Research Paper

The Growth Mindset and Talent Attraction: A Case Study of LMA.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how the growth mindset can enhance talent attraction through a qualitative case study of LMA Tech, an IT company operating in Portugal's highly competitive market. In-depth semi-structured interviews with internal leaders and external professionals were conducted to explore the relationship between growth mindset dimensions and the organization's Employer Value Proposition (EVP). Amid growing challenges in attracting technological talent—exacerbated by digital transformation and the COVID-19 pandemic employer branding strategies have become increasingly critical. While existing literature acknowledges the relevance of a growth mindset in organizational settings, little is known about its impact on talent attraction. The findings indicate that growth mindset principles such as continuous learning, adaptability, and constructive feedback can strengthen EVP and positively influence candidates' perceptions of the employer brand. However, the study also identifies a key challenge: assessing these intangible traits during the recruitment process. This research contributes to bridging a gap in the literature by reconceptualizing the growth mindset within the context of employer branding and by advocating for organizational practices that support cultural shifts toward learning, resilience, and sustainable engagement.

Keywords: Growth Mindset; Organizational Mindset; Employer Branding, Employer Value Proposition (EVP); Talent Attraction; Information Technology (IT) Sector.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, companies face increasing challenges in talent attraction, particularly in the IT sector, where competition is intense. In Portugal, this sector is increasing, accounting for 3.8% of national employment (CHRLY, 2024). However, the insufficiency of technological talent, exacerbated by digital transformation and the COVID-19 pandemic, creates a significant problem. According to the Talent Shortage 2024 study (ManpowerGroup, 2024), 65% of Portuguese employers experience difficulties in finding professionals with the desired profiles, with 16% encountering substantial difficulties, placing Portugal in the 5th position among countries with the highest talent shortages, above the global average. The most lacking technical skills are those related to technological profiles. In light of this shortage, employer branding becomes a crucial factor for organizational success, demanding the development of new strategies that align with candidates' preferences and enhance organizations' talent attraction capabilities (ManpowerGroup, 2024). The Employer Brand Research 2024 report (Randstad, 2024) underscores that the most important factors in choosing an employer are salary and benefits, work-life balance, work environment, and career progression, demonstrating that companies must offer more than just financial compensation to attract talent. In this context of a "war for talent," Employer Branding strategy is vital for the survival of organizations, with the Employer Value Proposition (EVP) being one of the initial steps in developing this strategy by presenting the benefits of working for the organization (Veldsman & Pauw, 2018). A theoretical framework that holds significant potential for advancing employer branding strategies in highly competitive landscapes is the growth mindset theory. According to Dweck and Leggett (1988), a growth mindset posits that intelligence and personal attributes are not fixed but malleable, capable of development through sustained effort and learning over time. While this concept has primarily been examined within educational and developmental psychology, its applicability to organizational outcomes has garnered increasing attention. The ability of organizations to cultivate a growth mindset may offer a competitive advantage in talent attraction, particularly in sectors such as Information Technology (IT), where continuous learning and adaptability are indispensable. Although the literature acknowledges the relevance of studying growth mindset in the organizational context and the need for future research

on how mindsets shape specific organizational outcomes (Rattan & Ozgumus, 2019), there are currently no studies on how a growth mindset can influence talent attraction. This research proposes to address this gap by providing empirical evidence through a case study of LMA Tech, a multinational software engineering and consulting firm operating in Portugal, which adopts a growth mindset as one of its core values. The study aims to investigate the role of a growth mindset in enhancing an organization's attractiveness to talent, particularly within the competitive IT sector. The central objective is to understand how the growth mindset enhances talent attraction, through a case study anchored in LMA Tech. This includes diagnosing the presence of a growth mindset in the organization, identifying the processes that communicate this mindset, exploring its application in the national market, and understanding the relationship between growth mindset and EVP in talent attraction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on the growth mindset has predominantly focused on individual and educational contexts (Han & Stieha, 2020). However, emerging research calls for a broader application of the concept in organizational settings, where it can offer new perspectives on cultural transformation and employee development. Building on the contributions of Murphy and Reeves (2019), this study seeks to reconceptualize the growth mindset in the context of organizational approach and talent management. This approach is particularly important given the growing relevance of the Employee Value Proposition (EVP) as a strategic tool for attracting and retaining talent (Reis, Sousa, & Dionísio, 2021), especially in competitive sectors characterized by talent scarcity and constant change

2.1 Growth mindset in organizational context

The theory of mindset, also recognized in clinical settings as implicit theory, emerged through the research efforts of Carol Dweck and her colleagues. They sought to understand individual behavioral patterns related to motivation, with a specific aim to model implicit psychology in motivational processes (Dweck & Leggett, 1988, p. 256). The findings of this study constructed an explanatory model that captures individuals' "implicit conception of the nature of ability" (Dweck & Leggett, 1988, p. 262). Many authors support the theory that individuals with a growth mindset actively seek learning opportunities and adopt behaviors intended to embrace challenges to develop their skills and intelligence (for example, Bandura & Dweck, 1985; Dweck & Elliott,

1983; Dweck & Bempechat, 1983; Leggett, 1985). Consequently, when faced with mistakes or challenging situations, these individuals develop adaptive strategies, striving to improve their performance (Dweck et al., 1995). In contrast, a fixed mindset characterizes individuals who believe their abilities and intelligence are static traits that remain stable throughout their lives. (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Dweck and Leggett (1988) further argue that individuals with a fixed mindset tend to adopt performance goals to avoid challenging situations, thus ensuring favorable evaluations of their innate abilities. Moreover, they are less inclined to apply effort in the face of failure, attributing low performance to a lack of inherent abilities (Dweck et al., 1995). There are numerous studies in the literature that expand on Dweck's work and apply it to various fields, demonstrating specific performance-related behaviors resulting from mindset activation. According to Murphy and Reeves (2019), organizational mindsets are communicated through a set of practices, policies, and procedures in an organization, frequently transmitted by influential individuals such as leaders or managers. These messages establish how a group, organization, or team recognizes the nature of talent and the capacity of its members (Murphy & Dweck, 2010). Similar to individual mindsets, organizations can embrace a fixed mindset, a growth mindset, or fall somewhere in between. Organizations that adopt a growth mindset believe and communicate that employees' skills can be developed over time through effort and the application of effective strategies. This perspective fosters a culture of continuous learning, resilience, and adaptability inside the organization. Employees are encouraged to embrace challenges, learn from mistakes, and persist in their efforts to improve.

According to Murphy and Reeves (2019), the literature is still quite limited about the knowledge needed to support organizations in developing strategies to create and sustain a growth mindset. In this context, Han and Stieha (2020) propose a model through which an organizational growth mindset can be developed, involving training, mentoring, leadership development, recruitment, human resources practices, and performance evaluation systems, as illustrated in **Figure 1.**

Figure 1. Evidence Enhancing Growth Mindset in Organizational Context (Han & Stieha, 2020)

In the context of training, activities focused on developing an extensive set of skills are more effective when they begin by introducing employees to the concepts of growth and fixed mindsets (Özduran & Tanova, 2017). Han and Stieha (2020) argue that spending time and effort in this area benefits organizations, as Cutumisu et al. (2018) found that employees with a growth mindset more effectively transfer knowledge following training interventions, leading to performance improvements. Karwowski et al. (2019) note that training activities incorporating a growth mindset can promote employees' openness to engaging in creative activities in the workplace. Han and Stieha (2020) suggest that mentoring activities aimed at employees are more effective when they focus on cultivating professional development. In this regard, a fixed mindset can obstruct managers' ability to recognize behavioral change and hinder employees' engagement in coaching activities (Heslin & Vandewalle, 2008). Therefore, strategies that promote a growth mindset among managers are crucial for improving employee engagement and organizational citizenship behaviors (Caniëls et al., 2018; Özduran & Tanova, 2017). Shapcott and Carr (2019) highlight the importance of consistent feedback sessions, especially those oriented to a growth mindset, as they can significantly boost employee motivation.

Concerning leadership development, Wang et al. (2018) argue that programs should highlight not only technical and behavioral competencies but also promote a growth mindset that promotes humility among organizational leaders. Hanson et al. (2016) suggest that reflective practices encouraging a growth mindset among leaders can increase employees' openness to positive change in the organization. Han and Stieha (2020) also indicated the importance of developing different leadership types in an organization, as employee mindsets should ideally align with their managers' leadership types, as previously discussed by Caniëls et al. (2018). In terms of recruitment and human resources practices, Caniëls et al. (2018) and Özduran & Tanova (2017) emphasize the importance of recruiting and retaining managers and employees with a growth mindset. This approach is crucial for building an organizational mindset oriented toward growth. These individuals are more likely to "believe in the possibility of change in human attributes over time and demonstrate more altruistic behaviors in the organization to their colleagues" (Özduran & Tanova, 2017, p. 600). Finally, concerning performance evaluation systems, Han and Stieha (2020) suggest that human resources professionals should help mitigate bias in company evaluation systems by leveraging research related to mindset theory. Heslin and Vandewalle (2008) argue that managers with a fixed mindset may have blind spots when evaluating employees,

as they are less likely to change an initial positive or negative impression when assessing performance. These authors, supported more recently by Shapcott and Carr (2019), suggest that interventions emphasizing that employees' skills can be enhanced through practice and useful feedback can help mitigate these problematic blind spots. Murphy and Reeves (2019), in the same context, also argue that the organizational growth mindset shapes practices, procedures, and policies across all organizational functions and is communicated through them, as shown in **Figure 2.**

Recruitment Process → Interview Process → Hiring Process → Onboarding Process → Evaluation Process → Promotion Process

Figure 2. Organizational Processes that can Communicate Growth Mindset through Policies, Practices, and Procedures (Murphy & Reeves, 2019)

Murphy and Reeves (2019) indicate that, in recruitment processes, interviews, and hiring, organizations can signal their growth mindset through the qualifications and desired characteristics outlined in job posters, as well as through the procedures used and the questions posed to candidates. In terms of onboarding and training, organizations with a growth mindset provide extensive training and support opportunities throughout their employees' careers, encouraging the continuous development of their skills. These organizations emphasize the importance of individuals growing and mastering their strengths while openly addressing and overcoming weaknesses. Culturally, these organizations often assume projects that require employees to experiment with new strategies, aiming to develop new strengths. This approach communicates the idea that weaknesses are not static but can evolve as individuals strive to improve them (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Regarding evaluation and promotion processes, feedback is considered crucial for signaling the organization's growth mindset. Evaluation and reward structures in these organizations take into account how employees acquire and tackle new skills, take on challenging tasks, overcome obstacles, seek critical feedback, and consistently try to learn and grow. It is common for these organizations to structure evaluations as "progress reports," which help identify and project areas for development and improvement.

2.2 Employer Branding and Employer Value Proposition

In today's global market, establishing an organization's identity as an employer brand is crucial for both attracting talent and maintaining a satisfied workforce (Gregorka et al., 2020). Human capital plays a key role in gaining a competitive advantage (Hadi & Ahmed, 2018), making employer branding (EMPLOYER BRANDING) strategies essential. Originally coined by Ambler and Barrow, EMPLOYER BRANDING comprehends the collection of functional, economic, and psychological benefits that an organization offers its employees (Ambler & Barrow, 1996: 187). Ahmad et al. (2020) have recently defined employer branding (EMPLOYER BRANDING) as the culmination of strategic initiatives aimed at establishing a company as an employer of choice, thus influencing perceptions both in the organization and among external stakeholders. These strategies are closely tied to the employer value proposition (EVP), which aims to attract, retain, and promote positive behaviors among employees (Chandrasekaran, 2020). Organizations that consistently implement EMPLOYER BRANDING practices tend to attract significantly more candidates than their competitors (Saini et al., 2021). This theory aligns with Knox et al.'s (2000) introduction of the organizational unique value proposition, now known as EVP, which highlights the importance of a plausible proposition to attract and retain talent. Veldsman and Pauw (2018) reinforce that EVP summarizes the attractiveness of the employer brand and the advantages of being associated with a particular organization. It represents a combination of compensations and experiences offered in exchange for employees' skills and contributions, fostering a mutually beneficial relationship (Veldsman & Pauw, 2018, p. 78). A comprehensive and critical examination of the employer branding concept has been presented in Behrends, Baur, & Zierke (2020), which challenges the novelty as well as practical benefit of employer branding as a strategic tool to manage HR. The authors contend that, even though employer branding has increased in popularity among HR professionals and scholars, the concept is characterized by several theoretical limitations and "blind spots," including its conceptual stagnation and poor empirical evidence about its real effects. They argue that many employer branding assumptions can already be found in previous constituent elements of internal marketing and that benefits, as well as the effects of such strategies, tended to be taken for granted in the literature without adequate critical examination. Behrends et al. (2020) suggested that a more evidence-based and cautious employer branding approach was needed and that the employer value proposition (EVP) needed to be aligned

with the organization's practice to avoid unrealistic expectations and dissatisfaction among employees and applicants.

2.3 The Relationship Between EVP and Talent Attraction

Currently, the skills, competencies, and knowledge of employees are crucial factors, and for this reason, organizations need to understand the urgency of attracting, developing, and retaining talent (Pawar, 2020). In general, the establishment of a diverse and qualified workforce begins with the development of a strong employer brand (Keppeler & Papenfuß, 2020). Currently, successful organizations recognized as more attractive are distinguished by their reputation as "first choice employers" and their effective employer branding strategies (e.g., Banerjee et al., 2020; Theurer et al., 2018).

The IT sector has been facing a significant talent shortage for the past two decades, leading to a high demand for qualified professionals in this field and consequently creating clear competitiveness in the market. This has pressured organizations to activate their talent attraction and retention strategies (Kargas & Tsokos, 2020).

In this context, effective talent management in this sector is crucial, as it addresses challenges such as the difficulty in attracting, recruiting, and retaining professionals (Mahmood et al., 2017; Moquin et al., 2019). A study conducted by Dabirian et al. (2019), based on a content analysis of approximately fifteen thousand evaluations by IT professionals, identified and described the values they consider when considering employers in this sector. The study's conclusions reveal the existence of eight relevant EVPs: social value, interest value, application value, development value, economic value, leadership value, work-life balance value, and brand image value, as stated in **Table 1.**

Social	Interest	Application	Development	Economic	Leadership	Work-Life Balance	Brand Image
"Is this a fun place to work with talented people and a good organizational culture?"	"Is the work interesting, challenging, and achievable?"	"Does the work have meaning and invite the application of knowledge and skills?"	"Are there opportunities for employees to progress professionally?"	"Is the work adequately rewarded through salaries, benefits, and perks?"	"Are there good managers, honest leaders who inspire, trust, protect, and respect employees?"	"Are tasks flexible to achieve success both at work and outside?"	"Through the eyes of employees, how is the company's brand perceived? Is it seen as pleasant and innovative?

Table 1. The 8 EVPs in the IT Sector (Dabirian et al., 2019)

2.4 The Relationship Between Growth Mindset and EVP

As seen earlier, the growth mindset relates to individuals who adopt the view that their attributes can be changed and that intelligence is a mutable and dynamic characteristic (Dweck & Legget, 1998). This theory is later applied to the organizational context, providing the origin to organizational mindsets, according to Murphy and Reeves (2019). In organizations that adopt a growth mindset, Murphy and Reeves (2019) affirm that they believe and communicate that employees' skills can be developed over time through effort and the application of efficient strategies. In this context, Murphy and Reeves (2019) and Han and Stieha (2020) argue that the application of the growth mindset in organizational settings can influence different significant dimensions, such as recruitment processes, integration, training, mentoring, leadership, and evaluation systems.

Meanwhile, Chopra, Sahoo, and Patel (2023) investigate the linkage of employer branding and talent retention, with the mediating effect of employee engagement. Through quantitative research, the paper finds that employer branding is not able to directly influence retention, but does so indirectly via employee engagement. Thereby, a positive employer brand perception results in high levels of engagement, subsequently leading to talent retention. These results emphasize the necessity of an integrated approach in which employer branding and engagement practices cooperate to create sustainable organisational results, especially in the competitive IT sector.

Furthermore, EVP simplifies the construction of a compelling value proposition targeted at both current employees and potential candidates, essential for attracting, recruiting, and retaining top talent in today's competitive job market (Lukić-Nikolić & Lazarević, 2022). Dabirian et al. (2019) identified eight key values that professionals in this sector prioritize when assessing employers, including social value, interest value, application value, development value, economic value, leadership value, work-life balance value, and brand image. Although the literature does not establish a relationship between EVP and a growth mindset, there are intersections between EVP values and the principles of a growth mindset , as will be clarified in **Table 2.**

Dimensions of Growth Mindset	Corresponding EVPs	References
Recruitment	Social Value	Murphy e Reeves (2019); Han e Stieha (2020); Backhaus e Tikoo (2004); Lievens e Slaughter (2016)
Integration	Social Value	Murphy e Reeves (2019); Bauer e Erdogan (2011); Sharma (2024)
Training	Development Value	Murphy e Reeves (2019); Han e Stieha (2020); Dabirian et al. (2019); Berthon et al. (2005); Nanjundeswaraswamy et al. (2022)
Mentorship	Development Value	Han e Stieha (2020); Wahdiniawati e Sarinastiti (2023); Jeong e Park (2020)
Leadership	Leadership Value	Han e Stieha (2020); Dabirian et al. (2019)
Evaluation Systems	Development Value	Murphy e Reeves (2019); Han e Stieha (2020); Sreejith e Mathirajan (2020); Dabirian et al. (2019)

Table 2. The Relationship between Growth Mindset and EVPs (Self-developed)

3. METHOD

This article aims to address one central objective and four specific objectives that outline this research. The primary objective is to understand how the growth mindset enhances talent attraction through a case study anchored in LMA Tech. This is subsequently operationalized into four specific objectives: I. To diagnose evidence of the growth mindset in leaders, as in organizational practices and policies at LMA Tech, II. To identify organizational processes that communicate the growth mindset at LMA Tech, III. To recognize the growth mindset as a strategic trend in the practices and policies adopted by organizations in LMA Tech's sector of operation, IV. To understand how the relationship between the growth mindset and EVP enhances LMA Tech's ability to attract talent. A qualitative methodology supported by a case study was used for this research. According to Corbin and Strauss (2000), a qualitative methodology is an approach used to discover and understand underexplored themes within their context. It allows the exploration of complex nuances that quantitative methods may not reveal. As an interpretative approach, this method focuses on studying specific characteristics of a population, phenomenon, or experience to find news insights or formulate views on a known reality (Gil, 2017). In this research, primary data were collected through twelve in-depth interviews. Six interviews were conducted with employees of LMA Tech, specifically with six individuals holding leadership positions inside the company. The other six interviews were conducted with external IT professionals who could

potentially be candidates for the organization, meeting the criterion of being current professionals actively working in the IT sector. The choice of in-depth interviews as a qualitative method is particularly well-suited for this research, as it enables a comprehensive exploration of participants' perceptions and experiences related to the growth mindset. This approach allows for nuanced insights that capture the complexities of how the growth mindset is perceived and implemented within organizational contexts. Additionally, the open-ended nature of the interviews encourages participants to share their thoughts freely, providing rich data that can reveal underlying themes and trends. While the number of interviews (twelve) is relatively small, the depth of information gathered through this method is vital for understanding the complex relationship between the growth mindset and talent attraction. Prior to conducting the interviews, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board, ensuring that the study follows to ethical standards. Informed consent was secured from all participants, who were fully briefed on the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. The coding and sociodemographic characterization of the participants are compiled in **Table 3**, based on the data collected according to the following criteria: type of professional (internal or external), gender, role performed, and participant coding. Given this context, two adaptations of interview guides were developed for the different participants mentioned. Both were previously constructed, taking into account the dimensions supported by the literature review, as well as the specific objectives defined for this research.

Type of Professional	Gender	Role
Internal	Male	Delivery Manager
Internal	Female	Employee Experience Manager
Internal	Male	Delivery Coordinator
Internal	Female	Talent Delivery Lead
Internal	Female	Employer Brand/ Communications Lead
Internal	Male	Country Head
External	Male	Junior Software Developer
External	Male	Junior Developer

External	Male	Junior Embedded Software Engineer
External	Female	Scrum Master
External	Male	Scrum Knight
External	Male	Product Owner

Table 3. Characterization and Coding of Interviewees

Concerning data analysis, as illustrated in **Table 4**, three themes were defined according to the specific objectives of the research. These themes are subdivided into 9 a priori categories and 27 subcategories, resulting from the script and supported by different authors. After analyzing all the data, a new a posteriori subcategory was identified in the category Dimensions of Attraction, titled "Other Dimensions of Attraction."

Themes	Categories	Subcategories
These categories aim to diagnose, firstly, evidence of a growth mindset both among leaders and within the organizational practices and policies of LMA Tech. Simultaneously, they seek to identify these same evidences in the experiences of external collaborators regarding their own organizations, which operate in the same sector as LMA Tech. This permits a holistic understanding of the competition and the perceptions of potential candidates for the organization.	**Recruitment and Human Resources Practices**	Recruitment and Selection with a Focus on Growth Mindset
		Integration of Growth Mindset into Organizational Policies
	Training	Focus of Training Activities
		Integration of Growth Mindset into Training Programs
		Evidence of Performance Improvement Post-Training
	Mentorship	Mentorship Approach
		Mentorship Practices Focused on Growth Mindset
		Outcome of Mentorship Sessions
		Effect of Feedback Sessions on Motivation and Development
	Leadership	Characteristics of Leadership Programs
		Measures for Aligning Mindset between Leader and Employee
	Performance Evaluation Systems	Structure and Application of Performance Evaluation Systems
		Integration of Information and Feedback for Competency Development
These categories aim to identify, in the first phase, the organizational processes that communicate the growth mindset at LMA Tech, based on the perceptions of the organization's leaders.	**Recruitment, Interviews, and Hiring Processes**	Signaling and Seeking Growth Mindset in Job Postings
		Questions for Mindset Assessment
		Orientation Programs during Integration
		Strengths Encouragement
		Openness to Weaknesses

Simultaneously, they seek to understand, through the perceptions of external collaborators, whether the organizational processes of their own companies also communicate this mindset. This also permits a holistic understanding of the competition and the perceptions of potential candidates for the organization.	**Integration and Training Processes**	Strategies to Overcome Weaknesses
	Evaluation and Promotion Processes	Utilization of Feedback in Evaluation and Promotion Systems
This category aims to understand how the dimensions of the growth mindset, involving both the evidence and the organizational processes that communicate this mindset, influence the perception of attraction among external collaborators. This allows for an understanding of how the relationship between these growth mindset dimensions, and the relation with EVPs enhances LMA Tech's capability as an employer brand to attract talent.	**Attraction Dimensions**	Attraction Mediated by Recruitment
		Attraction Mediated by Integration
		Attraction Mediated by Training
		Attraction Mediated by Mentoring
		Attraction Mediated by Leadership
		Attraction Mediated by Evaluation Systems
		Key Dimensions of Attraction
		Other Dimensions of Attraction

Table 4. Categories of Analysis

4. RESULTS

Diagnosing evidence of a growth mindset in LMA Tech involves examining both leadership behaviors and organizational practices and policies.

In recruitment and human resources practices, the data analysis suggested there is a clear duality among leaders. While some express concern about identifying candidates who exhibit a growth mindset from the beginning, others prioritize technical skills exclusively. Despite this variability, it was found that LMA Tech effectively integrates the growth mindset across its human resources practices, from recruitment through to career development and progression, as all leaders confirmed this integration. Regarding training, all leaders pointed out that LMA Tech offers comprehensive training activities aimed at fostering continuous employee development, both professionally and personally. These initiatives are designed to stimulate future growth, leading to observed improvements in employee performance, growth, internal mobility, and adaptation to technological advancements in the market. In mentoring, the organization demonstrates a

commitment to the growth mindset through its effective "Fuel50" mentoring program. This program connects employees with mentors who own higher proficiency levels, helping to link skill gaps and support mentees with future expectations. The mentoring sessions are monitored for engagement and citizenship behaviors, supported by informal mood following, and reviewed outcomes managed by the growth manager. Incorporating feedback sessions further increases employee motivation and commitment among both mentees and mentors. Leadership development at LMA Tech is structured to promote a growth mindset, emphasizing technical and social skills. Measures are taken to guarantee alignment between leaders' and employees' mindsets, mainly through feedback tools that facilitate effective leadership practices. The performance evaluation system at LMA Tech, anchored in the "PACE" tool, supports autonomy and feedback as promoters for employee growth. This system reflects the belief that competencies can be improved through continuous feedback and practice, supported by the competency assessment capabilities of the "Fuel50" platform and the organization's centers of excellence. Overall, LMA Tech demonstrates a healthy commitment to cultivating a growth mindset through its leadership behaviors and organizational practices, encompassing recruitment, training, mentoring, and performance evaluation.

The data suggest that LMA Tech shows signs of commitment to cultivating a growth mindset:

- Identifying organizational processes that communicate the growth mindset at LMA Tech

Regarding recruitment, interviews, and hiring processes, despite the divergent views among leaders, there is a general concern about communicating information about LMA Tech's growth mindset and seeking it in candidates. This communication occurs through communication in job postings and descriptions of desired candidate traits, as well as in initial interactions, particularly for roles less focused on engineering functions, where recruitment still highlights technical skills according to leaders. Additionally, questions are asked during this process to understand candidates' mindsets, aligning with specific company-defined parameters to seek a growth mindset. In terms of integration and training processes, it was found that LMA Tech has a well-structured onboarding and orientation program effectively communicated to new employees, facilitating their growth. Concerning training, LMA Tech demonstrates a clear effort to outline strategies that communicate the growth mindset, applying actions that encourage individuals to develop and master their strengths. However, there is a concerning case where a leader in the organization exhibits a fixed mindset by not recognizing weaknesses among their employees.

Despite this, most leaders understand that LMA Tech is open to accepting employee weaknesses and has strategies to overcome them, highlighting that weaknesses are not static and can progress as employees attempt to develop them. Lastly, concerning evaluation and promotion processes, it was found that at LMA Tech, these processes are established based on communication and feedback including various stakeholders such as managers, mentors, colleagues, and the final client. Furthermore, action plans derived from the evaluation process are developed to support the employee's growth strategy, showcasing signs of a growth mindset. LMA Tech implements several strategies.

- Identify the adoption of the growth mindset as an emerging orientation in practices and policies within LMA Tech's sector

It was found that there is a clear adoption of practices aligned with growth mindset principles in most organizations where external employees interviewed are employed. The analysis of external employees' experiences revealed that these practices are valued and predominantly focused on employee development and growth. However, they are less predominant with poorer-developed structures, compared to those implemented by LMA Tech.

- Understanding of how the relationship between organizational growth mindset and EVP enhances LMA Tech's ability to attract talent

It is essential to highlight that, based on the secondary data collected, a correlation was found between the dimensions of growth mindset and EVP. It was confirmed that social value is associated with recruitment and integration dimensions, developmental value with training, mentoring, and evaluation systems dimensions, and leadership value is entirely related to the leadership dimension. Thus, it was possible to conclude, through the perceptions of external employees, that concerning social value, attraction mediated by recruitment reveals positive implications in the perceptions of external employees regarding organizations that emphasize a growth mindset. This approach allows them to understand the organization's orientation, organizational culture, and the profile of future colleagues. However, it was noted that evaluating the truth of these characteristics during the application process is challenging. Regarding integration, it was concluded that most external employees state that integration is not a determining factor in their attraction perception, due to the seniority of their careers and the difficulty in evaluating this dimension during the application phase. However, it may be a relevant feature for more junior professionals, as they find it facilitates their early career growth. Regarding

developmental value, attraction mediated by training revealed a duality of understanding based on the type of professional. Junior employees had positive perceptions regarding companies offering continuous training programs, valuing the importance of training early in their careers and enhancing their sense of belonging within the organization. However, more senior employees considered this dimension less influential in terms of attraction, highlighting it only under specific circumstances when other value dimensions are similar among the companies under consideration. Nevertheless, both groups pointed out the complexity of evaluating the truth of these characteristics during the application process. Regarding mentoring, junior employees expressed positive perceptions about organizations offering structured mentoring programs, emphasizing the importance of integration, development, and professional growth, especially in a high turnover sector. Senior employees recognized some relevance in mentoring but did not consider it decisive due to the difficulty of externally evaluating this characteristic. As for evaluation systems, no significant disparities were observed between types of professionals. Half of the external employees consider evaluation systems based on a growth mindset, with practices of useful feedback, favorable as they allow for a more objective assessment and internal development opportunities. However, they also reported difficulties in analyzing this factor during the application process. In terms of leadership value, both junior and senior professionals agreed that alignment of mindset between leaders and employees has positive implications for attraction, emphasizing the importance of close and aligned leadership. However, they also revealed complexity in assessing the truth and applicability of this characteristic during the application. Overall, it was not possible to identify a more relevant attraction dimension in this context due to divergent perceptions between junior and senior employees. Juniors value leadership, training, and integration processes, while seniors emphasize training, recruitment, and evaluation processes supported by feedback. Additionally, it was noted that while dimensions related to the growth mindset positively influence talent attraction, the results are also influenced by the fact that interviewees were more focused on external factors. Competitive salaries play a crucial role, as candidates are often drawn to organizations that offer attractive compensation packages. Moreover, work flexibility has become increasingly important, with candidates valuing employers who understand their need for a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, the nature of the work itself is critical, candidates seek roles that align with their interests and career aspirations. By recognizing these external influences, it becomes clear that while a growth mindset contributes to

the attraction of talent, organizations must also address these broader factors to increase their attractiveness to prospective candidates. A perceived relationship emerged between growth mindset dimensions and EVP attributes.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, despite perceived slight disparities in certain organizational procedures, it was possible to diagnose, through the mass of perceptions from leaders at LMA Tech, the presence of evidence of a growth mindset across all analyzed organizational practices and policies. Simultaneously, it was noted that while there are some deficiencies, the leaders' perceptions indicate that the organization attempts to communicate a growth mindset throughout all organizational processes. Additionally, participants suggested that, other IT organizations also adopt practices associated with a growth mindset, yet they are notably less effective and require better structuring compared to those implemented by LMA Tech. Finally, it was concluded that the dimensions of the growth mindset can effectively enhance LMA Tech's EVPs correlated with social, developmental, and leadership values, positively influencing the external employees' perception of attraction towards the organization as an employer brand. However, these dimensions face challenges during the evaluation of the application process, which participants associated with social, developmental and leadership values.

Although there is no direct empirical research connecting the growth mindset with competitive advantage in talent acquisition, it is evident from the available evidence and practitioner experience that organization with a growth mindset culture are increasingly appealing to potential employees, especially in IT and other knowledge-based sectors (Han & Stieha, 2020; Murphy & Reeves, 2019). Such an environment communicates to candidates that the organization appreciates learning, adaptability, and career progression, and competes for the attention of top candidates (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Dabirian et al., 2019). Moreover, employer branding studies show that other core features of growth mindset culture, like feedback and developmental opportunities, are the most highly regarded components of an employer value proposition (Randstad, 2024; Veldsman & Pauw, 2018). This corroboration indicates that fostering a growth mindset may increase an organization's appeal and competitively position it in the talent market. Therefore, we examined how the growth mindset could serve as a strategic resource in defending and attracting talent to LMA Tech. Therefore, it should be clearly stated that the explanations obtained apply to

the scientific case or company (e.g. "LMA Tech") and cannot be automatically generalized to the entire IT sector in Portugal without further investigation.

5.1 Implications

The findings of this research contribute firstly by corroborating and simultaneously extending the studies of Caniëls et al. (2018), Özduran and Tanova (2017), Shapcott and Carr (2019), Han and Stieha (2020), Murphy and Reeves (2019) about the growth mindset in organizational contexts. In terms of theoretical contributions, as mentioned in the introduction of this research, Rattan and Ozgumus (2019) support the significance of future research exploring how mindsets shape specific organizational outcomes. So, this study addresses this gap by studying how the growth mindset influences organizational talent attraction, representing a pioneering study in this framework. Furthermore, this research contributes to the literature by providing essential insights to support organizations in developing strategies to adopt and sustain an organizational growth mindset. This contribution is achieved by developing an analytical instrument for assessing evidence of the growth mindset in a real organizational context, using a qualitative methodology based on the model recommended by Han and Stieha (2020). Additionally, it involves the creation of a tool, based on Murphy and Reeves (2019), which conducts an "audit" in the empirical context of LMA Tech to assess how different organizational processes communicate the growth mindset of an organization. Moreover, this research is relevant in terms of theoretical contributions as it demonstrates, through the analysis of secondary data, the relationship between dimensions of the growth mindset based on Han and Stieha (2020) and Murphy and Reeves (2019), and the IT sector's Employee Value Propositions (EVPs) supported by Dabirian et al. (2019), thus pioneering in this research context. In terms of practical contributions, data collection and analysis from leaders at LMA Tech and external employees have provided valuable insights to enhance the implementation of growth mindset orientation within the organization's practices and policies. One of the key recommendations is the need to optimize and standardize the communication of the growth mindset across all recruitment processes. To address perceived duality in recruitment practices, LMA Tech should standardize communication about the growth mindset in job offerings and interviews across all roles, including engineering positions. This involves guaranteeing clarity and consistency in highlighting the value of a growth mindset, potentially through detailed job descriptions, real employee feedback, or video casts showcasing organizational culture. Another practical implication is developing standardized tools to assess candidates' mindsets during

recruitment. Providing specific training for recruiters on the importance of the growth mindset and how to identify it during interviews and selection processes would be useful. Furthermore, improving integration programs, particularly onboarding processes for new hires, is critical for reinforcing the growth mindset from the outset. This includes providing clear orientation to new employees about LMA Tech's commitment to fostering a growth mindset. Additionally, strengthening mentorship programs to support professional development, and ensuring these initiatives are accessible and well-communicated, along with streamlining platforms like Fuel50 for effectiveness, would further embed this mindset into organizational practices. Leadership also plays a crucial role in promoting a growth mindset. Specific training for leaders to recognize and promote this mindset within their teams would ensure its consistent application throughout the organization. Aligning leadership and employee mindsets through workshops and team-building activities, supported by effective feedback tools, would foster a culture of continuous development. In the broader context of employer branding, LMA Tech's strategy should clearly and objectively communicate dimensions of the growth mindset in the EVP, along with other significant values such as competitive salaries, interesting projects, and work-life balance flexibility. Additionally, conducting detailed benchmarking to explore, identify, and analyze leading talent attraction practices in the global IT sector, potentially expanding into other prominent sectors is also needed. This enables LMA Tech to recognize trends that can inform the development of new employer branding strategies based on the growth mindset. Engaging in a dialogue with current employees and valuing their feedback would also facilitate the co-creation of talent attraction strategies that resonate with the workforce. Lastly, efforts to integrate the concept of the growth mindset into academic discussion, particularly through partnerships with universities, lectures, workshops, or internship programs, can cultivate a deeper understanding among students. This prepares future professionals to align with LMA Tech's operations and culture.

5.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Regarding the limitations of the research, two key points can be highlighted: first, the lack of existing literature that integrates the themes addressed in this study, which made the theoretical foundation of the research slightly challenging; second, the fact that only twelve IT professionals were interviewed— six internal leaders and six external employees—means that the findings may only conclusively apply to these participants. They may not fully represent the perspectives of all leaders in the organization or all IT professionals in this context. For future suggestions, it is

proposed to expand the study to include a larger number of professionals and adapt it to a quantitative methodology to collect more comprehensive data, their Employer Branding safeguarding the stronger validity of the conclusions. Additionally, future studies could examine how a fixed mindset influences talent attraction, offering deeper insights into the complexities of this relationship and its implications for organizational effectiveness. It is also recommended to conduct studies that explore how the growth mindset intersects with other organizational outcomes, especially investigating how the growth mindset can improve employee retention in organizations appears relevant, particularly considering the internal prominence of these values identified in the data analysis, which could be critical for retaining talent. Lastly, future research could explore how the growth mindset shapes organizational cultures or facilitates the creation of a cultural cycle, as suggested by Murphy and Dweck (2010).

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