location and opportunities for advancement (*Ibid.*). Symbolic attributes are psychological and describe the company in terms of subjective, abstract and intangible attributes that accrue from the user imagery. Symbolic attributes are related to a person's beliefs, personality and feelings, such as belonging and purpose. (Lievens et al., 2007; Ambler & Barrow, 1996) The framework proposes that prospective employees' attraction to organisations can be explained by their perceptions of instrumental attributes and symbolic traits. Instrumental and symbolic attributes are considered to be key components of an organisations' image as an employer (Lievens et al., 2007).

Employer attractiveness can be measured using the employer attractiveness scale. Ambler and Barrow (1996, 187) drew attention to three main aspects that define employer branding. These are functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment. Based on what was defined by the researchers in the past, Berthon et al. (2005) introduced an improved, more specific model of the employer attractiveness scale, taking three dimensions and turning them into five value propositions.

The proposed employer attractiveness model structure consists of five main factors. Each dimension assesses benefits and values provided by an employer and measures the extent to which a prospective employee is attracted to the mentioned values (*Ibid*, 159):

- 1) Interest factor: the employer is providing a challenging and motivating work environment that uses innovative work techniques. The organisation recognizes people for using creativity and outside of box thinking.
- 2) Social factor: the employer is providing a work environment and internal atmosphere, which are perceived as a fun and happy environment. The organisation values different relationships, collaborations and teamwork between colleagues.
- 3) Economic factor: the employer is providing competitive and up-to-date salary, which is in line with or above the average market salary and additional compensation packages. The organisation ensures the employee with the confidence of a secure job but offers career growth opportunities to its employees.
- 4) Development factor: employer acknowledges the employee's achievements, provides the employee with a career-enhancing experience which will increase employees' self-confidence and is a springboard to future employment.
- 5) Application factor: the employer is providing employees with the opportunities to apply previously gathered knowledge in the work environment and share the knowledge with others through the learning hives.

In total, the employer attractiveness scale is formed by twenty-five items distributed between the five value propositions mentioned above (Berthon et al., 2005, 158-159). The complete scale, including all the items and their distribution, can be seen in appendix 1.

The aforementioned employer attractiveness model is applicable in many contexts. Firstly, it can be used among different target groups to gain an overview of how attractive they consider the employer to be. Secondly, this collected insight can be used in forming recruitment strategies. The

employer attractiveness model can also be used among existing employees to understand and evaluate how employee value perceptions for the company have changed over time. (Berthon et al., 2005)

In the course of employer attractiveness model development, Dabirian et al. (2016) based their research on two previously developed models and added two more factors to the employer attractiveness scale, concluding this as a seven value propositions scale. Researchers added management value and work/life balance factors to the model (Dabirian et al., 4). Management value proposition determines how an individual perceives management attitude and behaviour. Incompetent and careless leaders are often the reason why employees leave the company. Job seekers assess the work and life balance from the perspective of work arrangements flexibility. (*Ibid.*)

The development of the employer attractiveness scale on the example of three different scales is shown in Figure 3.

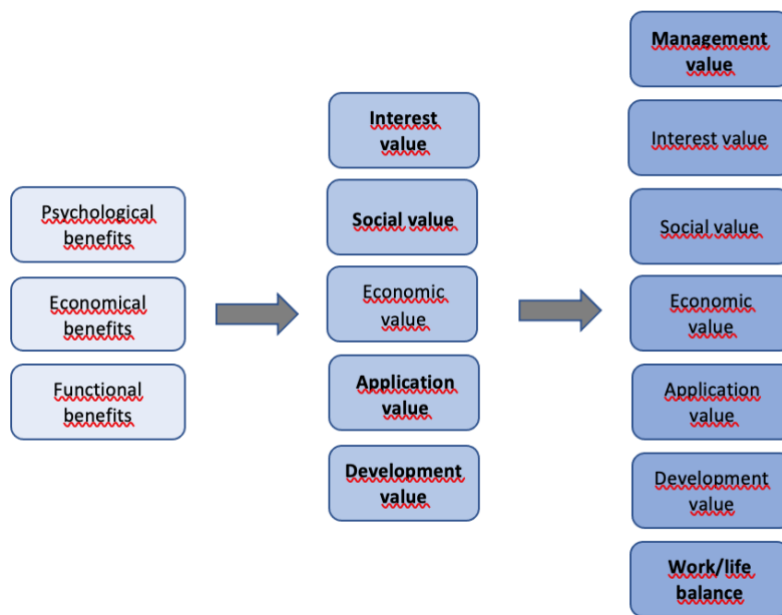


Figure 3. Development of the employer attractiveness scale

Source: Compiled by the author (based on Berthon et al., 162; Dabirian et al., 4)

The company's value proposition should aim to answer the question of what are the employees getting from working for your company and why they would want to work specifically for you.

The core of this is to answer the question “why“, which helps to define a stronger value proposition for the company (Brace, 2019).

Therefore, to sum up, employer attractiveness is closely related to employer branding, firms promises and messages to both prospective employees and current employees. The company’s reputation affects the attractiveness of the organisation and has a significant impact on how many candidates engage with the recruitment campaigns. Moreover, take action to apply to vacant job positions. It is important for the company to develop employee value propositions and communicate them to the labour market by pointing out the factors that benefits, attracts and makes the company a unique and desirable place to work in the eyes of prospective employees. In order to assess the attractiveness of the employer, it is good to conduct various surveys among the target group using different parts of the employer attractiveness scale.

2. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH SAMPLE

In the second chapter of this dissertation, the author describes the research object on which the work is based, Nortal AS by giving an overview of the company's field of activity, value propositions and Nortal University program. The second part of the following chapter includes the overview of chosen methodology and study sample, together with the reasoning of the specific selection.

2.1. Overview of Nortal AS

The research object of this bachelor's thesis is Nortal AS and its external image amongst IT students who are studying at the University of Tartu and TalTech.

Nortal AS, formerly known as Webmedia Group, was founded in the year 2000 by three university students. It is a multinational strategic change and technology company, with 18 offices in Europe, North America and the Middle East. In Estonia, Nortal employs 327 people (Register OÜ, 2021). The company is also one of the leading ICT enterprises that contribute to transforming Estonia into a digital leader. Nortal AS is entirely owned by the employees of the company. (Nortal, 2021a)

Nortal's vision is to build a seamless society. The company brings together software engineering, strategic consulting, data and design practices to offer high-quality services to the customers and create a meaningful impact for them. Nortal's mission is to optimise the way different tools work to ease the life of the end-user of the product or system. Creating a meaningful impact for the customers and the employees of the company is also brought out as a company's purpose. (Ibid.)

The company also popularises learning, innovation, software development and IT in general among the universities by conducting various lectures and educational courses carried out by Nortal's specialists. In addition, as a collaboration between the University of Tartu Youth Academy and Nortal, the company took part in the event aimed at helping girls find their way into

the IT field. Nortal's female talents shared their experiences of how they got into the field of IT and what their work is all about (Tartu Ülikooli teaduskool, 2021).

The company has been recognized with several awards through the years of operation and has remained in intense competition among the top ten most desirable employers for nine years in a row. In 2020, Nortal was awarded the title of the exporter of the year by the American Chamber of Commerce Estonia. In the same year, Nortal was also awarded the title of the company of the year. Shortly after, at the beginning of 2021, the company received the dream employer title, followed by third place in the recruitment marketing act competition in March.

2.1.1. Benefits and value propositions of Nortal

One of the main messages which are reflected in Nortal's operations and branding is "building a seamless society".

When it comes to prospective employees, the company has written out their culture and DNA on their website. It brings out six different aspects of the organisation's DNA (Nortal, 2021b):

- Creating positive impact. The company believes in getting things done. This also means keeping their promises, valuing initiative and maintaining a constructive team environment.
- Culture of openness and initiative. People in Nortal approach work with integrity, which means that they do and deliver what they promise to and operate with transparency and honesty inside the company and different teams. Nortal highly values a culture where promises are kept, and the priority falls to getting things done.
- Strong teams. Nortal has a flat company structure that is powered by small yet highly collaborative development teams all working towards common goals. Teamwork and supporting each other is something that is prized in the organisation. Nortal's flat structure offers the possibility for the employees to have full control over their career mobility.
- The power of learning. Nortal has developed its own Learning Hive as part of the learning and development side of the company. Learning Hive consists of many communities, and its purpose is to create growth opportunities for the employees. It also provides an opportunity to share best practices between the teams and individual Nortalists.
- Engineer pride and craftsmanship. Nortal offers its workers the latest industry-leading tools to work with and provides the opportunity to test gain hands-on experience by testing different techniques used in the IT field.

- Empowering you. Nortal aims to build teams that consist of the brightest talents and encourages each individual to grow and think innovatively. Therefore, teams are enriched by people who have different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. This, in turn, contributes to what the company strives for – fostering an inclusive environment and work culture that celebrates its employees.

Based on the company's culture and DNA, different aspects and opportunities that the company offers to its employees are outlined as following (Nortal, 2021b):

- Investing in the learning and development of the employees
- A global network of local companies
- Challenging opportunities
- A career that matches employees' ambition
- Inspiring environment

As the information presented above can be interpreted in many ways and is also partly dependent on the job position, the author looked at the company's various job offers to find out which value offers the company brings out in its job advertisements. The value propositions written out in the company's job advertisements include a people-oriented atmosphere, opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process, high-quality training and opportunities for growth, prioritising employees' well-being and health and supporting work-life balance.

Based on the information presented above, several indicators and messages can be pointed out, which are related to the value propositions presented on the employer's attractiveness scale studied by Berthon et al. and Dabirian et al. The value propositions offered by the organisation that matches with the employers' attractiveness scale are illustrated in appendix 2.

2.1.2. Nortal University

In 2005, Nortal developed a new project with the purpose to recruit and train new talent. The project is called Nortal University and is mostly aimed at university students to offer them an opportunity and a platform where they can kick off their IT career. Nortal University plays a big role in the external employer branding for university students.

The program consists of four different parts (Nortal, 2021c):

- 1) Firstly, anyone interested in the program can sign up for Nortal University, regardless of what background they have in education or career-wise.
- 2) After the registration period, all candidates will receive a test assignment that will assess the technical skills of candidates.
- 3) Test assignments are followed by group and individual interviews with the top-performing candidates based on the test assignment solutions and motivational letters.
- 4) The main part of Nortal University is a full-stack IT workout for the candidates who will continue their career in Nortal. During the learning week, all the future employees will get a chance to learn from the best of the best in their field and receive the necessary preparations and tools they need for the job.

In addition to the benefits and value propositions stated in the previous subchapter, through the Nortal University program, the company offers prospective employees the following: full-stack IT training, rewarding work on real-life projects, state-of-the-art equipment, salary from day one, flexible hours and personal onboarding and mentorship. (Ibid.)

Nortal University is not just an internship program for the students. All the graduates are offered a real job in the company with a salary from day one. It is a growth program that is designed to provide the best onboarding and career kick-off opportunities for young talents early in their careers (Nortal, 2021c). Over the years, the popularity of the program has grown, as evidenced by the growing number of received applications.

2.2. Methodology

The aim of the dissertation was to study the external employer brand image of Nortal AS and the attractiveness of the company as an employer among the students who are acquiring their higher education in IT.

Based on the aim of the dissertation and desired output, the author decided to use the quantitative data collection method to conduct the study. Quantitative research enables to make predictions based on the results and generalise the results to wider populations (McLeod, 2019). The author decided to prepare an online questionnaire and conduct a survey in the Google Forms platform as this allows to easily collect data and afterwards analyse it.

Although quantitative research is viewed as a scientifically objective approach, it still has some limitations. Quantitative research limits the opportunities for participants to explain the meaning behind their answers and excludes the chance to ask clarifying questions in case survey respondents do not understand the question or the statement. Additionally, it is difficult to check how seriously the respondents fill in the survey and in case of not receiving enough answers, the study results may be less reliable. (McLeod, 2019)

Before publishing the survey, the author tested the questionnaire with the help of two students who are studying at the University of Tartu and TalTech, respectively, and belong to the research target group. After filling in the questionnaire, feedback was gathered from the subjects to gain an overview of the bottlenecks, improvement points and time taken to fill in the questionnaire. Based on the feedback, the author clarified the wording of questions, fixed the amount of allowed answers per question and added comment boxes after each set of questions. Testing the questionnaire and applying feedback helped to neutralise some limitations of quantitative research.

The questionnaire was distributed among the students studying IT at the University of Tartu and TalTech. The survey was open for answers in between the period from the 2nd of April until the 10th of April. The estimated time to complete the questionnaire based on the feedback was seven to ten minutes.

To reach as many students and collect as many responses as possible, the author decided to publish a Facebook targeted advertising campaign, targeting students who are currently studying IT. In addition to that, the survey was shared with different organisations, whom the author asked to redistribute the questionnaire. Therefore, the author used random sampling method. To ensure interest in answering the survey, the author decided to include a giveaway for two Wolt gift cards, which was voluntary.

2.2.1. Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire, created for the thesis, consists of nine main sections and key topics, which are divided into sub-questions. In total, the questionnaire consists of thirty-eight questions. A significant part of the survey is based on the combination of Berthon et al. and Dabirian et al. employer's attractiveness models and its value proposition items, including thirty statements about the employer value propositions. The author used Liina Hindremäe's (2016) master thesis survey as an example and adapted it to compose the survey aligned with the author's dissertation goals.

In the first part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to assess their contact with Nortal AS. Respondents were given two options to choose from, which were: “I have heard of the company“ and “I have not heard of the company“. When choosing the second option, respondents were directed to the last part of the questionnaire.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of different options, from which respondents were asked to choose how they had heard of the company in the past. The respondents were given an option to add the answer themselves if they did not find a suitable answer from the multiple choices. Hereto, respondents were also asked to write down the keywords which related to them with a particular company.

The third to the seventh part of the questionnaire consisted of different expressions for which respondents were asked to give their own cognitive assessment. Respondents were asked to assess the extent to which they attributed the following statements to Nortal as an employer. Each part included four to eight statements. To gain an overview of respondents’ cognitive assessment of the statements, the author used the five-point Likert scale in the survey, where the author used the following statements, which were later converted to a numerical scale to simplify the analysis. The author decided to use the Likert scale as it is considered to be one of the most reliable methods for measuring the attitudes of respondents (Osula, 2008). The levels were as following: 1-do not associate at all, 2-associate to a small extent, 3-associate on an average level, 4-associate to a large extent, 5-associate completely. As the survey may contain statements about which the respondent did not have enough information, the author included the “difficult to assess“ option to the scale, which was later reported as zero on a numerical scale.

In the eighth section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate the overall image of the company by assessing how attractive they perceive the company and assess whether working in Nortal affects the attitude and respect of those close to them about them as individuals.

The ninth and final part of the survey collected the demographic data of respondents. Respondents were asked for information about the university and the course they are studying at. In addition to that, information was collected about their gender, age and previous work experience. Everyone who showed interest in taking part in the giveaway of two Wolt gift cards could leave their e-mail addresses at the end of the survey.

2.3. Research sample

The selection of the target group was based on the field of activity of Nortal AS. The fact that a significant amount of the students is recruited to the company through Nortal University was also considered as an important factor in the selection of the target group. Therefore, IT students from TalTech and University of Tartu were considered as a suitable target group among whom to conduct the research. The above-mentioned universities were included in the study because Nortal has offices in both Tallinn and Tartu. Additionally, both universities have several different information technology specialities where students who belong to the company's target group acquire their higher education.

Based on the previous information, all bachelor's students studying IT in the aforementioned universities are included in the study population. A population is the total number of subjects with common characteristics and for which predictions and conclusions can be made based on the survey data (Õunapuu, 2014, 137). As of April 2021, 1475 students are acquiring a bachelor's degree in the IT fields at TalTech. In the University of Tartu, the number of students who are acquiring a bachelor's degree in the same field is 629. Based on this, the total population of this research study is 2104 students.

The sample size is a part of the population which is separated for research purposes to simplify the analysis of the research (Õunapuu, 2014, 139). During the period from the 2nd of April until the 10th of April, the author received 178 responses to the survey. Out of 178 responses, 163 responses were included in the research. Therefore, the sample size is 163, which constitutes 91,6% out of all the received responses. Responses not included in the study came from master's students and university alumni. The final sample of the survey (163) represents 7,75% of the total study population. Responding to the survey was voluntary and anonymous.

55,2% of the students who participated in the survey are studying at TalTech. 44,8% of the answers were received from the University of Tartu. The author was surprised about the statistics and expected more responses from TalTech as there are more than twice as many students acquiring education in Tallinn than in Tartu.

The highest number of responses came from third-year students (57), followed right after with the first-year students (56). Second-year students answered the survey 48 times. The author decided

to include two fourth-year students' responses in the research as theoretically, they still acquire bachelor's degree. Among all respondents, 78 (48%) were women, and 85 (52%) were men.

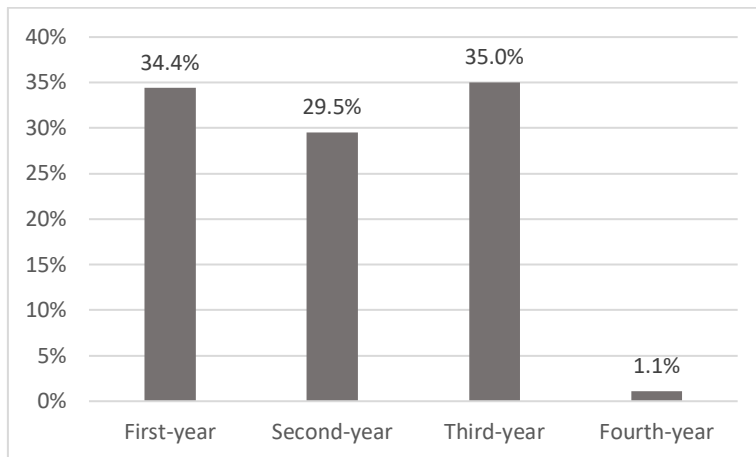


Figure 4. Distribution of respondents by the year of studies

Source: Compiled by the author

In the first and second part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to assess their previous contact with the company and mark all the options on how the respondent has previously heard about the company. 117 students who participated in the study have previously heard of Nortal. 46 students have not been in contact with the company before. In total, respondents have 232 contact points with the company. The author will analyse the results of previous contacts with the company in the next chapter.

The final part of the survey asked respondents to indicate their previous work experience by choosing one of the following statements: "I have no previous work/internship experience", "I have the previous internship/work experience", "I am currently working" and "other". When marking the last option, the respondents could add their own answer. Respondents could again choose multiple answers.

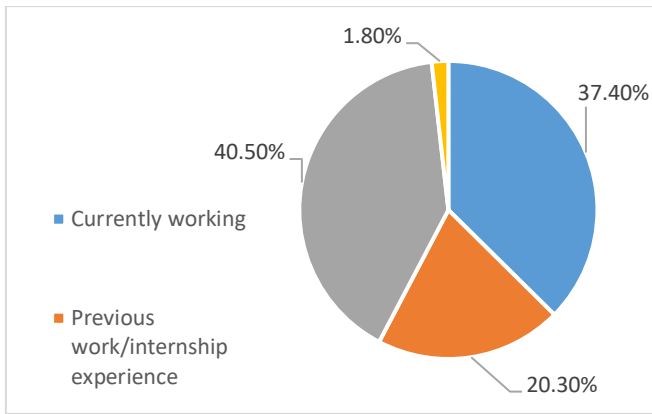


Figure 5. Respondents previous work experience

Source: Compiled by the author

37,4% of the respondents are currently working while acquiring their higher education degree. 26 respondents who are currently working also have previous work or internship experience. 33 respondents have only previous internship or work experience but are not currently working. 66 respondents do not have any previous work or internship experience. One student is planning to complete an internship in the upcoming summer. One respondent is currently doing the internship, and one has experience with job shadowing.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In the third chapter, the author discusses the research results. On the basis of the analysis, the author points out main conclusions and recommendations. In the first sub-chapter, the author analyses the students' awareness of Nortal AS and its relationship to different indicators. In the following sub-chapters, the author gives an overview of the connections created by students with the statements connected to the company's attractiveness and keywords associated with company under the study.

3.1. Nortal AS brand awareness

Awareness of the company was measured by the question in the survey about students' previous exposure to the company. Awareness analysis helps the company to understand how the students have heard of the company before and point the direction to the areas where the organisation should present themselves more to be known among the target group.

Respondents were asked to assess their contact with Nortal AS by choosing between two options, which were: „I have heard of the company“ and „I have not heard of the company“. Out of 163 respondents, 71,8% had previously heard of the company. 28,2% of the respondents had not heard the name of the company.

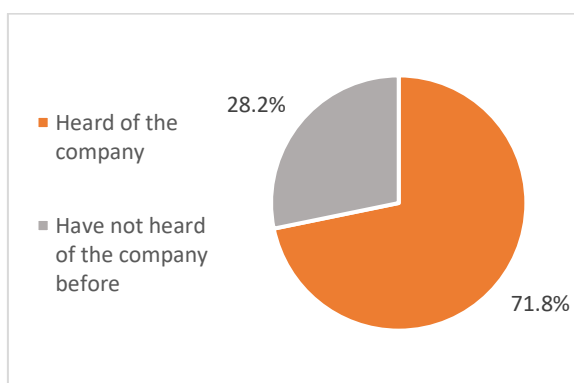


Figure 6. Respondents previous exposure to Nortal AS

Source: Compiled by the author

The author analysed the sources from where the respondents have heard about the company. The options to choose from were following: “I work in the company“, “I have previously worked in the company“, “My acquaintance/friend/relative works in Nortal“, “I have heard about Nortal through media channels“, “Career fairs“ and “Other“. For respondents, it was possible to indicate multiple options through which they had heard about the company and add their own. Therefore, a total number of 232 contact points were recorded for 117 students.

In addition to already predefined options, it was pointed out that the company was familiar because it had been talked about at school, acquaintances have applied for a job in the company, or respondents have applied for a job or internship in Nortal themselves. Additionally, it was referred that Nortal has sponsored different events organised by the students.

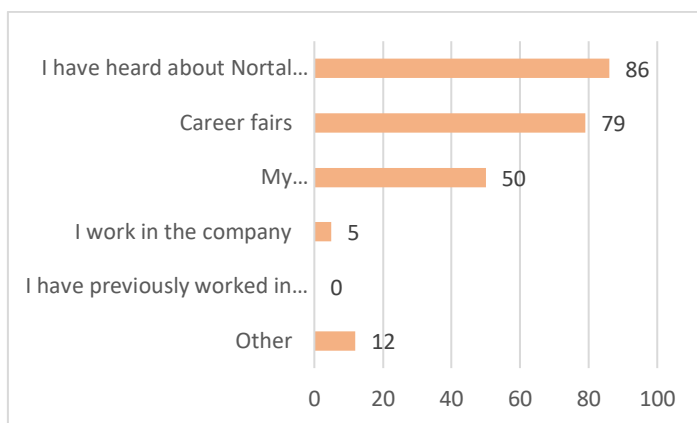


Figure 7. How respondents have heard of the company

Source: Compiled by the author

Results indicate that 73,5% out of students who have heard of the company, have heard about the company through different media platforms and channels. High awareness through the media may be supported by the fact that over the past year, Nortal has won different titles, which have also received media attention. 67,5% have heard about the company through different career fairs, which indicates that participating in various career events is useful for the company and could result in an increase in brand awareness. Additionally, it helps the company to maintain its reputation and stand out in the intense war for talents. Surprisingly, a lot of knowledge about the company comes from having an acquaintance who is working in the company.

The results show that the majority of students have heard of the company, and there are many contact points to the company. However, despite the fact that the company has won many prestigious titles, gained a lot of media publicity and is collaborating with different student parties, the number of students who have not heard of the company is still quite significant. Therefore, the author decided to carry out a further analysis to find out whether not being aware of the company depends on certain indicators.

The author conducted a correlation analysis to see if there is a connection between the year of studies and the awareness of the company. Out of 46 respondents who have not heard of the company before, 58,7% are first-year students. 26,1% are acquiring their education as second-year students. 13% of the respondents are third-year students, and 2,2% of the respondents' studies on the fourth course.

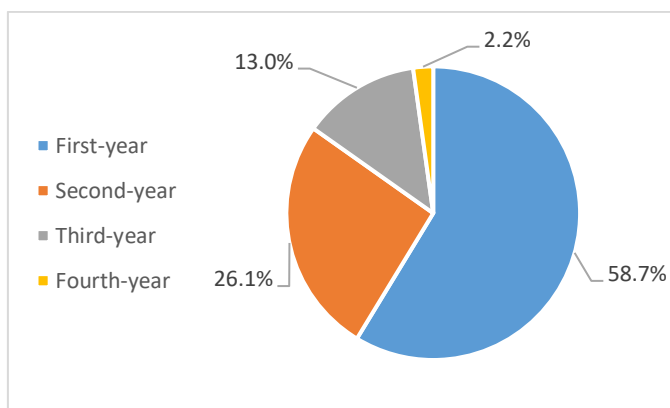


Figure 8. Year of studies of students who have not heard of Nortal AS

Source: Compiled by the author

To conduct the correlation analysis, the author included data about the student's awareness of a company and years of studies. Included data was encoded as follows: respondents who have heard about the company was encoded as "1", and respondents who have not heard about the company was encoded as "0". First-year students were encoded "1", second-year "2", third-year "3" and fourth-year students "4". The correlation analysis resulted in the Spearman correlation coefficient of 0,33, which indicates a moderate connection between the year of studies and the awareness of the company. On that account, it can be concluded from the results that, to some extent, the number of years studied influences students' awareness of the existence of Nortal.

A similar correlation analysis was done between the awareness of the company and the university where students are acquiring their education. The correlation analysis resulted in the Spearman correlation coefficient of 0,121, which indicates a small correlation between the university of studies and the awareness of the company. Figure 9 supports the results of the analysis as there are no significant numerical differences between universities in terms of students' unawareness of Nortal. Twenty-five respondents who had no previous knowledge about the company studies at the University of Tartu, and 21 students are studying at TalTech.

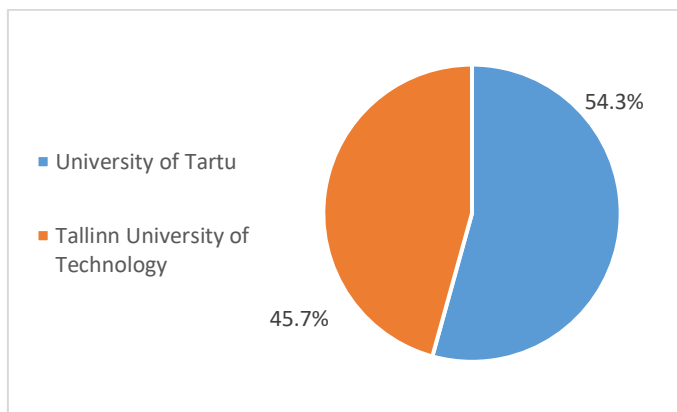


Figure 9. The distribution between universities for students who have not heard of the company
Source: Compiled by the author

Therefore, the following conclusions can be made that there is almost no connection between the awareness of the company and the university where the respondents are acquiring their education. There is, however, a moderate connection between the awareness and years of studies that can be taken into account in order to reach more students and to ensure their early awareness and interest in the company.

3.2. Associating employer attractiveness scale values with Nortal AS as an employer

In the questionnaire, the employer attractiveness scale values were divided into six different sub-topics. The sub-chapters covered the following topics: social working environment, development-friendly employer, practical working environment, a topic about employer stability, responsible employer and general image. The sub-topics consisted of various statements which the respondents were asked to assess on the basis of their internal perception. Firstly, the author calculated the

averages of the sub-topics to see which of the value propositions were rated as highest. For the analysis, “difficult to assess“ answers coded as zero were not taken into account.

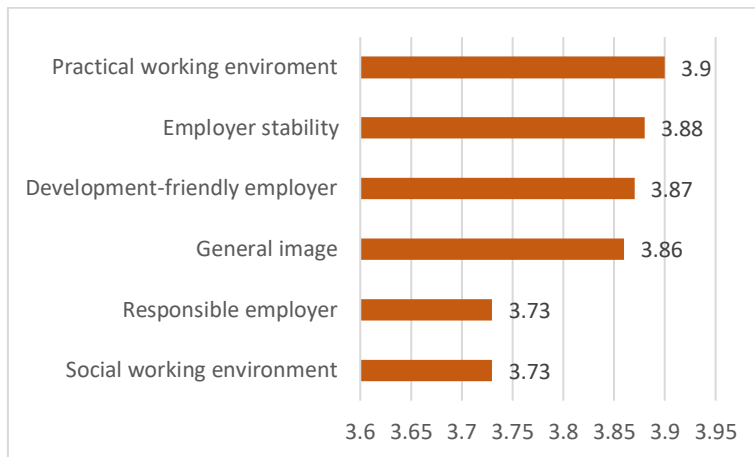


Figure 10. Averages of the value propositions

Source: Compiled by the author

Based on the calculated arithmetic means, it can be concluded that the respondents gave the highest rating to Nortal's practical work environment (3,9). Sub-topics about employer stability, development-friendly employer and general image were evaluated with almost the same mean values, differing only by 0,01 in between three topics. The lowest rating was given to Nortal's social working environment and employer's responsibility. Both were rated with an average of 3,73. None of the value proposition topics received an average rating over 4, which indicates that the respondents create a higher-than-average relationship with the company's values but do not create a significant relationship with any general value propositions topics.

In order to get a more detailed overview of the results, the author analysed the average values of all the statements based on the aforementioned divisions. The author started the analysis with the category that the respondents associated most with Nortal AS and finished with the category with the lowest rating.

To assess the company's practical work environment, the author used eight statements in the questionnaire. In conclusion, respondents gave an average rating of 3,9 to the practical working environment of Nortal AS.

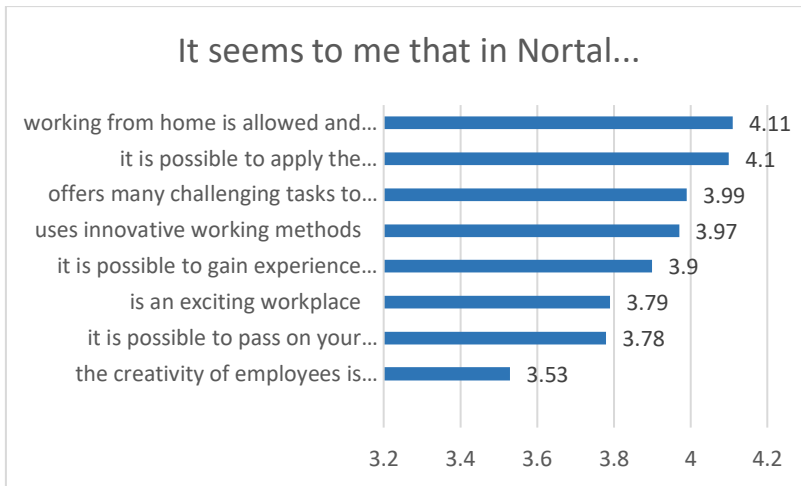


Figure 11. Averages of practical working environment values

Source: Compiled by the author

Regarding the practical work environment value proposition, respondents gave the highest rating (4,11) to the statement about the possibility to work from home. With an average of 4,1, respondents rated that in Nortal, it is possible to apply the knowledge acquired in higher education. Respondents rated that Nortal offers challenging jobs with a score of 3,99. An average of 3,97 shows that students associated on above-average that Nortal as a company is using innovative working methods. With an average of 3,9, the respondents expressed the opinion that it is possible to gain experience from different work units in the company. Almost equally, with a minimal difference, it was rated that the company is an exciting workplace (3,79), and it is possible to pass on the acquired knowledge to the colleagues (3,78). The lowest rating (3,53) was given by the students to the value statement that Nortal values the creativity of employees and applies it in everyday work.

In terms of employer stability values, Nortal was rated the highest as a stable employer (4,28). With an average of 3,79, respondents were of the opinion that the company offers an above-average salary. At the lowest and also equal level (3,73), connections were established with Nortal offices being in a favourable location and the motivational package, including amenities that the company offers.

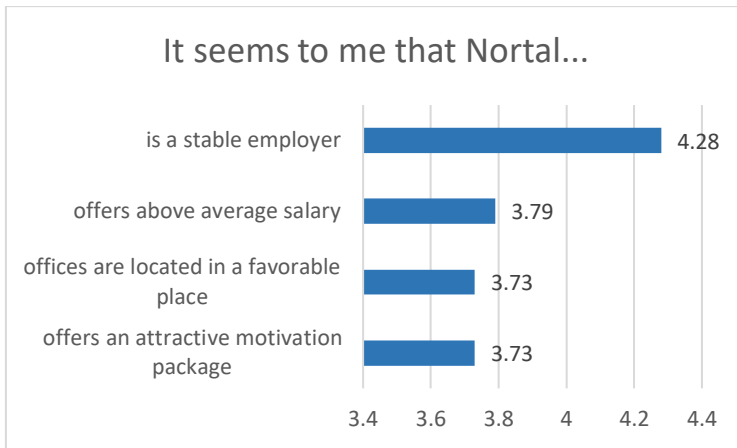


Figure 12. Averages of stability providing employer values
Source: Compiled by the author

Nortal was rated as a development-friendly employer with an average value of 3,87. The average rating bases on six value statements, which the author further analysed.

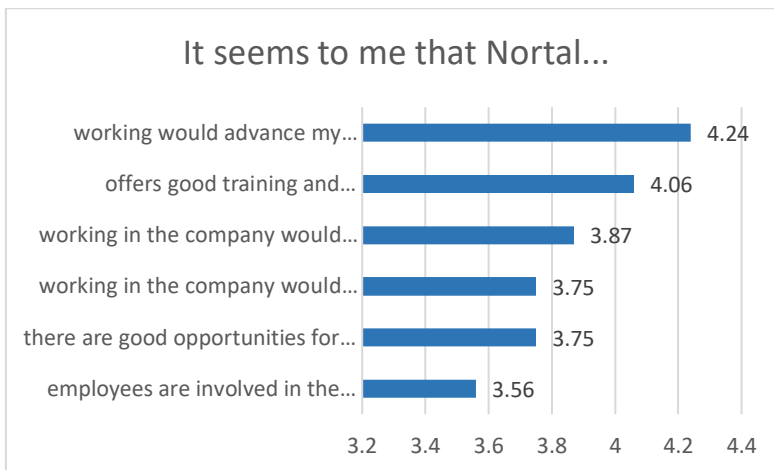


Figure 13. Averages of development-friendly employer values
Source: compiled by the employer

Respondents associated themselves on the highest level (4,24) with the statement that working in Nortal would advance their careers in the future perspective and would be a springboard for their careers. With an average of 4,06, respondents were of the opinion that the company offers good training and development opportunities to its employees. On an above-average level (3,87), students found that working in Nortal would make them feel more confident in the work field. It was rated equally that working in the company would make respondents feel good (3,75), and

there are great opportunities promotion wise (3,75) in Nortal. The lowest rating was given to the statement that employees are involved in the development of the company (3,56).

Regarding Nortal's overall image, respondents were asked to rate Nortal's attractiveness as an employer and whether they would gain respect in the eyes of their family and friends by working in Nortal. The average rating of 3,86 was calculated on the basis of the two aforementioned questions. The arithmetic means of the company's attractiveness as an employer was 4,15, which indicates that to a larger extent, respondents perceive Nortal as an attractive employer and as a company where they would want to work in. With an average of 3,58, respondents were of the opinion that working in the company would increase the respect in the eyes of their family and friends.

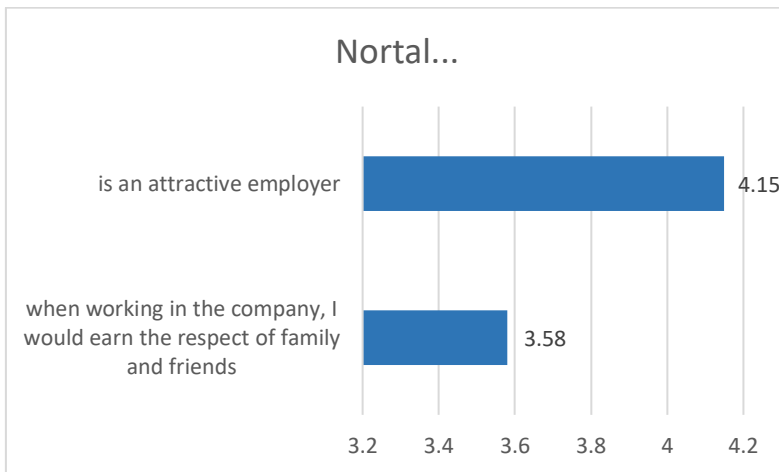


Figure 14. Averages of Nortal's overall image statements

Source: Compiled by the author

The lowest rating among the respondents was given to the company's social work environment and responsibility as an employer. Both were rated with an average of 3,73. In terms of the values of a responsible employer, the highest rating was given to the company's ability to be a flexible company and employer (3,96). With an average of 3,69, respondents were in the opinion of Nortal being a fair company. Fewer associations were made with the statement of Nortal supporting work and life balance, averaging on 3,66. Corporate social responsibility was rated the lowest (3,6) from value propositions that are being associated with the employer responsibility.

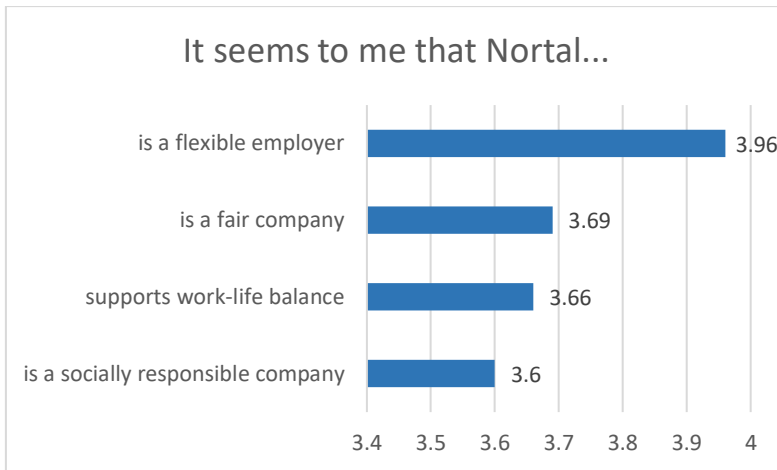


Figure 15. Averages of the value propositions associated with the employer responsibility
 Source: Compiled by the author

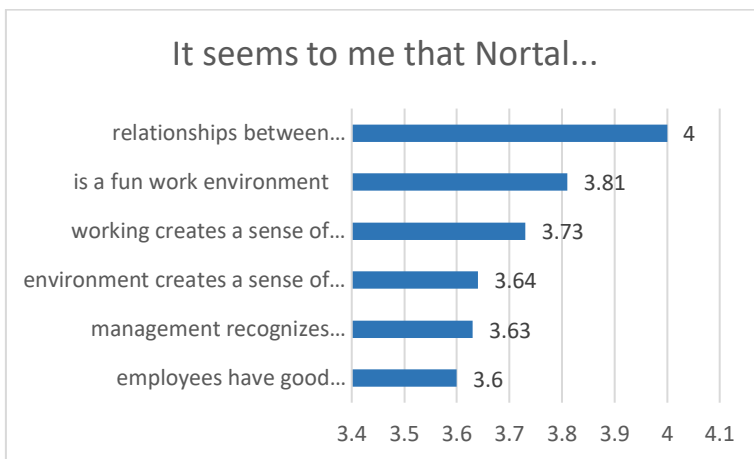


Figure 16. Averages of the value propositions associated with the social working environment
 Source: Compiled by the author

From the values of the social work environment, great relationships with colleagues were rated the highest, with an average of 4,0. A fun work environment was associated with an average score of 3,81 and a sense of belonging with an average of 3,73. Fewer associations were made with the working environment, creating a sense of happiness (3,64) and management recognising employees for their achievements (3,63). The lowest average rating (3,6) was given to the relationships between employees and managers.

3.3.1. Results comparison between two universities

The author compared the employer attractiveness scale value results between two universities to see if and to what extent the results differ between two universities. The analysis between the two cities show which values should be focused on in the respective city.

The results show that students studying at The University of Tartu generally gave lower average ratings to all the value proposition categories. The biggest difference (0,38) based on the averages was in the responsible employer value propositions category. There was also a significant difference in the social (0,34) and practical working environments (0,33) evaluations.

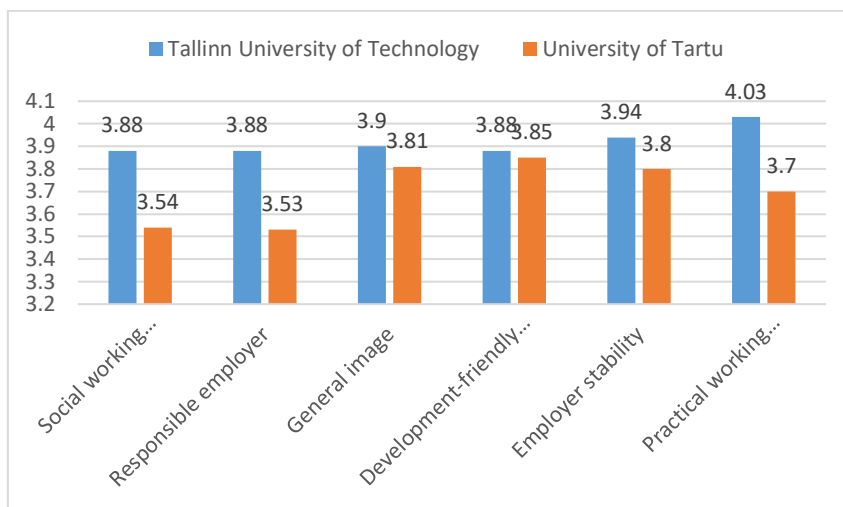


Figure 17. Comparisons of assessed values between two universities

Source: Compiled by the author

The students from The University of Tartu rated Nortal with the lowest average of 3,25 as a socially responsible company. Almost as low, an average rating (3,26) was given to the value proposition statement regarding the company's capability and willingness to value the creativity of employees and put it into practice in the company's everyday work. The highest rating (4,32) was given to the company being a stable employer in the eyes of IT students, followed by the fact that working in Nortal would promote the careers of the respondents (4,30).

TalTech students associated least with Nortal the statement that employees are involved in the company's development processes (3,54). A similar low rating (3,63) was also given about that working in Nortal would result in the increase of respect in the eyes of their family and friends.

Students highly (4,27) associated ability to work from home value proposition with Nortal. In addition, students consider Nortal to be a very stable employer with an average of 4,25.

The analysis indicates that there is a significant difference between the associations in comparison of both cities. In both cities, students consider Nortal to be a stable employer. However, when comparing values that had lower associations made by the respondents, the focus between cities should be on promoting different employer values to increase and harmonize results between two cities, which in the big picture should harmonise the external brand image of the entire company in the eyes of IT students.

41% (73) of all the survey respondents, studies at the University. For 34,2% of all Tartu respondents, Nortal is an unknown company that they had never been heard of before. The author received 90 responses (53%) in total from TalTech, of which 23,3% are unaware of the company's existence. The results show that Tartu students are more unaware of Nortal AS than the students in Tallinn.

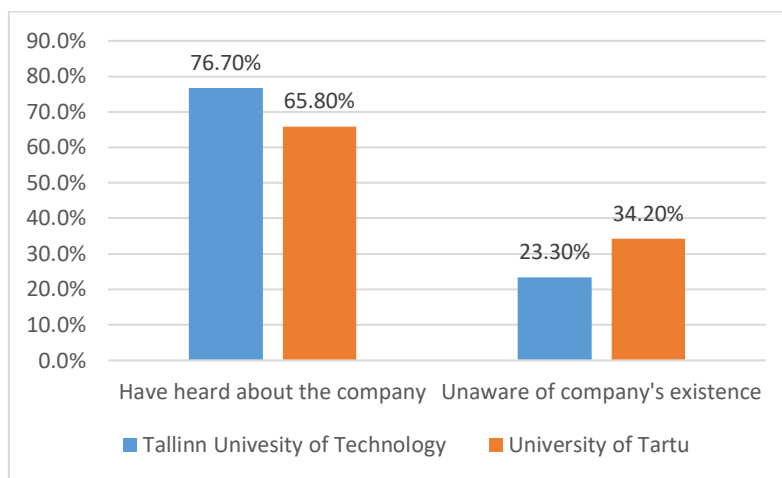


Figure 18. Awareness of the existence of Nortal AS in comparison between the universities

Source: Compiled by the author

3.3. Keywords related to Nortal AS as an employer

In the second part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to write down all the keywords they remember when thinking about the company. This sub-question was asked from the

software development (9), java development (6), e-government solutions (5), public procurement (6), programming (3), testing (3), agile development (2), and analytics (2).

Keywords related to the work environment and people working in the company were mentioned 38 times with keywords like student-friendly (9), great work environment (6), nice people (5), teamwork (4), youthful (3), intense work (2), employee-friendly (2). A friendly environment, multiple teams and active working groups were mentioned once. As most of the aforementioned keywords are positive, the author concludes that students mostly perceive Nortal AS as a company with a supportive work environment and kind-hearted employees.

Next to other keywords, respondents also mentioned keywords that can be perceived as negative. In total, 24 negative keywords were mentioned. Most frequently mentioned were high workload, poor quality, low salary, intense work, hard to get a job in that company, high competition. In addition, students mentioned keywords such as bad employer, boring, strict, too complex test assignments and not so reputable among IT professionals.

Out of 328 keywords, 37,2% were labelled as positive keywords, 55,5% as neutral keywords and 7,3% as negative keywords. Although the percentage of negative keywords is small, emphasis should be placed on neutralizing them as negative opinions tend to spread faster. This may, at some point, have an indirect effect on the attractiveness of the company and the brand image.

Forty-two keywords (12,8%) out of all the keywords mentioned by respondents are related to the employer value propositions offered by the company. This shows that a significant amount of the students is either unaware of the company's value propositions or they can not specifically associate these values with Nortal.

Further analysis was done between the education level and the amount of the mentioned keywords to see if the number of keywords the respondent was able to point out about the company depends on the course being studied. The author used calculated averages from mentioned keywords to conclude the analysis. First-year students mentioned on average 2,74 keywords per student. Second-year students mentioned on average 2,79 keywords, and third-year students three keywords. This indicates that students' awareness of the company grows with the years they have been studying in the university. This, in turn, means that students are able to point out a greater number and more diverse keywords about the company.

3.4. Conclusions and proposals

The aim of this dissertation is to research the external employer branding image of Nortal AS and to find out company's attractiveness as an employer amongst the students of the Faculty of Information. In this sub-chapter, the author presents the conclusions of the survey conducted among IT students together with the proposals that are recommended to Nortal based on the study conclusions.

The first research question identified, based on the Berthon et al. employer attractiveness scale, how the students studying IT relate different employer attractiveness scale values to Nortal AS. The calculated arithmetic means of the company's value proposition topics in a 5-point Likert scale ranged from 3,73 to 3,9. The respondents most associated the company with its practical work environment. The lowest links were established to the company's employer responsibility and with Nortal's social working environment.

Out of the 30 value proposition statements, the respondents rated Nortal the highest in being a stable (4,28) and attractive employer (4,15). With an average of 4,24, students were of the opinion that working in Nortal would advance their career in the future perspective. From the results, it can be concluded that Nortal has built a reputation as a stable employer, offering employees long-term jobs and challenges.

Students associated Nortal the least as a workplace where employees' creativity is valued and applied in the company's operations (3,53). A low rating (3,56) was also given about employees getting involved in the development of the company. Results show that students gave lower marks to value propositions related to the involvement of employees in various activities. This opinion may refer that the company has not clearly communicated the opportunities of how the employees can be involved in the development and growth of the company to their target groups.

A comparison was made between the two universities to find out differences in value proposition association results between the two universities. The study revealed that students from the University of Tartu created weaker connections with all value proposition topics. The comparison

also showed that the percentage of students who have not heard about the company before was higher among the University of Tartu students. Students from both universities highly valued the company's stability as an employer, which again indicates that the company has a reputation as a stability offering employer.

When searching for an answer to the second research question of this dissertation, the author aimed to find out what keywords' IT students associated with Nortal as a company. Respondents pointed out 37,2% positive keywords, 55,5% neutral keywords and 7,3% negative keywords.

The results showed that a lot of neutral keywords are associated with the company, the vast majority of which were related to the company's field of activity. In addition, it was found that several students associate Nortal with the Nortal university program, which shows that the students are well acquainted with the internship program offered by the company.

Of all the keywords identified, 12.8% were related to the company's value propositions. From this, it can be concluded that the company's value propositions are not communicated well enough, or they do not differ from other companies enough in a way that students would be able to point these value propositions out through descriptive keywords. In addition, 42 negative keywords were written by students when describing Nortal as a company and an employer. This indicates to the company which point of views should be focused on neutralizing.

Taking into account the conducted research and the previously presented conclusions, the author makes the following suggestions to the company:

- Bring out and introduce the value propositions of Nortal when introducing the internship program to students through the webpage and in person. In that way, students would know what to expect from working in the company in addition to benefits that they will receive during the internship program as the program is built in a way that the real work in the company is followed after Nortal University.
- The author suggest that the organisation should present their value propositions in a uniform way everywhere to attract all the potential employees as a lot of people make decisions to apply or not based on their cognitions of the company.
- It can be deduced from the study that in order to increase the awareness of the company, Nortal should take further steps to become more noticeable as an employer among the students at both universities but especially in the University of Tartu. Many of the students

who were unaware of the company are first-year students, placing them in a position of not being exactly the target group of the company. Nevertheless, taking into account the competition between companies for IT talents, a company should start creating awareness from early on to secure a higher application rate and to ensure that the right talents would find their way into the company.

- The survey respondents pointed out many negative keywords. Although the percentage of negative keywords is small, negative opinions tend to spread faster. This may, at some point, have an indirect effect on the attractiveness of the company and the brand image. Therefore, the author suggests that the company should take a look at the negative and explain to students about the various opportunities that working in Nortal opens up to slowly reduce the number of negative opinions.
- The survey revealed that keywords pointed out by respondents related to Nortal do not reflect the company's value propositions, which indicates that a significant amount of the students is either unaware of the company's value propositions or when characterizing the company, they cannot specifically recall these values and associate them with Nortal. Therefore, the author again suggests emphasizing on the value propositions that differ the company from its competitors when promoting the company among its target groups.

The author suggests the company to put into practice the aforementioned suggestions to further strengthen its external employer brand image and increase the awareness of the company. The conducted study can be used as a basis for further in-depth studies. This basis can be used either among the companies target groups on a wider basis, including all the target group population, not only students, or to conduct a similar study inside the organisation.

SUMMARY

The aim of the bachelor's thesis was to study the external employer brand image of Nortal AS and find out company's attractiveness as an employer among the students who are acquiring their higher education in IT. On the basis of which proposals were made to the company to better display and strengthen the employer's external brand image among university students. Information technology bachelor's students from the University of Tartu and TalTech were included in the study by using random sampling.

The theoretical overview of the literature was carried to analyse employer branding and its conceptual framework, external and internal employer branding and the relationship between employer branding and the attractiveness of the employer, which was also the most important basis for the conducted study.

The research was carried out to find out how the students relate different employer attractiveness scale values to Nortal AS. IT students were also asked to write down different keywords that they associate with Nortal as a company. The author conducted a quantitative study, for which data were collected by means of an electronic questionnaire. The final sample of the survey (163) represented 7,75% of the total study population. The answers collected included 90 answers from TalTech and 73 answers from the University of Tartu.

The results of the survey showed that 28,2% of the students had no prior knowledge about the existence of the company. The vast majority of this percentage is formed by first-year students. Conducted correlation analysis proved a moderate correlation between the knowledge about the company increasing throughout the year of studies.

According to the research questions, the following results were obtained from the study:

- The stability of Nortal as an employer (4,28), working in a company would advance job seekers career in the future (4,24), and attractiveness as an employer (4,15) were rated highest by the respondents.
- The lowest scores were given to valuing and applying employee creativity (3,53), involvement of employees in the development of the company (3,56) and earning the respect of family and friends by working in the company (3,58).
- Keyword analysis showed that a large number of the keywords associated with the company, are related to the company's field of activity. This, however, shows that the company can be largely indistinguishable from other companies in the same field for the students, as the field of activity is similar for everyone.
- 37,2% of the keywords were labelled as positive keywords, 55,5% as neutral keywords and 7,3% as negative keywords. If we exclude neutral keywords, which can mostly be applicable to other companies as well, students pointed mostly out positive keywords about the company.
- A comparison of universities revealed that the students of the University of Tartu have a lower awareness of the company. The results also showed that students from the University of Tartu rated the company's value propositions with lower grades than students of TalTech.

Based on the results, the author makes proposals for strengthening the employer's external brand and for follow-up activities:

- Uniform the way value propositions are communicated outside of the company to give a full and equal overview to every prospective employee.
- The company should constantly work on the development of the employer's external brand, as it plays a role in finding the right talents and keeping them in the company later.
- Start increasing the company's brand awareness already among university entrants to ensure higher knowledge about the company and that the right talents would find their way into Nortal.
- Focus on the value proposition areas on both cities that the students studying in a respective city perceived lowest.

The conducted study can be used as a basis for future studies to compare the change in results between different time periods. This study can also be used as a basis to conduct a similar study inside the organisation for its current employees. In conclusion, it can be said that the goals set for

this bachelor's thesis were met, and the company can continue to strengthen the employer's external brand among IT students based on these results.

KOKKUVÕTE

TÖÖANDJA BRÄNDI KUVAND IT-TUDENGITE HULGAS ETTEVÕTTE NORTAL AS NÄITEL

Regina Lukk

Käesoleva bakalaureusetöö eesmärgiks oli uurida Nortali tööandja brändi välimist kuvandit ja tööandja atraktiivsust Tartu Ülikooli ja Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli IT tudengite hulgas. Autor valis uurimisobjektiks Nortali ASi kuna eelpool mainitud teema kohta pole varem konkreetsetes ettevõttes sarnast uuringut läbi viidud. Sellest tulenevalt oli töö kirjutamise aluseks infopuudus ettevõttele olulise info kohta. Autor omab ettevõttes eelnevat töökogemust, mis võimaldas ligipääsu kontaktidele ja infole, mis omakorda toetasid antud lõputöö kirjutamist. Töö tulemuste põhjal antakse ettevõttele soovitusel tööandja brändi tugevdamiseks sihtrühma hulgas.

Bakalaureusetöö küsitluse tulemuste analüüsimisel selgitati välja, millisel määral seostavad tudengid erinevaid Berthon et al. ja Dabirian et al. tööandja atraktiivsuse skaala väärtuspakkumisi Nortali AS-iga. Tudengitel paluti muuhulgas kirjutada välja ka erinevad märksõnad, mis nende jaoks seostavad Nortali kui ettevõttega. Autor viis läbi kvantitatiivse uuringu, mille kohta koguti andmeid elektroonilise küsimustiku abil. Uuringu lõplik valim (163) moodustas 7,75% üldkogumist. Kogutud vastustest laekus 55,2% Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli tudengitelt ja 44,8% vastustest Tartu ülikooli tudengitelt.

Uuringu tulemustest selgus, et 28,2% tudengitest ei ole varasemalt Nortalist kuulnud. Valdava osa antud hulgast moodustavad esimese kursuse tudengid. Läbiviidud korrelatsioonanalüüs näitas, et tudengite teadlikkuse kohta ettevõttest ja õpitava kursuse vahel esineb Spearmani korrelatsioonikordaja alusel keskmine seos.

Tudengite loodud seosete uurimiseks tööandja väärtuspakkumistega kasutati Likerti 5-palli skaalat. Tulemustest selgus, et kõige kõrgemalt hinnatakse Nortali stabiilsust tööandjana (4,28).

Kõige madalamalt hinnati töötajate loovuse rakendamist ettevõttes (3,53) ning töötajate kaasamist ettevõtte arengusse (3,56). Ülikoolide vahelisest võrdlusest selgus, et Tartu Ülikooli tudengite teadlikkus Nortali olemasolust on madalam kui Tallinna Tehnikaülikooli tudengitel. Samuti hindasid Tartu Ülikooli tudengid ettevõtte väärtuspakkumisi madalamate hinnetega.

Märksõnade analüüsi tulemusel selgus, et Nortali ASiga seostatavad märksõnad on 55,5% ulatuses neutraalsed, mis tähendab, et tegemist on märksõnadega, mis on omased ka teistele sama valdkonna ettevõtetele ning seetõttu ei peegelda need suurt teadlikkust Nortali tööandja väärtuspakkumistest. 37,2% välja toodud märksõnadest olid positiivse alatooniga ning viitasid ettevõttele kui töötajasõbralikkule ettevõttele. 12,8% väljatoodud märksõnadest olid vastavuses Nortali ASi tööandja väärtuspakkumistega, mis näitab tudengite vähest teadlikkust ettevõtte väärtuspakkumiste kohta ning ühtlasi ka seda, et ettevõtte ei ole piisavalt keskendunud väärtuspakkumiste esile tõstmisele, et tihedas tööjõu otsingu konkurentsivälja paista.

Läbiviidud uuringu tulemuste põhjal teeb autor Nortali ASile järgmised ettepanekud tööandja brändi tugevdamiseks:

- Ühtlustada väärtuspakkumiste edastamise viis väljaspool ettevõtet nii, et see annaks igale tulevasele töötajale täieliku ja võrdse ülevaate selle kohta, mida ettevõttest oodata.
- Ettevõtte peaks tegelema järjepideva tööandja välise brändingu arendamisega kuna see mängib rolli õigete talentide leidmisel ja nende hilisemal ettevõttesse püsima jäämise tagamisel.
- Ettevõtte brändi teadlikkuse suurendamisega tuleks alustada juba ülikooli astujate hulgas, et tagada kõrgemad teadmised ettevõttest ning sellega tagada õigete talentide jõudmist Nortali ASi.
- Keskenduda mõlema ülikooli puhul nende väärtuspakkumiste kommunikeerimisele, mida vastavas linnas õppivad õpilased kõige madalamalt hindasid. Lisaks tuleks keskenduda ka üldisele ja pidevalt väärtuspakkumiste kommunikeerimisele, mis eristuvad teistest sama valdkonna ettevõttest ehk teisisõnu mis on Nortali konkurentsieelisteks.

Läbiviidud uuringut saab kasutada järgnevate uuringute alusena, et võrrelda tulemuste muutust erinevate ajaperioodide lõikes. Lisaks saab uuringut kasutada ka organisatsiooni sisese sarnase uuringu tegemiseks praeguste töötajate hulgas.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Employer attractiveness scale items and corresponding factors

Value offered by the employer	Value proposition factor
Working in an exciting environment	Interest value
Innovative employer – novel work practices/forward-thinking	Interest value
The organisation both values and makes use of your creativity	Interest value
The organisation produces high-quality products and services	Interest value
The organisation produces innovative products and services	Interest value
A fun working environment	Social value
Having a good relationship with your superiors	Social value
Having a good relationship with your colleagues	Social value
Supportive and encouraging colleagues	Social value
Happy work environment	Social value
Good promotion opportunities within the organisation	Economic value
Hands-on inter-departmental experience	Economic value
An attractive overall compensation package	Economic value
An above-average basic salary	Economic value
Recognition/appreciation from management	Development value
A springboard for future employment	Development value
Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organisation	Development value
Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organisation	Development value
Gaining career-enhancing experience	Development value
Humanitarian organisation – gives back to the society	Application value
Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution	Application value
Opportunity to teach others what you have learned	Application value
Acceptance and belonging	Application value
The organisation is customer-oriented	Application value

Source: (Berthon et al., 158-159)

Appendix 2. Nortal AS value offers that coincide with the employer attractiveness scale value items

Nortal AS value offer	Employer attractiveness scale item
Constructive team environment, strong teams	Supportive and encouraging colleagues
Strong teams, inspiring environment	Having a good relationship with your colleagues
Power of learning, growth opportunities	A springboard for future employment
Opportunity to hands-on test different techniques used in information technology	Innovative employer – novel work practices/forward-thinking
Latest industry-leading tools to work with	Innovative employer – novel work practices/forward-thinking
A work culture that celebrates its employees	Recognition/appreciation from management
People-oriented atmosphere	Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organisation
High-quality training and growth opportunities	Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organisation
Transparency and honesty inside the company and teams	Acceptance and belonging
Growth opportunities, full control over career mobility	Good promotion opportunities within the organisation
Prioritising employees' well-being and health	An attractive overall compensation package
Opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process	Having a good relationship with your superiors
Work-life balance	Work-life balance
Inspiring environment	Working in an exciting and happy environment

Source: Compiled by the author

Appendix 3. Keywords associated with Nortal AS

Keyword	Frequency	Keyword tonality
Infotehnoloogia	27	Neutral
Nortali ülikool	19	Neutral
Roheline värv	16	Neutral
Innovaatiline	13	Positive
Suurettevõte	11	Neutral
Praktikavõimalused	10	Neutral
Hea tööandja	9	Positive
Tudengisõbralik	9	Positive
Hea töötasu	9	Positive
Mainekas	9	Positive
Tarkvaraarendus	9	Neutral
Hea töökeskkond	6	Positive
Riigihanked	6	Neutral
Algorütm	6	Neutral
Java arendus	6	Neutral
Edukas	5	Positive
Huvitav	5	Positive
Toredad inimesed	5	Positive
E-lahendused	5	Neutral
Karjäärpäevad	4	Neutral
Tiimitöö	4	Neutral
Unistuste tööandja	4	Positive
Priit Alamäe	4	Neutral
Raha	3	Neutral
Palju arenguvõimalusi	3	Positive
Paindlikkus	3	Positive
Nooruslik	3	Positive
Suur koormus	3	Negative
Programmeerimine	3	Neutral
Testimine	3	Neutral
Kaasaegne	3	Positive
Seamless society	2	Neutral
Väljakutsuv	2	Neutral
Madal kvaliteet	2	Negative
Rahvusvaheline	2	Neutral
Agiilne arendus	2	Neutral
Raske tööle saada	2	Negative
Usaldusväärne	2	Positive
Professionaalne	2	Positive
Madal palk	2	Negative
Töötajasõbralik	2	Positive
Pingeline töö	2	Negative
Analüütika	2	Neutral

Appendix 3 (continued)

Suur konkurents	2	Negative
Ülemiste City	2	Neutral
Kõrgelt hinnatud	2	Positive
IT lahendused	1	Neutral
Kott-toolid	1	Neutral
TOP10	1	Positive
Lahedad sokid	1	Neutral
Igav	1	Negative
Impact	1	Neutral
Halb tööandja	1	Negative
Sponsor	1	Neutral
Head karjäärivõimalused	1	Positive
Arendav töö	1	Positive
AÜE	1	Neutral
Väike kontor	1	Negative
Palju valdkondi	1	Neutral
Kivi konsum	1	Neutral
Äri	1	Neutral
Tehnoloogia	1	Neutral
Organiseeritud	1	Positive
Rahulik	1	Neutral
Efektiivne	1	Positive
Abivalmis	1	Positive
Mitmekesised projektid	1	Positive
Populaarne	1	Positive
IT teenuse pakkuja	1	Neutral
Sõbralik õhkkond	1	Positive
Odav	1	Negative
Lõbus töökeskkond	1	Positive
Motiveeritud tiimid	1	Positive
Vaheldusrikas	1	Neutral
Tartu	1	Neutral
Efektised meened	1	Positive
Lahe kontor	1	Positive
Karjäär	1	Neutral
Peresõbralik tööandja	1	Positive
Arendajate kasvulava	1	Positive
Palju Eesti projekte	1	Neutral
Tugev töökultuur	1	Positive
Analüütiline	1	Neutral
Raske praktikale saada	1	Negative
Koolitused	1	Neutral
Põhjalik	1	Neutral
Projektipõhine	1	Neutral
Turvalisus	1	Positive

Appendix 3 (continued)

Palju töötajaid	1	Neutral
Kiirelt kasvav	1	Positive
Avalik sektor	1	Neutral
Hea suhtumine	1	Positive
Informaatika	1	Neutral
Keerulised kandideerimisülesanded	1	Negative
Stabiilne	1	Positive
Kättesaamatu	1	Negative
Modernsed lahendused	1	Positive
Perspektiivne	1	Positive
Austatud	1	Positive
Palju töökohti	1	Neutral
Maksu- ja tolliamet	1	Neutral
Spring	1	Neutral
Projektijuht	1	Neutral
Toetav töökeskkond	1	Positive
8h koodi	1	Neutral
Range	1	Negative
Nõudlik	1	Negative
Kõrged standardid	1	Negative
RHRi otsingusüsteem	1	
Mitte niivõrd hea mainega IT spetsialistide hulgas	1	Negative
Rahvusvahelised projektid	1	Neutral
Mitmekorruseline kontor	1	Neutral
Start-up	1	Neutral
IT lipulaev	1	Positive
Palju tiime	1	Neutral
Silmapaistev	1	Positive
Tegus	1	Positive
Aktiivsed töögrupid	1	Positive
Priit Liivak	1	Neutral

Source: Compiled by the author

Appendix 4. Questionnaire

Dear IT student!

I am writing a bachelor's thesis at Tallinn University of Technology in the field of business, with specializing in marketing. The aim of my dissertation is to study the external brand image of Nortal AS and company's attractiveness as an employer among the students studying information technology in the University of Tartu and Tallinn University of Technology. As a result of the dissertation analysis, recommendations are forwarded to the company to strengthen and more successfully display its external employer's brand image.

It takes around 5-7 minutes to answer the survey.

There will be a giveaway for two 15-euros Wolt gift cards among all the respondents. Participation in the draw is optional, but if you wish to participate, please enter your e-mail address after completing the survey.

The responses and data collected will be treated as anonymous and the contacts received will not be used for other purposes. I am waiting for your answers by April 10 at the latest. If you have any questions or problems answering the survey, please let me know via lukkregina@gmail.com.

I really ask for your help!

Regina Lukk

1. Previous contact with Nortal AS

Please indicate if you have heard of the company before or have no previous connection with the company (i.e you have not heard of Nortal as a company before)

- I have not heard of the company (71,8%)
- I have heard of the company (28,2%)

2. Previous exposure to the company

Previous exposure/contact points to Nortal AS

Please indicate/mark down all previous points of contact with the company

Appendix 4 (continued)

- I work in the company (5)
- I have previously worked in the company (0)
- My acquaintance/friend/relative works in Nortal (50)
- I have heard about Nortal through media channels (86)
- Career fairs (79)
- Other... (12)

Keywords related to Nortal AS

What relates to you with Nortal as an employer? Please add all the keywords!

.....

3. Practical work environment

Please assess the extent to which you associate the following statements with Nortal as an employer. When evaluating each statement, please proceed from what your inner feeling is, i.e. what external impression Nortal leaves on you.

It seems to me that in Nortal..

	Do not associate at all	Associate to a small extent	Associate on an average level	Associate to a large extent	Associate completely	Difficult to assess
...the creativity of employees is valued, and it can be applied	1,7%	15,4%	18,8%	32,5%	15,4%	16,2%
...it is possible to apply the knowledge acquired in the university	0,9%	2,6%	18,8%	37,6%	35,9%	4,3%

Appendix 4 (continued)

... it is possible to pass on your knowledge to colleagues	0,9%	6%	26,5%	28,2%	22,2%	16,2%
... is an exciting workplace	3,4%	7,7%	23,9%	28,2%	29,9%	6,8%
... it is possible to gain experience from different work units	1,7%	6,8%	20,5%	25,6%	30,8%	14,5%
... offers many challenging tasks to work with	1,7%	3,4%	18,8%	35,9%	29,9%	10,3%
... working from home is allowed and offered	1,7%	3,4%	14,5%	23,9%	35%	21,4%
... uses innovative working methods	1,7%	6,8%	13,7%	37,6%	29,9%	10,3%

Comments

If needed, please add your comment/explanation

.....

4. Social working environment

Please assess the extent to which you associate the following statements with Nortal as an employer. When evaluating each statement, please proceed from what your inner feeling is, i.e what external impression Nortal leaves on you.

It seems to me that in Nortal...

	Do not associate at all	Associate to a small extent	Associate on an average level	Associate to a large extent	Associate completely	Difficult to assess
... management recognizes employees	0,9%	10,3%	21,4%	24,8%	17,1%	25,6%

Appendix 4 (continued)

... is a fun work environment	0,9%	4,3%	29,1%	30,8%	23,1%	12%
... employees have good relationships with managers	0,9%	9,4%	23,9%	24,8%	15,4%	25,6%
... relationships between colleagues a great	0,9%	3,4%	17,1%	39,3%	26,5%	12,8%
... environment creates a sense of happiness in the employees	1,7%	9,4%	23,9%	30,8%	17,9%	16,2%
... working creates a sense of belonging	1,7%	6%	19,7%	31,6%	16,2%	24,8%

Comments

If needed, please add your comment/explanation

.....

5. Development-friendly employer

Please assess the extent to which you associate the following statements with Nortal as an employer. When evaluating each statement, please proceed from what your inner feeling is, i.e what external impression Nortal leaves on you.

It seems to me that in Nortal...

	Do not associate at all	Associate to a small extent	Associate on an average level	Associate to a large extent	Associate completely	Difficult to assess
... working would advance my career in the future perspective	0,9%	5,1%	12,8%	29,1%	48,7%	3,4%

Appendix 4 (continued)

... working in the company would make you feel good	2,6%	6,8%	27,4%	30,8%	25,6%	17,1%
... working in the company would boost confidence	3,4%	6%	23,1%	29,1%	33,3%	11,1%
... there are good opportunities for promotions	2,6%	9,4%	18,8%	30,8%	23,9%	14,5%
... offers good training and development opportunities	0,9%	5,1%	13,7%	37,6%	31,6%	5,1%
... employees are involved in the development of the company	3,4%	12,8%	17,9%	31,6%	17,1%	6,8%

Comments

If needed, please add your comment/explanation

.....

6. Employer stability

Please assess the extent to which you associate the following statements with Nortal as an employer. When evaluating each statement, please proceed from what your inner feeling is, i.e what external impression Nortal leaves on you.

It seems to me that Nortal...

	Do not associate at all	Associate to a small extent	Associate on an average level	Associate to a large extent	Associate completely	Difficult to assess
... is a stable employer	0%	0%	15,4%	38,5%	41,9%	4,3%
... offers above average salary	6%	6%	16,2%	39,3%	26,5%	6%

Appendix 4 (continued)

... offers an attractive motivation package (benefits, compensation etc.)	2,6%	6,8%	19,7%	29,9%	19,7%	21,4%
... offices are located in a favorable place	4,3%	7,7%	18,8%	34,2%	23,1%	12%

Comments

If needed, please add your comment/explanation

.....

7. Employer responsibility

Please assess the extent to which you associate the following statements with Nortal as an employer. When evaluating each statement, please proceed from what your inner feeling is, i.e what external impression Nortal leaves on you.

It seems to me that Nortal...

	Do not associate at all	Associate to a small extent	Associate on an average level	Associate to a large extent	Associate completely	Difficult to assess
... is a socially responsible company	4,3%	7,7%	20,5%	31,6%	16,2%	19,7%
... is a fair company	2,6%	6%	21,4%	36,8%	15,4%	17,9%
... is a flexible employer	3,4%	3,4%	16,2%	35%	29,9%	12%
... supports work-life balance	1,7%	8,5%	22,2%	31,6%	17,1%	18,8%

Comments

If needed, please add your comment/explanation

.....

8. General image

Please assess the extent to which you associate the following statements with Nortal as an employer. When evaluating each statement, please proceed from what your inner feeling is, i.e. what external impression Nortal leaves on you.

Nortal...

Appendix 4 (continued)

	Do not associate at all	Associate to a small extent	Associate on an average level	Associate to a large extent	Associate completely	Difficult to assess
... is an attractive employer	4,3%	3,4%	13,7%	29,9%	47,9%	0,9%
... when working in the company, I would earn the respect of family and friends	10,3%	8,5%	17,9%	24,8%	28,2%	10,3%

Comments

If needed, please add your comment/explanation

.....

In which university are you studying?

- Tallinn University of Technology (55,2%)
- University of Tartu (44,8%)

On which course you are studying currently?

- First-year (34,4%)
- Second-year (29,5%)
- Third year (35%)
- Other... (1,1%)

What is your previous work experience?

You can mark several options if you wish

- No previous work/internship experience (40,5%)
- Previous work/internship experience (20,3%)
- Currently working (37,4%)
- Other... (1,8%)

Appendix 4 (continued)

Sex

- Woman (47,9%)
- Man (52,1%)

Thank you very much, dear student!

Thank you very much for your contribution to the completion of my dissertation!

If you would like to take part in a raffle for 15-euros worth of Wolt gift card, please leave your e-mail address here. The contacts obtained will not be used for any purpose other than to draw lots and to contact the winners.

The draw will take place on May 15!

E-mail address

.....

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Employer external brand image amongst IT students based on Nortal AS,

supervised by Dr Mohammed Razaq Raj,

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