

# Employer Branding and its Role in Effective Recruitment



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*The concept of employer branding, focuses on the development of firm's image by a positive image. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the five value proposition of employee attractiveness. Data collection has been done using questionnaire and analysis through SPSS. The analysis result suggests that value proposition such as; interest value, social value, application value, development value and economic value are related to the creation of employer branding. Thus, the various value propositions play a significant role in attracting potential candidates and ensuring an effective hiring.*

**Keywords:** Value proposition, Potential Candidate, Hiring, Employer Branding, Employee Attractiveness

## 1. Introduction

Organization faces crucial challenges to survive in the global competitive market and also encounter with growing and sustaining itself (Mosley, 2007) in order to gain competitive advantages (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Sivertzen, et. al., 2013). Efficient Human capital is basic need for the survival of the organization, therefore, recruitment of right and competent candidate become the necessary element for the organization (Wright, McMahan & McWilliams, 1994). Along with, current trend demands a far more comprehensive and strategic perspective to recruit, utilize and retain valuable human resources (Guthridge et al. 2008). The importance to attract, recruit and retain talents has been acknowledged by all as they face the scarcity of potential employee in the labor market (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Companies are always concern about employee's opinion, loyalty, and their retention as well as their perception towards the company. So that, they feel what strategy should be made to attract the potential employees (Dabirian et.al., 2016). In the global market, employer brand and corporate reputation are imperative factor for attracting the best talent (Cappelli, 2001). Employer attractiveness is defined as, "the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organization" the package of benefits in which potential employees perceive from his future job (Berthon, P., Ewing, M. & Hah, L.L., 2005). But, how this attractiveness generated in the mind of the potential employee and influences them to apply for a job; is still a matter of discussion. Previous researches indicate that potential employee compare their own needs, personality and value with the organization's image (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). When their desires match with the organization's image, the organization becomes attractive to them (Schneider, 1987; Cable & Judge, 1996; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Strong brand image of a company have benefits like; hiring of employee at low cost, enhance employee relation, can hire best talent in lower pay scale and also helpful in improving employer- employee relations (Riston, 2002). "Branding" is the commitment between an organization and its potential or existing customers that, it has to be understood and delivered by the organization (Foster, Punjaisri & Cheng, 2010). Employer branding is a tool which is used to enhance employer attractiveness and corporate reputation (Sivertzen et al., 2013). It focuses on the outside the organization, where there could be chances to convert potential employee to become the part of the organization (Foster et al., 2010).

Previous literature reviews states the significant impact of employer branding on retention of employees (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Armstrong, 2007; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). But a very few research work has been conducted to find the role of employer branding dimensions for attraction of candidates. In this study we tried to find out the employer attractiveness depends upon which of the major factors of employer branding in recruitment influence them to apply for a job.

The main purpose of this paper is to find out role of different value proposition of employer branding dimensions on job seekers to attract and influence them to apply for a job. Organization image perception and attractiveness can influence the job seeker's to apply for the job. The study will outline the key factors or value propositions of employer branding for the organizational attractiveness. The study will also help the managers to make the organization more attractive and eye-catching for the job-seekers. The core objective of the study is to determine which value proposition of employer branding affects employee attraction.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To study the concept of employer branding.
2. To study the role/significance of employer branding in recruitment
3. To identify the factors influencing employer branding.
4. To determine the value propositions of employer branding which affects employee attractiveness

### Concept Related to Employer Branding

Branding is a very well known area of marketing, but it is very new and at the nascent stage in the Human resource management (Edwards, 2010). The significance of brand image in product market is well known but it also plays an important role in recruitment process (Sivertzen, Nilsen & Olafsen, 2013). In the organization 'employees' are the most important resource and 'brand' is an asset for the company (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). In other side of view, the employer creates its image as a brand which communicating its loyalty, trust, positive attitudes towards the potential employee.

The concept of employment brand very specifically pointing out by Swystun (2007) who argues "a brand is a mixture of attributes, tangible and intangible, symbolized in a trademark, which if managed properly, creates value and influence" (p.14). In this definition researcher says branding is essential to create organization's image positively. Similar to the concept of 'branding' in marketing, it also provides the uniqueness of the product and gaining distinct employment experience (Edwards, 2010). It is assumed that when organizations clearly interpret the employment experience, it helps in creation of brand perception towards the potential recruits and influences them to apply for job (Edwards, 2010). This experience is organization specific; in this regard Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) argue, employer branding "suggests differentiation of a firm's characteristics as an employer from those of its competitors, the employment brand highlights the unique aspects of the firm's employment offerings or environment" (p. 502). In this regard, American Marketing Association (1960) said that, a 'brand' is a means to differentiate from the competitors, and it gives competitive advantage to the organization (van Reil & Balmer, 1997). The image of employer brand indicates the nature of employment, career opportunity, challenges and its unique features, which distinguish it from competitors (Arachchige & Robertson, 2011).

The term 'employer branding' does not refer the short term recruitment strategy but, it is focused on long term strategy; having innovation (Srivastava & Bhatnagpur, 2010), awareness and creation of perception of different stakeholders regarding the firm (Sullivan, 2004). Brand creates a psychological impact on people as they associated with them mentally and emotionally (Brown, 1992; Kapferer, 2004). The employer branding concept is mostly applicable in high value- added business or services where, salary is high and fewer in number of employees working (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) define employer branding as "*the process of building an identifiable and unique employer identity*".

Ambler & Barrow, 1996, was proposed three dimensions of employer branding namely: functional, economical and psychological. Functional is defined as development or engagement of some useful activity (Ambler & barrow, 1996, p.187). Economic benefit is the sum up as 'material or monetary reward'. It signifies not only the price of the product, but also the things involve in it. Psychological benefits is intangible in nature, it is the feeling such as belongingness, purpose and satisfaction (Ambler & Barrow, 1996).

### Role of Employer Branding in Recruitment

Employer branding is a sum of psychological, economic, and functional benefits provided by employment and identified by the employer (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Employer branding creates a psychological impact on prospective employee as; an ideal place to work (Lloyd, 2002). Job-seekers perception towards a brand is closely related to the company's reputation (Micik & Micudova, 2018), which is most likely is the reflection of brand (Fombrun, 1996). Several study also suggested that, there is a relationship between image of the organization and attraction of quality job applicants (Fombrun, 1996; Cable & Turban, 2001). Many researches support the finding that reputation and brand image of organization plays a significant role in recruitment process (Berthon et al, 2005; Lievens et al., 2007, Xie, Bagozzi & Meland, 2015).

Employer branding becomes an 'umbrella programme' to give a definite structure to the previous HR policies and practices (Edwards, 2010). Employer branding targets current and potential employee.

### Value Proposition of Employer Branding

Value proposition is considered as a 'backbone of employer branding', the reason behind this it develops a clear vision about organization and significantly help in employee attraction and retention (Sengupta et al., 2015). To attract a potential candidate, a successful employer branding strategy first identify and develop their value propositions which is the combination of several types of offerings, after that they design external marketing strategy (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

The Value proposition of employer branding is measured in five criteria namely; social value, interest value, economic value, development value and application value (Sivertzen, 2013). Social value can be defined as, "It calculates the mark of appeal of an organization or a company providing a work environment with good and welcoming team spirit and decent respectable relations among co-workers (Hadi & Ahmad, 2018). Social value is the sum of the attributes such as; fun, happiness, stress upon good employer and employee relationships as well as collegial relation (Berthon et al., 2005). Social value at work is emotional attachment (Dabirian et al., 2016), and feeling of belongingness from their working place (Sivertzen, 2013). Interest value related to innovation and development of interest in performing the task in order to meet the challenges (Sivertzen, 2013). "It assesses the degree of appeal of an employer who is responsible for providing a work situation with innovation and creativeness opportunities" (Hadi & Ahmad, 2018). It is the extent to which job-seekers attracted towards the employer for novel work practices, implication of creativity and innovation in product and services (Berthon et. al., 2005). Economic value estimates the amount of attraction of an employer providing a worthy remuneration and profits" (Hadi & Ahmad, 2018). Economic value accounts the all type of monetary benefits offer by the firm to their employees; it includes salary, compensation package, job security and scope for promotion (Berthon et al., 2005; Dabirian, 2016). Development value refers to the acknowledgement of employees' performance and provides benefits for professional

development and future career growth (Dabirian, 2016). It assesses the extent to which an individual is attracted towards the employer that provides confidence, recognition, and career-enhancement. Hadi and Ahmad (2018), defined development value as, "It is an attribute that estimates the degree of attractiveness of an employer providing career development". Further, their study in their study found that there is a positive relation between development value with employee retention, but not such in case of application value, interest value, work life balance. It

Lastly, application value signifies the relevance of work with the knowledge and skills, it makes the work meaningful. It also determines the degree of attraction towards the establishment which provides a platform to apply the knowledge (Hadi and Ahmad, 2018). It is an extent to which job-seekers attracted to the employer that, he could apply his learning experience for the benefits of society (Berthon et al., 2005).

Apart from these five value proposition Dabirian et al., 2016, added two more value propositions; management value and work life balance. Management value focuses on the employer-employee relation and not with the company. A proper work life balance facilitates the people to work in the harmony at work place and also maintain personal life (e.g., friend, parent, club member) without any conflict (Hadi & Ahmad, 2018). Another important two more value is also added in employer branding; diversity value and psychological value (Hadi & Ahmad, 2018).

## 2. Research Methodology

The sample size of the study was 205, which consists of job seekers; both fresh graduates or final year students and also those employees who are actively searching for the better opportunities outside the organization. The students were drawn from the final year students of MBA, were less than 5 months away from completing their post-graduate degrees and probably entering in the organization. On the other side, employees are both full-time and part time and their education level ranges from graduate, post-graduate and M.Phil/ Ph.D. In addition, they had mostly been working for the past six months to several years as a part-time or full-time in the organization.

Before selection of the population of the study and sample size determination, total three focus groups discussion were conducted, using final-year MBA students of different colleges and also in between full time and part-time employee. The purpose of the focus group discussion was to identify the items for employer branding dimensions of the attractiveness construct. For this study, researcher outlined twenty-four items, but after focus-group study there were total fourteen value propositions were identified. These items were rated from 'never' (least preferred) to 'always' (most preferred). For this research, survey method is opted and questionnaire is designed in such a way to collect demographic details of the respondents and also collect their opinion related to employee attraction and employer branding. Total twenty three questions were designed in which, part-A of the questionnaire contained their name, gender, education level, experience, about their interest and choices. Part-B of the questions designed in a five point Likert scale (from 1-Never to 5-Always) to measure the outcome value. The statistical analysis was performed in using SPSS 20.0.

## 3. Data Analysis and Results

**Table 1** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Frequency	percentage	Mean	S.D.
<b>Gender</b>	Male	125	61%	
	Female	80	39%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.39</b>
<b>Age</b>	< 20	0	--	
	20-25	108	52.7%	
	25-30	24	11.7%	
	30-35	51	24.9%	
	35<	22	10.7%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2.94</b>	<b>1.099</b>
<b>Education Level</b>	Graduate	69	33.7%	
	Post-Graduate	124	60.5%	
	M. Phil/PhD	10	4.9%	
	Others	2	1.0%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.73</b>
<b>Enrolment Type</b>	Final-year Student	87	42.4%	
	Pass-out Student	12	5.9%	
	Full-time employee	98	47.8%	
	Part-time employee	08	3.9%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2.13</b>
<b>Work Experience</b>	0-3 Yrs.	111	54.1%	
	3-6 Yrs.	49	23.9%	
	6-9 Yrs.	15	7.3%	
	9 <	30	14.6%	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.82</b>

- Among 205 samples, 61% are male and 39% are female.

- Percentage of participant age group; 20-25 is 52.7%, 25-30 is 11.7%, (30-35) is 24.9% and above 35 is 10.7%.
- Participant education level; graduate-33.7%, Post-graduate-60.5%, M.Phil/PhD-4.9%, others-1%.
- In the Sample of the participant; Final-year student-42.4%, pass-out student- 5.9%, Full time employee-47.8 and part-time employee-3.9%
- Work experience of participants; (0-3) yrs-54.1%, (3-6) yrs.-23.9%, (6-9) yrs.- 7.3% & above 9 yrs.14.6%.
- In this survey, the question was asked to working employee that; are they working in their dream company. The response was (exclamatory), 78% said ‘No’, whereas 23.4% said ‘yes’ and 38.5% of the participants haven’t decided yet. Among these responses majority percentage was not working in their ideal company. This response left the area of further research that why they are not in their dream organisation.
- 35.6% respondent said they usually attracted to apply for a job due to company’s brand position, 20% people influenced due to the others opinion, 15.1% due to company’s rating given by the agency, 13.7% due to company’s vision and mission and significantly 15.6% said that other factors about the company attract them to apply for a job.

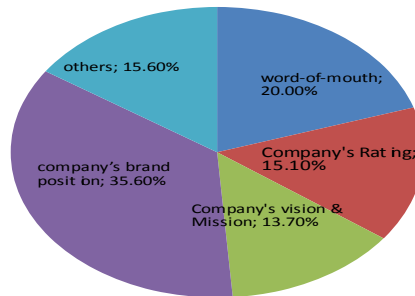


Figure 1 Major Factors Influencing the Job-Seeker to Apply

- While searching and applying for a job, significantly 63.9% respondent looking career growth opportunity, 19.5% working environment, 7.3% company’s offerings, 6.3% employer-employee relations and 2.9% saw other factors. It could be said that now-a-days career growth opportunity in a company plays a crucial role to apply for a job.

**Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)**

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is a statistical method used to find the underlying structure of a relatively large set of variables. Before extraction of the construct, there should be some test was performed to measure the adequacy of the sample and the suitability of data for factor analysis (Burton & Mazerolle, 2011). Cronbach alpha for the items was 0.786. The adequacy of sample size of the data was checked by KMO and Bartlett’s Test which suggests minimum KMO value should be 0.5, 0.50-0.59 is miserable, 0.60-0.69 is mediocre, 0.70-0.79 is middling, 0.80-0.89 is meritorious and 0.90 to 1.00 marvelous (Kaiser, 1974; Cerny & Kaiser, 1977) and the values between 0.5 and 0.7 are rated as average, 0.7 and 0.8 are good, 0.8 and 0.9 are very good and the values 0.9 and above are excellent as recommended by Hadi et al. 2016. Our result of KMO is 0.834, which indicates that the data is fit for factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of Sphericity results chi-square output check the suitability (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) for factor analysis and it must be significant (p<0.5).

Table 2 KMO & Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity

KMO and Bartlett’s Test			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.834	df	91
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	805.777	Sig.	.000

Sources: SPSS Results.

The data collected through questionnaire was processed in SPSS 20 and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method was used along with Direct Oblimin rotation was performed and extracted all the factors having Eigen value greater than one (>1). The results were reported in Table 2, pattern matrix which summarizes the component value greater than 0.4. One item asking the question about the opportunity to learn new things, having the correlated value below 0.4, has been dropped to reduce the error.

#### 4. Discussion on Finding

In this study, first value proposition i.e. Social value assess the most important variable related to the working environment such as; enjoyment, relation with employer and colleague. In 'economic value' offer the potential employee to attract with the According to the study, good salary, promotional opportunities and a good compensation package. 'Interest value,' assess the extent to which the potential employee attracted to the enjoyment in work, appreciation for work and value for his work. 'Development value' offers to the potential employee career-enhancing opportunity, satisfaction of his work and appreciation. Lastly, 'Application value' offers to learn a new thing and application, feeling of sense of belongingness with the working environment.

In the study, literature suggests five-value proposition of employer branding (Sivertzen, 2013; Berthon et al., 2005 ) and this structure showing the three dimensions of employer branding (psychological, functional & operational) which was proposed by Ambler & Barrow (1996). Further, after analyzing the data, our study suggests three factors (or value propositions) of employer branding. These are categorized as; social and interest value representing the 'psychological benefits' (Ambler & Barrow, 1996), development and application value representing the 'functional benefits' (Ambler & Barrow, 1996) and economic representing the 'operational benefits' (Ambler & Barrow, 1996).

**Table 3** Pattern Matrix

Q.No.	Items on Questionnaire	Component		
		1	2	3
<b>A. Social &amp; interest</b>				
21.	Feel a sense of belongingness in the firm	0.77		
22.	Get enough support from your boss	0.76		
23.	Get enough support of your colleagues at work place	0.72		
20.	satisfaction at your work	0.72		
19.	searching enjoyment in your work	0.58		
<b>B. Economic Value</b>				
11.	Non-monetary benefits offer by the company is most important thing to apply.		0.69	
10.	Monetary benefits (salary+ incentives) offer by the firm are the most important to apply		0.58	
12.	Career enhancing opportunity		0.43	
<b>C. Application &amp; Development Values</b>				
15.	Getting New ideas to work			0.82
14.	Appreciation of new ideas in the organization			0.77
13.	Significance of Social security benefits			0.69
16.	fair decision making policy of the organization			0.50
17.	Opportunity to get Participate in decision-making process in the organization			0.43

Source: Researcher's creation from SPSS

#### 5. Conclusion

Organization's image perception and attractiveness do influence the job seeker's to apply for the job. Employer branding is a sum of psychological, economic and functional benefits provided by employment and identified by the employer. It is a psychological impact on prospective employee. Value propositions are considered as a backbone of employer branding as it develops a clear vision about the organization and significantly helps in employee attraction and retention. This research paper explored the importance of employer branding and its impact on recruitment process. From this study our findings suggests that social value is a very crucial value for employees or hiring a new employee in the organization. It is noticeable that in the output job-seekers are giving more preference in the social values. While searching the job they give more preference to the employer-employee relations, good relations with colleague so that they can feel the sense of belongingness with the organization. Findings of the study will help the recruiters to adapt to better measures.

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