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# Identifying Differences in the Application of HR Marketing Tools in Companies in the Secondary Sector – a Case Study of Mining, Construction, and Manufacturing Industries

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# Abstract

HR marketing is a relatively new field in corporate practice. When implemented effectively and designed professionally, HR marketing can give companies a significant competitive advantage in the labour market. Increasingly, HR managers and executives focus on securing high-quality and skilled employees who are integral to building a strong brand and employer value. To date, no studies have specifically examined HR marketing within the secondary sector, which appears to be stagnating in economically developed countries. This study aims to identify differences in the application of HR marketing tools among companies operating in the secondary sector, particularly within the mining, construction, and manufacturing industries. The research was conducted in two stages: the first stage involved an analysis of HR marketing practices among a sample of 215 companies operating in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The second stage focused on a case study of 10 companies from the secondary sector, specifically three companies operating in the mining, construction, and manufacturing industries. This study offers a comparative analysis of HR marketing tool usage among companies within the secondary sector, including those in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The key findings address the research questions and hypotheses. The results indicate that companies in the secondary sector primarily use traditional HR marketing tools such as company websites, personnel agency services, and job portals. Mining and manufacturing companies employ a wider range of HR marketing tools to enhance employee loyalty than construction companies.

### Keywords

HR marketing, mining industry, secondary sector, loyalty, employees



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#### Introduction

The current economy drives globalisation, enabling the emergence of world-class markets, internationalisation, and hyper-competition (Uhlík et al., 2022). Human capital is considered a creative ability inherent in individuals, which cannot be separated from their bearers, reflecting their skills. In reality, enterprises lease this economic resource as a production factor (Khayrulina et al., 2020). With the increasing automation and robotisation in the market environment, attracting and retaining skilled and loyal employees is becoming increasingly difficult. For this reason, enterprises are increasingly integrating the areas of HR management, HR, and marketing into a single, coherent and specialised activity known as HR marketing. The effective redistribution of the labour market not only increases the need for effective communication in a complex labour market but also involves introducing innovative technologies (Gavurova et al., 2020; Soltes and Gavurova, 2014; Nikitina et al., 2021). By linking marketing, HR, and recruitment processes, HR marketing is gradually developing (Malý, 2022).

Coal mining is no exception, and the demands on competent HR professionals, whose educational backgrounds are directly related to the industry, are increasing as well. These growing demands, as illustrated by the experience of mining companies, are accompanied by an increase in the number of employees within departments that directly address HR issues (Bobrikov et al., 2020). Given that coal mining is a collective labour activity, where success is dependent on the entire team, HR professionals should focus not only on individual material support but also on the overall outcome of the team's work.

It is crucial for any employee in the secondary sector to have a defined role within the operational process to contribute effectively to the sector's development. Therefore, evaluating one's career trajectory is important, even while progressing up the career ladder. Cerne et al. (2018) emphasise the significance of modern conditions that enhance the competitive advantage of corporate HR skills, the effectiveness of which is largely determined by training.

In their study, Saini and Jawahar (2019) highlighted that ensuring quality employees is influenced by both the selection of potential candidates and the effectiveness of HR marketing tools. Many authors agree that attracting potential employees should increasingly involve innovative approaches to differentiate the company from its competitors (Gavurova et al., 2017; Van Dierendonsk et al., 2016; Nayak et al., 2015; Fetting et al., 2018).

In the context of HR marketing, Gogolova et al. (2015) recommend combining external and internal HR marketing strategies, particularly during the recruitment process.

According to Saini et al. (2014), the primary advantages of HR marketing include enhanced competitiveness of companies and reduced time and financial costs associated with the recruitment process. Aallali (2020) demonstrated that one of the major concerns for 21<sup>st</sup>-century companies is creating a sustainable competitive advantage in the labour market. Ikhide et al. (2022) attribute successful company competitiveness to the organisation's targeted engagement in corporate social responsibility. Also Mishchuk et al. (2023) define the development of social capital as a key indicator of the competitiveness of companies and at the same time as a determinant of human development at the macroeconomic level. Human development stimulates the development of human capital and subsequently ensures the stability of the organization's competitiveness. Nikitina et al. (2021) also link the company's competitive quality to a focus on a robust recruitment process, which is ensured by qualified personnel, including related activities. Strategic implementation and planning of innovations ensure corporate competitiveness and sustainability (Ershavova et al., 2019; Šafránková et al., 2020).

A key HR marketing tool is communication. Job offers must be tailored to indicate whether they are intended for internal or external candidates (Koubek, 2015; Šikýr, 2014). Social platforms are used to communicate with the public, promote the company, and recruit employees (Bejtkovský, 2020). According to Bartáková et al. (2017), the use of online tools is expected to grow significantly, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises.

Micic and Radosavac (2018) assert that the use of IT technology in HR marketing significantly impacts corporate processes. In today's technologically advanced era, social media platforms are widely used to search for employees. Bejtkovský (2020) argues that e-recruitment primarily relies on recruitment videos. In an earlier study, Lievens et al. (2002) highlighted the importance of social media from the employer's perspective. Employees use social networks and recruitment videos to familiarise themselves with the corporate culture and vision of the company. Jančíková and Milichovský (2019) emphasise that when using social platforms, companies have only about 10 seconds to capture the attention of potential job seekers. Tian Liu (2018) argues that employees need to be able to infer whether they meet the candidate's profile from a job offer.

Jain (2021) pointed out that the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the critical importance of the mining industry for economic growth. Despite the high revenues generated in the mining industry, there has been a gradual decline in coal and other fossil fuel extraction businesses. Bednárik and Máliková (2016) demonstrated that the frequency of layoffs significantly impacts the optimisation of employment plans if the time interval for hiring new employees remains unchanged. The mining industry significantly influences society from economic, environmental, and social perspectives, although the importance of these criteria may vary considerably depending on the geographical location where mining occurs (Ranangen and Lindman, 2017).

Enterprises in the secondary sector play a crucial role in generating GDP for many countries. The extraction of raw materials such as metals, minerals, and fossil fuels is essential for producing a wide range of products and services, creating job opportunities, generating tax revenues, and thereby supporting economic growth (Vochozka et al., 2024). However, the EU's efforts to reduce energy consumption and facilitate a transition to alternative resources could significantly impact the oil market. Policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions could have several consequences, including a potential decrease in overall oil demand. This shift could reduce oil dependency and diversify the market share of various energy resources.

Enterprises that adopt innovative technologies in manufacturing enhance their competitiveness in the job market (Olah et al., 2021; Dušek and Sagapova, 2022), thereby also strengthening their employer brand (Chang & Ku, 2023; Mehmood et al., 2023). The secondary sector has unique characteristics, which are particularly evident in the mining industry. However, it is important to note that the mining industry employs not only labourers and production workers but also requires skilled and talented employees, such as engineers and researchers, to ensure quality research and the development of new mining technologies (Civelek & Krajčík, 2022). The economic, social, and environmental impacts of mining activities on the local environment depend on many factors associated with these operations. Straková et al. (2024) state in their study that among the fundamental changes implemented are restructuring, i.e. organizational changes, the use of IT technologies and innovation management. Some organizations are slow to make changes, from changing thinking in planning to attempting changes in company leadership.

This paper focuses on identifying differences in the application of HR marketing tools within the secondary sector. The mining, manufacturing, and construction industries have certain specifics concerning employers' requirements for employees. Excluding administrative workers and managers, the employee's physical condition is crucial for performing these work activities.

The study aims to identify differences in the use of HR marketing tools by enterprises operating in the secondary sector, particularly in the mining, manufacturing, and construction industries. In this context, the following research questions and hypotheses are formulated:

RQ 1: How do enterprises in the secondary sector employ HR marketing tools?

 $H_0$ : There is no significant difference in the application of HR marketing tools among enterprises in the secondary sector.

 $H_1$ : The extent to which HR marketing tools are applied differs significantly depending on the type of secondary sector industry.

RQ 2: Which tools do secondary sector enterprises use to ensure the loyalty of their existing employees?

 $H_0$ : The application of HR marketing tools has a significant impact on ensuring employee loyalty in the secondary sector.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the application of HR marketing tools and employee loyalty.

# **Material and Methods**

The first phase of the research was conducted using mathematical and statistical methods on a sample of 215 enterprises operating in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The second phase of the research, which served as the primary basis for the subsequent case study, involved a total of 10 companies in the secondary sector. The case study focused on a sample of 3 companies in the mining, construction, and production industries. The research sample for the second and third phases was obtained by combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, primarily through a questionnaire survey and expert interviews. Judgmental sampling was used to select respondents with identical specific characteristics (Tahal et al., 2017), while stratified sampling was used to ensure a representative sample.

The mathematical and statistical methods were categorised according to qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The analysis methods applied were based on descriptive analysis and served as the foundation for testing statistical hypotheses. The main research method was a comparative study utilising the t-test and ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). The ANOVA method was used to determine whether one variable depended on another. F-statistics, which is a test statistic for one-way ANOVA, was calculated, as presented in Table 1.

Tab. 1. Components of the F-statistics

Sum of values		df	Mean values	
TREATMENT	$SS_R$	$df_r$	$MS_R$	$MS_R/MS_E$
ERROR	$SS_E$	df <sub>e</sub>	$MS_E$	
TOTAL	$SS_T$	$df_T$		

Source: Authors

The total variance (SS Total) is defined as follows:

$$SS_{Total} = \sum \sum (X_{ij} - \overline{X}) n_i \quad j = 1 \ k \ i = 1$$
 (1)

where,

k the total number of groups (level of independent variable)

 $n_i$  number of valid observations in i-th group

Between-group variance

$$SS_{Between} = \sum n_i (\overline{X_i} - \overline{X}) 2 k i = 1$$
 (2)

where,

number of valid observations in i-th group

 $\overline{X_i}$  mean value in *i*-th group  $\overline{X}$  total mean of all observations.

Within-group variance

$$SS_{Within} = \sum \sum (X_{ij} - \overline{X_i})^2$$
 (3)

	within 22 ty ty
vhere,	
$n_i$	number of valid observations in <i>i</i> -th group
$X_{iJ}$	<i>j</i> -th observation in <i>i</i> -th group
$X_i$	the mean value of <i>i</i> -th group
$SS_R$	Regression sum of squares
$\mathcal{SS}_{E}$	error sum of squares
$SS_T$	total sum of squares ( $SST = SSR + SSE$ )
dfr	Model degrees of freedom (equals $dfr = k - 1$ )
$df_{ m T}$	Total degrees of freedom (equals $dfT = dfr + dfe = n - 1$ )
$MS_{ m R}$	SSR/dfr= mean square regression
$MS_E$	SSE/dfe= mean square error

Next, the F-statistics is calculated as follows:

$$F = MS_R/MS_E$$

The Chi-Square test is used to determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between variables in the sample studied. It is a non-parametric test that assesses the difference between expected and observed frequencies.

The formula for the Chi-Square test is defined as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)}{E_i} \tag{4}$$

where,

 $X^2$  Chi-Square test statistic,

 $O_i$  represents the observed frequency in each category,

 $E_i$  represents the expected frequency in each category,

Which is calculated as follows:

$$E_i = \frac{Row \, Total \times Column \, Total}{Grand \, Total} \tag{5}$$

The Pearson test determines the statistical measure that indicates the strength and direction of a linear relationship. The values of the Pearson coefficient range from -1 to 1, where 1 indicates a perfect positive correlation.

The formula for the Pearson test is provided below:

$$r = \frac{\sum (X_i - \overline{X})(Y_i - \overline{Y})}{\sqrt{\sum (X_i - \overline{X})^2 - \sum (Y_i - \overline{Y})^2}}$$
(6)

where,

 $X_i a Y_i \ \overline{X} a \overline{Y}$ 

Represent individual data points, are mean values of X or Y values.

where,

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X_i}{n} \tag{7}$$

$$\overline{Y} = \frac{\sum Y_I}{n} \tag{8}$$

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) commonly employs the Tukey test to compare multiple groups and identify differences between the mean values of multiple groups. The Tukey HSD (honestly significant difference) test specifically compares the means of all pairs of groups to determine if the differences between them are statistically significant. The null hypothesis,  $H_0$ :  $\mu_i = \mu_j$ , posits that the means of the compared groups i and j do not differ. This is tested against the alternative hypothesis  $H_1$ :  $\mu_i \neq \mu_j$ , which suggests that the means are different.

The formula for the Tukey HSD test is provided below:

$$q = q_{\infty}, k, N \times \sqrt{\frac{MS_{error}}{n}}$$
(9)

where,

 $q_{\infty}, k, N$ 

is the critical value taken from the Tukey Test Critical Values Table according to the selected significance level  $(\propto)$ , number of groups (k) and the total number of observations (N),

 $MS_{error}$ 

n

is the mean square error obtained from the ANOVA tables, which represents within-group variability,

is the number of observations in each group.

The critical values of  $q_{\infty}$ , k, N can be obtained from statistical tables of software programs. The Tukey HSD test helps prevent Type I errors, which may occur during multiple comparisons, by adjusting the critical value on the basis of the number of comparisons performed.

The Kruskal-Wallis test is a non-parametric statistical test used to detect statistically significant differences between the medians of three or more independent groups. It extends the Mann-Whitney U test to more than two

groups. In this type of test, data are ranked and used to compare the medians across groups. The formula for the Kruskal-Wallis test is given below:

$$H = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \left( \sum_{i=1}^{k} \frac{R_i^2}{n_i} \right) - 3(N+1)$$
 (10)

where,

N Total number of observations in all groups.

k Number of groups.

 $R_i$  The sum of ranks for group I.

 $n_i$  i is the number of observations within group i.

If the null hypothesis is rejected, it indicates that at least one group has a median that is different from others. However, the Kruskal-Wallis test does not specify which particular groups differ from each other.

#### Results

**First research phase.** The effectiveness and efficiency of various HR marketing tools are crucial for ensuring the loyalty of current employees. A pilot study was conducted with a sample of 215 enterprises operating in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Graph 1 illustrates the mean value of the importance of HR marketing across different company size categories. The graph indicates that the importance of HR marketing increases with the company's size.

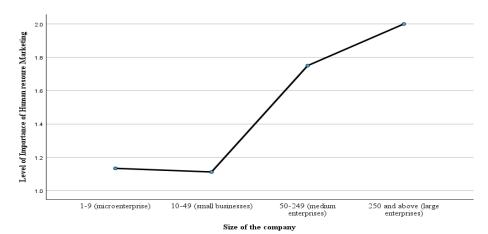


Fig. 1. Importance of HR marketing across different company size categories

Table 1 shows the results of the Pearson Chi-Square test conducted on a sample of 215 companies. The test aimed to assess the relationship between variables, specifically related to applying external and internal HR marketing across different company size categories. The chi-squared value of 44.958 and 6 degrees of freedom indicates a statistically significant relationship between the variables (p < 0.001).

Similarly, the Likelihood Test Ratio, with a statistical value of 17.724 and 6 degrees of freedom, also confirms the existence of a statistically significant relationship, although at a slightly higher significance level (p = 0.007). The results suggest a clear relationship between company size and the perceived role of internal and external marketing in HR marketing activities. Notably, in 66.7% of the cases, the expected counts in the contingency table cells are less than 5, which may indicate a potential limitation in the reliability of the results due to small expected counts. Nevertheless, the overall findings strongly suggest a significant relationship between company size and the application of external HR marketing within the dataset analysed.

The notation "<0.001" for the Pearson Chi-Square test indicates that the p-value is less than 0.001, signifying a highly statistically significant result. The Likelihood Ratio Test shows significance at the 0.007 level, meaning

there is a significant difference between the observed and expected values, confirming that the relationship between the variables (company size category and observed frequencies) is statistically significant.

Tab. 2. Results of Chi-Square test of the relationship between company size and different HR marketing

·	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-tailed)	
Pearson chi-square	44.958 a	6	<0.001	
Measure of Probability	17.724	6	0.007	
N valid cases	215			
a. 8 cells (66.7%) have expected counts of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 0.03.				

Source: Authors

Table 2 presents the results of the analysis of the importance and extent of the application of individual HR marketing tools, evaluated using the statistical t-test. The resulting values within the range of 0 to 2.5 fall under the most commonly used HR marketing tools category. Values between 2.6 and 4.5 represent occasionally used HR marketing tools, while values from 4.6 and above indicate a category of rarely used HR marketing tools.

The standard deviation of the mean shown in Table 2 indicates the extent to which various HR marketing tools are applied in different countries. This requires a precise calculation of the mean number of respondents. In contrast, the standard deviation reveals the consistency in the application of HR marketing tools.

Tab. 3. T-test for the application of HR marketing tools in practice in the CR and SR

	Country	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Company website	CR	111	2.14	0.537	0.051
Company website	SR	104	2.18	0.604	0.059
	CR	111	4.54	1.354	0.128
Dedicated company career websites	SR	104	4.48	1.619	0.159
	CR	111	4.89	2.237	0.212
Cooperation with schools	SR	104	4.48	2.216	0.217
<b>Y</b>	CR	111	4.34	2.189	0.208
Lecturing activities	SR	104	3.82	1.925	0.189
Duint advantisin a	CR	111	3.57	1.693	0.161
Print advertising	SR	104	3.74	1.784	0.175
Online adventising	CR	111	3.45	0.882	0.084
Online advertising	SR	104	3.61	1.083	0.106
Discordance Leafiner	CR	111	3.91	1.133	0.107
Direct marketing	SR	104	3.65	1.164	0.114
Public relations	CR	111	4.12	1.929	0.183
Public ferations	SR	104	3.24	1.604	0.157
E-rest menderting	CR	111	4.00	1.854	0.176
Event marketing	SR	104	3.64	1.816	0.178
B '4	CR	111	4.77	1.541	0.146
Recruitment agencies	SR	104	4.63	1.632	0.160
III and browners	CR	111	3.46	1.948	0.185
Head hunters	SR	104	3.53	1.666	0.163
Tab mantala	CR	111	4.09	1.116	0.106
Job portals	SR	104	3.96	1.284	0.126
Donnitus and seconds	CR	111	4.64	2.239	0.213
Recruitment events	SR	104	4.69	2.349	0.230
Outsoursing	CR	111	4.02	2.157	0.205
Outsourcing	SR	104	3.72	2.174	0.213
Internal recruitment	CR	111	4.23	1.599	0.152
internal recruitment	SR	104	4.07	1.621	0.159

Brand ambassadors	CR	111	4.16	1.871	0.178
Brand ambassadors	SR	104	4.51	1.643	0.161
I., £1	CR	111	4.03	1.365	0.130
Influencers	SR	104	3.85	1.213	0.119

Source: Authors

The most frequently used HR marketing tool in the Czech Republic is company websites, with a mean value of 2.14.

Lecturing activities are categorised as occasionally used HR marketing tools. These activities are sporadically employed in the Czech Republic, with a mean value of 4.34. Similarly, in Slovakia, lecturing activities are also used sporadically, with a mean value of 3.82.

Printed advertisements are occasionally used as HR marketing tools in both countries, as shown by the mean values of 3.57 in the Czech Republic and 3.74 in Slovakia. Similar results were observed for the use of online advertising.

Direct marketing is also an occasionally used tool, indicated by a mean value of 3.91 in the Czech Republic and 3.65 in Slovakia. Another tool with occasional use is headhunting, with a mean value of 3.46 in the Czech Republic and 3.53 in Slovakia.

In the Czech Republic, job portals are occasionally used as HR marketing tools, as indicated by a mean value of 4.09. However, there might be some variability in their usage, as shown by a standard deviation of 1.116, reflecting the data points' dispersion around the mean. In Slovakia, job portals have a mean value of 3.96, also indicating occasional use. "Outsourcing" is another occasionally used tool in the Czech Republic, with a mean value of 4.02. The same trend is observed in Slovakia, where the mean value is 3.72. The variability in the use of outsourcing in Slovakia is evident, with a standard deviation of 2.174.

Internal recruitment is rarely used in the Czech Republic, as indicated by a mean value of 4.23, placing it in the category of rarely used HR marketing tools. The situation in Slovakia is similar, with a mean value of 4.07, also indicating that internal recruitment falls under the "rarely used tools" category. In the Czech Republic, the use of brand ambassadors is categorised as an occasionally used HR marketing tool, with a mean value of 4.16. This is comparable to the use of influencers, which has a mean value of 4.03. In contrast, in Slovakia, brand ambassadors are less frequently used (4.51), while the use of influences is used more frequently in Slovak companies (3.85).

The activities within "Public relations" and "Event marketing" are occasionally used in the Czech Republic, with mean values of 4.12 and 4.00, respectively. Similarly, these tools are also occasionally used in Slovakia, with mean values of 3.24 for Public Relations and 3.64 for Event Marketing.

Slight differences in the use of HR marketing tools were observed in the application of dedicated company career websites, cooperation with schools (including supervising student theses), event marketing, recruitment agencies, and recruitment events. In the Czech Republic, the use of dedicated company career websites has a mean value of 4.54, indicating a less frequently used tool. This tool is slightly more common in Slovakia, with a mean value of 4.48, but it is still categorised as occasionally used. Cooperation with schools, including supervising student theses, shows similar usage patterns in Slovakia but is rarely used in the Czech Republic, as indicated by a mean value of 4.89. The use of recruitment agencies is also infrequent in the Czech Republic, as indicated by a mean value of 4.77. Recruitment events show a similar trend, with a mean value of 4.64. In Slovakia, recruitment agencies (4.63) and recruitment events (4.69) are similarly categorised as rarely used. The standard error of the mean, at 0.160, indicates how well the sample mean reflects the population mean, while the standard deviation of 1.632 reflects a degree of variability similar to that observed in the Czech Republic.

**Second phase of research.** Table 3 outlines the extent to which external HR marketing tools are used by companies in the secondary sector. The content analysis shows that all the companies analysed fully utilise their company websites, external services of recruitment agencies, and job portals. However, dedicated career websites are underutilised, with 30% of companies nearly not using them and another 30% of companies not using them at all. Despite this fact, 40% of the companies make full use of dedicated career websites on social platforms. Based on the results of the analysis, cooperation with schools appears to be an ineffective HR marketing tool, as 40% of

the companies in the secondary sector either nearly do not use it or do not use it at all. On the other hand, lecturing activities are partially used by 20% of companies.

Brand ambassadors, influencers, recruitment events, and outsourcing are among the least frequently used HR marketing tools. The secondary sector minimally uses tools like online advertising (30%), offline advertising (10%), direct marketing (10%), public relations (30%), and event marketing (20%).

Tab. 4. Evaluation of the application of external HR marketing tools (in %)

Tool	Fully used	Nearly fully used	Minimally used	Partially not used	Nearly not used	Not used
Websites	100					
Dedicated career websites	40				30	30
Cooperation with schools				20	40	40
Lecturing activities		20			40	40
Online advertising			30		40	30
Offline advertising			10		40	50
Direct marketing			10		50	40
Public relations	40		30			30
Event marketing			20		40	40
Recruitment agencies	100					
Headhunters	50					50
Job portals	100					
Recruitment events			30			70
Outsourcing	20					80
Internal recruitment	35	35	30			
Brand ambassador			10			90
Influencer						100

Source: Authors

Table 4 shows the extent to which internal HR marketing tools are employed by companies in the secondary sector. The most frequently employed tools include the provision of financial benefits offered by 70% of the companies surveyed. Meanwhile, 30% of the companies provide financial benefits only to a minimal extent. Career growth opportunities are fully utilised by 80% of companies, with only 20% applying this internal HR marketing tool minimally.

Support for development and education is employed by a total of 60% of the companies surveyed. Non-financial benefits are utilised by 20% of companies, while 80% use them to a minimal extent. Internal communication is fully used by 60% of companies, whereas 40% of companies make little to no use of it.

Tab. 5. Evaluation of the application of internal HR marketing tools (in %)

Tool	Fully used	Partially	Minimally	Never
		used	used	used
Financial benefits	70		30	
Non-financial benefits	20		80	
Career growth	80		20	
Internal communication	20	80		
Company events		70	30	
Intranet	60			40
Development and training	60		40	

Source: Authors

Figure 2 illustrates the utilisation of HR marketing tools to ensure current employees' loyalty. The analysis revealed that 100% of the companies in the secondary sector employ effective internal communication to secure employee loyalty. Additionally, 70% of these companies utilise company communication through the intranet. Furthermore, 70% of the companies also employ financial and non-financial benefits, company culture initiatives, events, and magazines. Moreover, a significant portion of these companies supports career growth and invests in

building a strong Employer Value Proposition (EVP). However, in 30% of the cases, building a strong employer brand is not considered an HR marketing tool for ensuring employee loyalty.

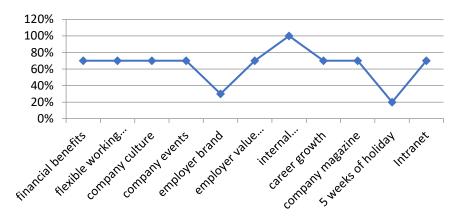


Fig. 2. Employment of tools to ensure employee loyalty

**Case study – manufacturing company.** Gosling, s.r.o. is a medium-sized enterprise located in Slovakia and is part of a multinational corporation. Operating in the secondary sector, the company specialises in textile production. Over the past five years, Gosling has demonstrated profitability in its cumulative earnings.

Gosling extensively employs HR marketing tools. Its HR marketing strategy encompasses not only recruitment but also the recruitment and adaptation processes. The company utilises these tools to attract talented and qualified employees from both external and internal sources, as well as to ensure the loyalty of its existing employees. Gosling differentiates between internal and external HR marketing approaches. Additionally, the company focuses on using HR marketing to enhance brand quality and present its Employee Value Proposition (EVP).

In terms of current HR marketing trends, Gosling has effectively implemented a dedicated careers section on its website, considering this tool to be the most efficient and cost-effective tool for advertising job vacancies. Other effective HR marketing practices include video presentations that showcase the company culture, current employees, and corporate values.

Despite distinguishing between external and internal HR marketing tools, Gosling predominantly utilises external tools, such as corporate websites, external recruitment agencies, and publicly available job portals. Internally, the company focuses on financial and non-financial employee benefits, career growth incentives, intranet communication, and support for development and training. To a lesser extent, it also engages in internal recruitment and organises company events. Furthermore, Gosling offers non-financial benefits such as flexible working hours, the possibility to work from home, and support for learning foreign languages.

Gosling primarily uses the careers section on its website, social media platforms, and external recruitment agencies' services for recruitment. The company finds cooperation with universities and hiring graduates to be effective HR marketing tools. Targeted recruitment campaigns and strategic planning for building company culture are also deemed very effective and important. Gosling employs video presentations to describe its activities, corporate culture, and employee benefits during its collaboration with schools, lecturing activities, and presentations on its website and social media platforms. Additionally, the company creates attractive recruitment packages for new hires and current employees who refer new candidates, provided the referred candidates remain with the company for an extended period.

Ensuring employee loyalty is a top priority for Gosling's management. To this end, the company offers a broad range of benefits, including flexible working hours and remote work options. Gosling promotes a positive company culture by organising sports and cultural events to foster employee loyalty. The company also highlights its brand and employer value in its monthly magazine, which also features regular updates on personal and career growth events. To support loyalty, Gosling utilises internal communication tools, including the intranet and ethical mailboxes for anonymous feedback.

Case study – mining company. According to the number of employees, OKK Koksovny, a.s. is a large, wholly Czech-owned company. The company has demonstrated consistent profitability over the last five years. The analysis is based on available information and data obtained through a questionnaire survey involving the HR manager and HR officer of the company.

The company reports that HR marketing tools and strategies are only marginally employed in practice. The distinction between internal and external HR marketing tools is minimal, and their application in the field is limited. Despite this, HR marketing tools are crucial for the company's operations. Among current HR marketing trends, OKK Koksovny successfully uses Big Data in its marketing activities. The company also finds value in

recruitment competitive analysis, competitor mapping, employer branding strategies, and planning for public perception of the employer brand. Additionally, the company has effectively implemented a strategy for building a strong company culture and maintains a dedicated careers section on its website.

However, certain HR marketing tools are less effective, including onboarding processes, video presentations of the company, networking, on-campus recruiting, and the analysis of candidates' decision-making criteria when searching for new job opportunities. The company does not employ some of the latest HR marketing trends, such as defining an ideal employer brand, creating unique recruitment campaigns and advertisements, or creating special recruitment packages. The company does not present its corporate values in practice.

Of external HR marketing tools, the company fully utilises its company website and dedicated career sites via links and redirection. In addition, the company fully uses public relations, recruitment agencies, services provided by head hunters, external job portals, outsourcing, and internal recruitment, as well as supervising student theses.

On the other hand, the least employed external HR marketing tools in OKK Koksovny include lecturing activities, offline and online advertising, direct marketing, event marketing, recruitment events, and the services of brand ambassadors and influencers.

According to the HR officer, internal HR marketing tools applied in the company include employee financial benefits, career growth incentives, effective internal communication, intranet, and support for development and training. In contrast, non-financial benefits and company events are less frequently used. The company offers flexible working hours, five weeks of vacation, and language courses to ensure employee loyalty.

The most frequently used tools within recruitment processes are dedicated career websites, on-campus recruitment, targeted recruitment campaigns, structured interviews, assessment centres, testing, and candidate analyses. Conversely, the company does not employ video presentations and gamification tools in its recruitment processes.

The HR officer highlights key HR marketing tools, including the analysis of employee recruitment strategies, the careers section on the company website and social networks, creating a strategic plan for building company culture, and applying tools to enhance employee loyalty. In contrast, the company considers careers pages adapted for mobile devices, gamification, video presentations, and targeted recruitment campaigns as less relevant.

In the case of acute staff shortage, the company employs HR marketing tools such as social networks, websites, referrals from existing employees, recruitment agencies' services, and internal recruitment. To address long-term staff shortages, the company also utilises the services of external headhunters.

To ensure the loyalty of both new and existing employees, OKK Koksovny primarily relies on financial benefits and internal HR marketing tools, including flexible working hours, a positive company culture, presentations in the company magazine, quality employee care through EVP, effective internal communication, increased number of vacation days, and support for career growth, development and training.

In conclusion, the company finds using the careers section on its website, strategic company culture building, a well-designed and intuitive company website, flexible working hours, extended number of vacation days, and financial and non-financial employee benefits to be highly effective HR marketing tools.

As part of building a strong brand and EVP, OKK Koksovny employs HR marketing tools such as quality recruitment events, social networks, employee involvement in company activities, the creation of a clear career site, internal communication, intranet use, regular employee remuneration, and non-financial benefits like development, training, and cultural and sporting events. Additionally, to ensure the visibility of its employer brand, the company engages in lecturing activities, trade fairs, and workshops, primarily presenting its employer brand through social networks. The success of their HR marketing activities is measured by reduced employee turnover.

Case study – construction company. Gama is a medium-sized enterprise that is part of a Slovak multinational corporation operating in the secondary sector. The company requested to remain anonymous in the research conducted. Over the past five years, Gama has maintained positive cumulative earnings. The company regularly incorporates HR marketing into its HR practices and evaluates the application of the various tools it employs as highly effective.

In its HR operations, Gama differentiates HR marketing tools based on the specific areas in which they are applied. The external HR marketing tools fully utilised by the company include its corporate website, services provided by external recruitment agencies, including the services of head hunters, public job portals, and, when appropriate, internal recruitment.

Internal HR marketing tools are primarily utilised to ensure the loyalty of current employees and to enhance the EVP. Gama fully employs HR marketing tools such as financial and non-financial employee benefits, career growth incentives through support for personal development and training, internal communication via the intranet, and the organisation of company events. In terms of non-financial benefits aimed at enhancing employee loyalty, the tools include flexible working hours, remote work options, and language courses.

HR marketing tools are highly significant for Gama. According to HR officers, the most important tools include the company careers section on the company websites and corporate social networks, strategies for

building company culture, analysis of recruitment processes, on-campus recruitment, targeted recruitment campaigns that offer attractive recruitment packages and other tools that enhance employee loyalty.

The HR officers positively assess the effectiveness of individual tools, categorising some as highly efficient and others as less so. The most effective HR marketing tools are those that enhance employee loyalty and provide non-financial employee benefits, such as support for development and training, career growth incentives, language courses, flexible benefit vouchers, flexible working hours, and remote work options. Tools considered partially efficient include targeted recruitment campaigns, social networks, the organisation of company events, and support for effective internal communication.

The effectiveness of individual HR marketing tools is assessed by HR officers primarily through reduced employee turnover, shortened recruitment processes, lower cost per hire, and higher quality of recruited candidates, as evidenced by fewer resignations during the probationary period or within the first year of employment.

Gama has developed both short-term and long-term strategies for building a strong employer brand, which is highly valued by executives. A strong employer brand significantly enhances competitiveness in the labour market and attracts the attention of potential employees. The EVP is communicated to prospective employees primarily through the company magazine and social media platforms. Additionally, Gama incorporates elements of corporate social responsibility in presenting the employer's value and brand.

#### Discussion

The mathematical and statistical methods employed in the first phase of the research demonstrated the extent to which HR marketing tools are utilised. These results were then compared with the findings from the second pivotal phase of the research and the case study. Based on the analysis, the following conclusions were drawn:

RQ 1: How do enterprises in the secondary sector employ HR marketing tools?

The case study analysis of individual companies yielded the following conclusions. The mining company analysed employs the widest range of external HR marketing tools. The extent of HR marketing tools application was rated on a scale of 6 to 1, where 6 indicates full application, 5 indicates partial application, 4 indicates minimal application, 3 indicates partial non-application, 2 indicates almost no application, and 1 indicates no application at all.

The most frequently used external HR marketing tools include company websites, recruitment agencies, and job portals. Additionally, the mining company commonly employs the company's career site, public relations, headhunters, outsourcing, and internal recruitment. Conversely, the mining company's least utilised external HR marketing tools are lecturing activities, online and offline advertising, direct marketing, event marketing, and recruitment events.

In contrast to the findings, the manufacturing company shows minimal to no application of external HR marketing tools such as career sites, cooperation with schools, lecturing activities, online and offline advertising, and direct marketing. These tools have never been applied in construction companies. For both manufacturing and construction companies, the external HR marketing tools that are never utilised include event marketing, headhunters, recruitment events, outsourcing, brand ambassadors, and influencers.

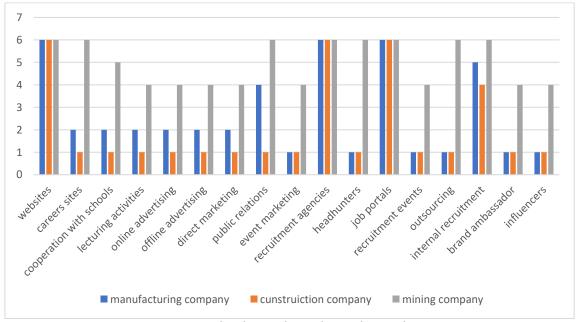


Fig. 3. Utilisation of external HR marketing tools

Gogolova et al. (2015) confirm the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the use of external and internal HR marketing tools. Regarding internal HR marketing tools, manufacturing and mining companies primarily utilise support for development and training, as well as career growth incentives. This finding is corroborated by Caha and Ruschak (2017), who argue that effective and systematic corporate training, as part of the overall company strategy, is crucial for maintaining high competitiveness in the current knowledge economy. In addition to these tools, the manufacturing company heavily relies on internal communication (via intranet) and financial and non-financial benefits, which are similarly employed by the mining company. In contrast, the construction company only partially employs company events and internal communication. The least employed HR marketing tools in the construction company include support for development and training, career growth incentives, and financial and non-financial benefits. However, Klementová et al. (2023) argue that companies tend to use non-financial benefits to motivate their employees regardless of their size. The least applied internal HR marketing tool in the construction company is the use of an intranet.

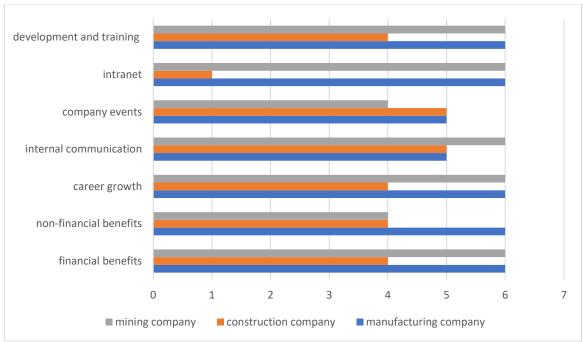


Fig. 4. Extent of employing internal HR marketing tools

Based on the findings obtained, it can be stated that the extent of HR marketing tool implementation varies significantly depending on the type of industry within the secondary sector. The manufacturing company, as well as the mining company, utilises a wider range of HR marketing tools. In contrast, the construction company employs the fewest HR marketing tools, particularly in the area of external HR marketing. This discrepancy may significantly impact staff turnover and the cost-effectiveness of recruitment. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

RQ 2: Which tools do secondary sector enterprises use to ensure the loyalty of their existing employees? Table 5 presents the utilisation of HR marketing tools to ensure current employees' loyalty. Zanabazar et al. (2024) demonstrated the existence of a positive impact of employee loyalty on employee engagement. The authors further found that support for open internal communication enhances employee trust, which in turn increases their willingness to work beyond their job responsibilities.

Tab. 6. Extent of employing internal HR marketing tools to ensure loyalty

HRM tool	Manufacturing	Construction	Mining
Financial benefits	✓		✓
Flexible working hours	✓		✓
Company culture	✓		✓
Company events	✓	✓	
Employer brand	✓		✓
<b>Employer Value Proposition</b>	✓		✓
Internal communication	✓	✓	
Career growth	✓		✓
Company magazine	✓		✓
5 weeks of holiday			✓
Intranet	✓		✓

Source: Authors

The results of the case study allowed for identifying the most frequently used HR marketing tools in the secondary sector to ensure the loyalty of existing employees. The companies in the manufacturing and mining industries employ the widest range of HR marketing tools. However, the HR officer in the construction company did not perceive any relationship between utilising HR marketing tools and ensuring employee loyalty. According to Urban et al. (2011) and Spielmann (2015), the use of financial benefits has a significant impact on ensuring employee loyalty. Similarly, Stern and Willet (2014) argue that financial rewards are key in enhancing motivation, increasing performance, and ensuring employee loyalty.

The study confirmed that companies that utilise a wider range of HR marketing tools typically report lower staff turnover, resulting in reduced recruitment process costs. Based on the results obtained, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that the application of HR marketing tools has a significant impact on ensuring the loyalty of existing employees.

#### **Conclusions**

Companies operating in the secondary sector play a vital role in the global economy. Human capital is a critical asset for these companies, making its management a primary focus. Ensuring quality production requires securing skilled, talented, and loyal employees. In this context, applying HR marketing tools has become increasingly important. HR marketing serves to attract high-quality human capital and maintain their loyalty. This paper investigated the differences in the application of HR marketing tools among companies in the secondary sector.

The first research question explored how individual companies apply HR marketing tools, categorised into external and internal tools. The study results indicate that companies tend to use external HR marketing tools more frequently than internal ones. Specifically, the construction company in the study relies more on external HR marketing tools, which may significantly influence staff turnover. Among the external tools, the most frequently used were websites, recruitment agencies, and job portals. The construction company was found to utilise HR marketing tools the least effectively. Therefore, it is recommended that this company enhance its use of external HR marketing tools.

The second research question examined the extent to which HR marketing tools are employed to ensure the loyalty of existing employees. The study found that manufacturing and mining companies utilise HR marketing tools for this purpose more extensively than construction companies. Loyal employees contribute to building a strong employer brand, reducing staff turnover, and increasing overall competitiveness in the labour market. Gutiérrez-Broncano et al. (2024) point out that ensuring employee well-being at work has a significant influence on employee loyalty, and the associated building of the company's competitiveness. In this context, Ruschak et al. (2023) emphasise the importance of corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and ethics.

The findings of this study may assist managers in the secondary sector in identifying which HR marketing tools are currently in use in corporate practice. To attract and retain skilled employees, it is crucial to employ HR marketing tools more broadly, tailored to the specific job positions they aim to fill. To enhance employee loyalty, companies are advised to increase their use of internal HR marketing tools, particularly through financial and non-financial benefits.

The research focuses on enterprises in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions with different economic and cultural contexts. The relatively small sample size in the case study phase provides in-depth insights but may restrict the breadth of conclusions. Additionally, reliance on self-reported data could introduce bias, although this is mitigated by the integration of qualitative interviews.

Future research could expand the sample size and include a more diverse geographic range to enhance the applicability of the results across different contexts.

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