Becoming an Employer of Choice in the Infrastructure and Construction Sector

Sohan Mohanty

Abstract: Purpose of Research: The aim of the study was to understand the perception of campus applicants towards employers in the Infrastructure and Construction related sectors. This research further explored, into measuring the extent to which these perceptions translated into employment preferences for the campus applicants. The objectives of the study were to (1) to understand the preference of campus applicants towards different employer-types, (2) to identify the job attributes that campus applicants seek in their prospective employers, (3) to analyse if job-preferences are based on demographics such as gender, work experience etc. An attempt was also made to compare and contrast the EmAp scale developed by Berthon et al. (2005) in the Indian context.

Methodology: Descriptive research was undertaken to explore the aforementioned research objectives. Data was collected through a mail-questionnaire administered on a sample comprising the final year students pursuing post-graduate management courses in NICMAR, Pune and RICS, Noida; two of the country’s premier Institutes offering niche courses in the Infrastructure and Construction related sectors. In all, 264 students had participated in the online survey. Various multivariate tools and techniques were used to evaluate and analyze the data collected.

Findings: The survey findings have helped identify those variables that determine a firm’s attractiveness as an employer of choice in the Infrastructure and Construction sector. Given that the survey was restricted to only the aforementioned Institutes, it has helped understand the sectoral specifics, as far as job preferences of campus applicants are concerned.

Implications: By understanding the drivers and motivators of potential campus recruits, organisations will be better positioned to develop strategies to attract-retain the young workforce and consequently, nurture tomorrow’s leaders. It is worthwhile to understand the millennials, such that it helps Organizations to modify their workplace policies to suit the distinctive tastes, interests and preferences of the young workforce and become employers of choice.

Keywords: employer branding, employer of choice, job attributes, millennials

INTRODUCTION

According to the PwC’s 2017 CEO survey, Chief Executives considered the demand-supply talent gap, as the biggest challenge for their businesses. Fundamentally, the core of competitive advantage of any firm lies in the intellectual and human capital that it possesses (Berthon et al., 2005). This is forcing organisations to compete and position themselves over their competitors as better employers, thereby enhancing their competitiveness (Rampi, 2014). Therefore, a firm’s ability to attract and retain talent becomes fundamental to its success in the marketplace.

Today’s competitive environment is forcing employers to take cognisance of, and constantly adapt to the evolving trends such that they are perceived as a desirable place to pursue a career. Organisational strategies are getting heavily inclined towards developing strong ‘employer brands’, primarily to attract prospective recruits and to retain existing employees. Building an employer brand, creating an effective employer value proposition and becoming an employer of choice necessitate the recognition and development of the human capital within a firm (Martin et al., 2005).

Behling et al. (1968) had studied those variables that influence applicant decision-making process, employer attractiveness, and job-choice behaviour. Behling et al. (1968) said that applicants will evaluate an employer on the basis of job-characteristics and work-environment, to determine whether or, not, the job and the organisation will meet their expectations. Subsequently, various studies have been conducted to understand applicant behaviour (e.g., Harris and Fink, 1987; Rynes et al., 1997; Collins and Han, 2004; Collins, 2007). It is a known fact that a favourable employer brand positively influences applicant behaviour, which is why it is important for an organisation to position itself as a preferred employer (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Ployhart, 2006).

A Dun & Bradstreet study on the Construction industry has revealed that one of the major shortcomings of the industry is the lack of managerial competence. It is largely understood that owing to site hardships and work-life imbalance, the Infrastructure and Construction sector does not attract many talented and skilled professionals. Sadly, this aspect of the Construction Industry extends across the globe, as well. Companies operating in the construction sector need to be ingenious to compete and remain relevant in this global inter-sector market (Sedighi & Loosmore, 2012). Further, The Great Place to Work Report – 2018, had a mere 2 percent representation in the Top 100 Companies, from the Construction, Infrastructure and Real Estate sector. While the Indian Construction sector happens to be the second largest employer in India, next only to agriculture, little research exists in the area of employer branding. Attracting prospective employees with talent and projecting the right employer brand image are crucial for becoming an employer of choice in the Construction Industry.

This empirical study has endeavoured to fill the existing gap by studying a student-sample pursuing post-graduate management courses at NICMAR, Pune and RICS, Noida;
two of India’s premier Institutes offering niche courses in the Infrastructure and Construction domain. This study in an Indian setting is an attempt to understand the perception of professionals towards employers in the Construction Industry. The study investigates those factors that influence the choice decision of campus applicants, with prospective employers in mind, typically, from the Infrastructure and Construction sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizations, the world over are now engaged in a ‘war for talent’ to attract and retain employees. Most employers would agree that being a compelling employer brand makes this job of attracting and retaining employees, only easier and better. In other words, the brand plays a crucial role in the applicant’s decision-making, while choosing an employer. Many studies have proved the importance of a strong employer brand and how it helps in reducing costs, improving customer satisfaction and yielding better margins for a firm.

Much attention therefore, has been directed towards examining the crucial importance of employer brand and the associated concepts of employer image and employer attractiveness (Ambler and Barrow, 1996; Cable and Turban, 2003; Turban, Forret, and Hendrickson, 1998). Also, past studies suggest the construct of an employer brand and how an employer could become an attractive company with a strong brand (C. J. Collins and Stevens, 2001, 2002).

Few studies have found close association between employer brand dimensions and the employer of choice (EOC) construct (Rampi, 2014; Tanwar and Kumar, 2019). According to Branham (2005), employer branding is a process of applying traditional marketing principles to achieving the status of Employer of Choice. An employer of choice (EOC) means that the company has been able to create an image of being a great place to work in the mind of the prospective applicant pool (Tanwar and Kumar, 2019). An employer of choice therefore, refers to an organization where top talent aspires to work for, as a result of its corporate reputation and employer image.

An employer brand is viewed as a bundle of “functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by an employing company” (Ambler and Barrow, 1996). While many studies in the past have delved on the construct of the employer brand (Arachchige and Robertson, 2008; Tuzuner and Yuksel, 2009; Srivastava and Bhatnagar, 2010; Alnaçık and Alnaçık, 2012; Hillebrandt and Ivens, 2013; Zhu et al., 2014), however, it is believed that these studies have certain limitations such that it demands further research to develop an employer brand scale, that is reliable and valid. While the above scales possess few limitations, the scale developed by Berthon et al. (2005), has been found to be popular and robust in the context of the employer brand. Berthon et al. (2005) developed their 25-item “EmpAt” scale by adopting the Ambler and Barrow (1996) framework. This particular scale has been found to be conceptually and statistically strong and has confirmed not only the three dimensions; functional, economic and psychological (Ambler and Barrow), but also discovered two new ones. The limitation of this scale however, is that it has been developed by studying a sample comprising final-year students possessing limited work experience. Nevertheless, owing to its reliability and validity, this scale has been adopted by various researchers to measure the employer brand in their respective studies.

Although employer branding is vitally important to attract potential employees, no specific research has been conducted to understand perceptions of management students towards prospective employers in the Infrastructure and Construction Industry, more so in the Indian context. Moreover, crucial factors that influence potential employer branding in the infrastructure and construction industry have not been determined so far. The present study attempts to fill the gaps in the extant literature.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is believed that campus applicants are equally discerning while choosing the right organisation as much as choosing the right job. Projecting an attractive employer image helps an organization attract the right pool of applicants on campus. This would however, necessitate understanding the tastes, interests and preferences of campus applicants. This study aims to understand the expectations of final year post-graduates who are currently pursuing a degree in a Construction related course at one of the two premier Institutes; NICMAR, Pune and RICS, Noida and would be entering the Construction and Infrastructure sector in six months’ time. An attempt has been made to understand their perceptions of the job market; their preferred employers, employment attributes they seek in their prospective employers and what job preferences do they have, if any.

Objectives

This study examines the prospective employees’ (student job-seekers) perception of companies operating in the Infrastructure and Construction Industry, where they seek to work upon course-completion. This research also attempts to identify those job-attributes preferred by campus applicants. Further, the study also analyses the effects of demographics such as gender and work experience on job-preferences, if any.

The objectives of the study are (1) to understand the preference of campus applicants towards different employer-types, (2) to identify the job attributes that campus applicants seek in their prospective employers, (3) to analyse if job-preferences are based on demographics such as gender, work experience etc. An attempt is also being made to compare and contrast the EmpAt scale developed by Berthon et al. (2005) in the Indian context.

Questionnaire and Scale

This research aimed to identify the job attributes sought by management students who were to be employed in the Infrastructure and Construction sectors. In order to make statistical inferences about the potential workforce, who were to enter the workforce, an online survey was conducted.
This necessitated the adoption of an effective scale to capture various aspects of potential campus applicants.

This study aimed to understand the employer preferences of post-graduate students, who were in the final year of the course and about to enter the workforce, soon. The employer attractiveness scale (EmpAt) developed by Berthon et al. (2005) was adopted for this study. The 25 item-scale developed by Berthon et al. (2005) and subsumed under five (5) factors is considered to be more refined than the employer brand construct proposed by Ambler and Barrow (1996).

The questionnaire for this study was comprised of two sections. Respondents were to rank their top-three preferred employer-types in Section One. The featured options under ‘Employer Type’ were Large Indian Contracting Firm, Large MNC Contracting Firm, Indian Consulting Firm, Global Consulting Firm, Real Estate Developer, Project Management Consultant, Central / State Government Construction and Indian PSU Construction Company. Section Two covered the 25 items of the EmpAt scale proposed by Berthon et al. (2005) and these were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Least Important, 2 = Not So Important, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important, and 5 = Very Important).

The demographic variables viz., age, gender, work experience, engineering branch and academic course pursued, were obtained through single items in the questionnaire.

Survey Method

To explore and understand the preferences of the representative sample, an electronic survey was undertaken at the two Institutes of India; NICMAR, Pune and RICS, Noida. The final year post-graduate students, who took part in the survey, were expected to join any infrastructure / construction firm, post completion of their course. To this end, the Training and Placement Officers (TPO) of the Institutes were contacted and questionnaires mailed to all the final year students pursuing a Construction Management or, a related course, at these two Institutes.

The online questionnaire was administered on a mix of 264 post-graduates, in their final-year of study at NICMAR, Pune and RICS, Noida. From a total of 264 online respondents, only 227 fully-completed and valid questionnaires were obtained. Thereby, resulting in an effective response rate of 86 percent, only. Descriptive Research was undertaken to explore the research objectives, listed earlier. The investigation was guided by the following research questions:

RQ 1: Which types of employers are preferred by applicants at the two Institutes?

RESULTS

The data collected from the sample was analysed with the help of SPSS package and the results are as below:

Demographic Characteristics

Out of the 227 respondents, only 20 were female and 85 had some work experience ranging between 1 – 5 years. No student had work experience greater than 5 years. The age of the respondents fell within the range 22 - 28 years. The demographic composition of the 227 respondents is tabulated and presented in Appendix – 1.

Employer-type preferences

In the survey, respondents were asked to indicate their preference for different employer types, by indicating their top-three choices (rank). Eight employer types as options were provided and the below pie-chart shows the preference for them. Large Indian Contracting Firms (24.5%) have emerged as the most preferred type, followed by Project Management Consultants (19.9%) and Large MNC Contracting Firms (18.7%).
Study of job-attributes

A Principle Component Factor Analysis using orthogonal rotation was carried out on the survey data to determine the underlying structure of the job attributes sought in prospective employers. Factor Analysis was used to identify those factors that influence the choice decision of new employees entering the workforce population.

Interpreting the Factor Analysis

The reliability of the factor analysis output was measured as Cronbach’s Alpha equal to 0.958 (Table No. 2), indicating the output as highly reliable. Further, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin, measure of sampling adequacy had a value of 0.937 (see Appendix-2). As the KMO value is greater than 0.5, it shows that factor analysis was appropriate.

Table No. 2: Reliability Statistics

| Cronbach’s Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| 0.958            | 25         |

The Factor Analysis output resulted in three factors accounting for 59.69% of the variance in the data. Three factors, all having an eigenvalue greater than ‘1’ emerged as per Table No. 3. All factor loadings greater than 0.6 were included in the relevant factor. The first factor, ‘Functional’ subsumed nine (9) variables and has accounted for 26.072% of the variance. The second factor ‘Economic’ accounted for 16.847% of the variance and has subsumed only three (3) variables whereas, the third factor ‘Psychological’ accounted for 16.771% of the variance and has subsumed only four (4) variables.

Three factors were extracted as shown in the Table below.
- Factor 1, covered all those variables which were functional in nature
- Factor 2, consisted of variables associated with economic well-being
- Factor 3, could be termed as psychological as it included intangible variables such as feelings and appreciation

Table No. 3: The 3 Factors

| The Three (3) Factors | Functional | Economic | Psychological |
|-----------------------|------------|----------|--------------|
| Having a good relationship with your colleagues | Job security within the organization | Recognition/appreciation from management |
| Supportive and encouraging colleagues | An above average basic salary | Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization |
| Working in an exciting environment | An attractive overall compensation package | Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization |
| The organization produces high-quality products and services | Gaining career-enhancing experience | |
The organization produces innovative products and services
Humanitarian organization – gives back to society
Opportunity to teach others what you have learned
Acceptance and belonging
The organization is customer-oriented

Out of the 25 variables identified and utilized in the questionnaire, only 16 variables had factor loadings greater than equal to 0.6. Therefore, only 16 variables out of the original 25 (Berthon et al., 2005) were found to be relevant for this study (as illustrated in the above Table No. 3) and were included for further analysis. Nine (9) variables, each having factor loading less than 0.6 could not be subsumed under any of the above three factors and have been excluded from further analysis.

The output of the Factor Analysis in SPSS is exhibited in Appendix- 2.

Other Statistical Tests: t-test and ANOVA
An attempt was made to conduct few other statistical tests on the 16 items constituting the three factors that have emerged post the Factor Analysis. To check internal consistency among the nine variables constituting Factor-1 (Functional), a reliability analysis was conducted. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha value was 0.916, which is good for use. Similarly, reliability analysis was done for the 3 items subsumed under Factor – 2 (Economic) and 4 items subsumed under Factor-3 (Psychological). The resulting reliability coefficients have turned out to be sufficient for research purposes, as they are greater than 0.6 (Nunnally, 1978), and shown in the table below.

Table No.4: Reliability Coefficients*

| Scale          | Reliability Coefficient |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| Functional     | 0.916                   |
| Economic       | 0.816                   |
| Psychological  | 0.812                   |

*See Appendix – 3 for the Reliability Analysis of the Factors

One of the study objectives was to analyse if job-preferences were based on demographics such as gender and work experience. To test the same, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H1. There will be significant difference in students’ perceptions of the employer characteristics between male and female students (gender).

H2. There will be significant difference in students’ perceptions of the employer characteristics based on the amount of students’ work experiences.

Independent t-test: Gender
To determine the preference of Males vis-à-vis Females, a two-independent – samples t test was conducted. Further, independent t-tests and Levene’s test for equality of variance was carried out in the sample sub-category: gender. The results are presented in the Table No.5, as below. Note that the F test of sample variances has a probability less than 0.05 for only four items out of the 16 items, as presented in the table below. Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the t test based on the “equal variances not assumed” is used. On further analysis, it emerged that the null hypothesis of equal means is rejected for the said 4 items too. When independent sample t-tests were conducted on the ‘gender’ variable, significant differences between female and male respondents emerged, as captured in Table No. 5. Female respondents have rated these specific job attributes as more ‘important’ than the male respondents, as evident from their higher mean scores.

Table No. 5: Independent Sample t-test (Gender)

| Items                                           | T-test for equality of means | Mean Scores |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Job security within the organization           | 0.004                       | Male – 4.31 Female – 4.75 |
| Recognition/appreciation from management       | 0.000                       | Male – 4.35 Female – 4.85 |
| Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization | 0.013                       | Male – 4.39 Female – 4.75 |
| Gaining career-enhancing experience            | 0.000                       | Male – 4.64 Female – 4.95 |

* For the comprehensive results on the t-tests and Levene’s test, refer Appendix -4

ANOVA: Work Experience
Under the demographic sub-category: work experience, we had four types of population; students with Nil work experience, students with less than 1 year experience, between 1-2 years of experience, and between 2-5 years of experience.
Since there were four populations, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The null hypothesis, typically, is that all means are equal. From the F Distribution Table (Statistical), we see that for 3 and 223 degrees of freedom, the critical value of F is 2.60 for α = 0.05. Since, the calculated value of ‘F’ (values under ‘F’ column in Appendix – 5) is smaller than the critical value (2.60 from F Distribution Table), we do not reject the null hypothesis. It is therefore concluded that the one-way ANOVA test did not yield any significant results as evident from the SPSS output presented in Appendix – 5

**DISCUSSION**

It is interesting to note that while the ‘EmpAt’ scale involving the same set of 25 variables in the study done by Berthon et al. (2005) resulted in five factors viz., Interest Value, Social Value, Economic Value, Development Value and Application Value, this particular study has resulted in three factors, resonating more with the research outcomes of Ambler and Barrow (1996).

An independent sample t-test was done to check the difference in perceptions, basis gender. It was found that female respondents consistently rated four (4) job-characteristics (see Table No.5) as more ‘important’ than did the male respondents. Male and female respondents did not exhibit significant difference of perceptions over the remaining twelve (12) items.

The ANOVA test performed to check difference in perceptions based on the amount of work-experience did not produce any significant results. Meaning, work experience did not influence perceptions about employer characteristics.

When compared to the Berthon et al. (2005) study, this particular study had few observable differences and it could be accounted for the following:-

- While Berthon et al. (2005) conducted their study in Australian campuses, this study was conducted at two Indian campuses. The difference in the outcomes could be attributable to possible cultural differences between sample respondents belonging to two different nationalities.
- Both the study samples were drawn from a population representing the final year students, who were to join the workforce soon. While Berthon et al. (2005) had a sample consisting students pursuing business management students, this study involved a sample comprising students pursuing a construction / infrastructure related management course.
- Since this particular survey-study was done almost fourteen (14) years after the Berthon et al. (2005) study got completed, differences arising out of generational cohorts cannot be ruled out.

**LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The study was carried out at two Institutes offering niche courses in the Construction and Infrastructure sectors. Therefore, generalisation of the study outcomes to other campus applicants say, general management, pharmaceutical sciences or, journalism students may not be appropriate. Moreover, the sample comprised students, who were in the final-year of their post-graduation course.

Another limitation of this study was the ‘as-is’ adoption of the EmpAt scale, without any further psychometric testing. Berthon et al (2005) recommend use of the EmpAt scale cross-nationally, only after further psychometric testing. Also, the EmpAt scale developed in 2005, may not be relevant for today’s campus applicants viz., Gen Z and the Millennials. As a generation, Millennials are considered to have grown up using technology as part of their everyday lives, and are likely to expect their employers to provide them with the same tools to collaborate and network on the job as they did in their personal sphere (Meister and Willyerd, 2010). The EmpAt scale is limited in terms of addressing this particular need of the technology-savvy generation.

Further, even though the sample size of 227 respondents may have been adequate to base the research findings, a larger sample would have been appropriate for generalization and validation in the context of the Indian Infrastructure and Construction sectors. Since the study was limited to a sample comprising only college students, job-related perceptions would have been a restricted one, as students are expected to possess very limited or, negligible work experience. Going forward, studying an experienced workforce, would produce a better picture of the sought for ‘employer image’.

Various researches on employer branding have identified variables like ethics, diversity, work-life balance, CSR, work culture, environmental reputation as important construct-items of the employer brand (Agrawal and Swaroop, 2009; Iacovou et al., 2011; Tanwar and Kumar, 2019). In terms of the future direction, it may be worthwhile to explore broadening the employer attractiveness (EmpAt) construct, by adding current and relevant variables.

Also, few studies have opined the strong influence of social media on the employer brand (Davison et al., 2011; Cable and Turban, 2003; Madera, 2012).
It may be interesting to study the effects of social media on the employer brand too.

Further, the role of existing employees may be studied to determine their influence on the employer brand, in the Infrastructure and Construction Industry.

Appendix – 1: Demographic Characteristics (N=227)

| S/No | Characteristics | Description | N    | Statistics (%) |
|------|-----------------|-------------|------|----------------|
| 1    | Institute       | NICMAR, Pune | 156  | 68.3           |
|      |                 | RICS, Noida | 71   | 31.7           |
| 2    | Gender          | Male        | 207  | 91.2           |
|      |                 | Female      | 20   | 8.8            |
| 3    | Work Experience | Zero        | 142  | 62.6           |
|      |                 | < 1 Year    | 33   | 14.5           |
|      |                 | 1 - 2 Years | 38   | 16.7           |
|      |                 | 2 - 5 Years | 14   | 6.2            |
| 4    | Branch of Engineering during graduation | Civil | 212 | 93.4 |
|      |                 | Mechanical | 9    |                |
|      |                 | Electrical | 1    |                |
|      |                 | Architecture | 3   |                |
|      |                 | Construction | 3   |                |
|      |                 | Tech & Management | 2   |                |
| 5    | Course Pursued (Post Graduate) | ACM | 105 | 46.3 |
|      |                 | PEM        | 30   | 13.2           |
|      |                 | REUIM      | 14   | 6.17           |
|      |                 | IFDM       | 7    | 3.03           |
|      |                 | CPM        | 56   | 24.7           |
|      |                 | CE&QS      | 15   | 6.6            |

Note: Respondents were pursuing the Courses as below:

| Post Graduate courses at NICMAR, Pune | MBA Courses at RICS, Noida |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ACM – Advanced Construction Management | CPM – Construction Project Management |
| PEM – Project Engineering and Management | CE&QS – Construction Economics and Quantity Surveying |
| REUIM – Real Estate and Urban Infrastructure Management | |
| IFDM – Infrastructure Finance, Development and Management | |

Appendix – 2: Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis Output

KMO and Bartlett's Test

| KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy | Bartlett's Test of Sphericity |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| .937                             | Approx. Chi-Square         |
|                                 | df                         |
|                                 | Sig.           |

Total Variance Explained

| Component | Initial Eigenvalues | Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings |
|-----------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Total     | % of Variance | Cumulative % | Total     | % of Variance | Cumulative % |
| 1         | 12.561 | 50.245 | 50.245 | 6.518 | 26.072 | 26.072 |
| 2         | 1.254  | 5.018  | 55.263 | 4.212 | 16.847 | 42.919 |
| 3         | 1.107  | 4.427  | 59.690 | 4.193 | 16.771 | 59.690 |
| 4         | .977   | 3.909  | 63.599 |
| 5         | .914   | 3.656  | 67.255 |
| 6         | .855   | 3.421  | 70.676 |
| 7         | .770   | 3.079  | 73.755 |
| 8         | .715   | 2.861  | 76.617 |
| 9         | .677   | 2.706  | 79.323 |
| 10        | .598   | 2.391  | 81.714 |
| 11        | .525   | 2.102  | 83.816 |
| 12        | .508   | 2.031  | 85.847 |
| 13        | .422   | 1.687  | 87.534 |
| 14        | .394   | 1.577  | 89.111 |
| 15        | .358   | 1.433  | 90.544 |
| 16        | .338   | 1.352  | 91.897 |
| 17        | .322   | 1.329  | 93.226 |
| 18        | .291   | 1.162  | 94.388 |
| 19        | .283   | 1.131  | 95.519 |
| 20        | .248   | .992   | 96.511 |
| 21        | .215   | .859   | 97.369 |
| 22        | .200   | .799   | 98.169 |
| 23        | .182   | .727   | 98.896 |
| 24        | .156   | .622   | 99.518 |
| 25        | .120   | .482   | 100.000 |

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
### Rotated Component Matrix

| Component                                                                 | 1    | 2    | 3    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Recognition/appreciation from management                                | .146 | .381 | .605 |
| A fun working environment                                                | .321 | .435 | .256 |
| A springboard for future employment                                      | .189 | .447 | .441 |
| Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization | .345 | .211 | .682 |
| Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization | .322 | .235 | .691 |
| Gaining career-enhancing experience                                     | .184 | .285 | .724 |
| Having a good relationship with your superiors                           | .541 | .171 | .508 |
| Having a good relationship with your colleagues                          | .615 | .117 | .502 |
| Supportive and encouraging colleagues                                    | .655 | .150 | .437 |
| Working in an exciting environment                                       | .604 | .229 | .419 |
| Innovative employer – novel work practices / forward-thinking            | .544 | .189 | .434 |
| The organization both values and makes use of your creativity            | .486 | .361 | .435 |
| The organization produces high-quality products and services              | .673 | .311 | .219 |
| The organization produces innovative products and services                | .716 | .319 | .191 |
| Good promotion opportunities within the organization                     | .482 | .450 | .321 |
| Humanitarian organization – gives back to society                        | .755 | .201 | .192 |
| Opportunity to apply what was learned                                   | .591 | .309 | .387 |
| Opportunity to teach others what you have learned                        | .642 | .415 | .211 |
| Acceptance and belonging                                                 | .651 | .321 | .346 |
| The organization is customer-oriented                                    | .707 | .357 |      |
| Job security within the organization                                     | .357 | .630 | .273 |
| Hands-on inter-departmental experience                                   | .465 | .572 | .164 |
| Happy work environment                                                   | .478 | .556 | .277 |

### Appendix – 3: Reliability Analysis for Factors

| Factor       | Items                                                                 | Cronbach “Alp ha” |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Functional   | Having a good relationship with your colleagues                      | 0.916             |
|              | Supportive and encouraging colleagues                                |                   |
|              | Working in an exciting environment                                   |                   |
|              | The organization produces high-quality products and services         |                   |
|              | The organization produces innovative products and services           |                   |
|              | Humanitarian organization – gives back to society                    |                   |
|              | Opportunity to teach others what you have learned                    |                   |
|              | Acceptance and belonging                                             |                   |
|              | The organization is customer-oriented                                |                   |
| Economic     | Job security within the organization                                 | 0.816             |
|              | An above average basic salary                                         |                   |
|              | An attractive overall compensation package                            |                   |
| Psychological| Recognition/appreciation from management                             | 0.812             |
|              | Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization | |
|              | Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization | |
|              | Gaining career-enhancing experience                                  |                   |
### Appendix - 4: Independent Sample t-test (Gender)

|                                | Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances | t-test for Equality of Means |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                | F          | Sig. | Equal variances assumed | t     | df  | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Having a good relationship with your colleagues | 2.837 | .094 | Equal variances not assumed | -2.014 | 225 | .045 |
| Supportive and encouraging colleagues | 1.259 | .263 | Equal variances assumed | -1.287 | 225 | .199 |
| Working in an exciting environment | 1.705 | .193 | Equal variances not assumed | -1.496 | 225 | .136 |
| The organization produces high-quality products and services | .045 | .833 | Equal variances assumed | -.591 | 225 | .555 |
| The organization produces innovative products and services | .144 | .705 | Equal variances not assumed | -1.254 | 225 | .211 |
| Humanitarian organization – gives back to society | 2.823 | .094 | Equal variances not assumed | -1.652 | 225 | .100 |
| Opportunity to teach others what you have learned | 1.762 | .186 | Equal variances assumed | -.342 | 225 | .733 |
| Acceptance and belonging | .245 | .621 | Equal variances not assumed | -2.041 | 225 | .042 |
| The organization is customer-orientated | 1.266 | .262 | Equal variances not assumed | -1.946 | 225 | .053 |
| Job security within the organization | 7.684 | .006 | Equal variances not assumed | -.2057 | 225 | .041 |
| An above average basic salary | 3.596 | .059 | Equal variances not assumed | -.461 | 225 | .645 |
### Appendix – 5: ANOVA (Work Experience)

|                               | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F       | Sig. |
|-------------------------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|------|
| **Having a good relationship** |                |    |             |         |      |
| With your colleagues          | 140.441        | 223| .630        |         |      |
| Total                         | 140.793        | 226|             |         |      |
| Supportive and encouraging colleagues |       |    |             |         |      |
| Within Groups                 | 140.028        | 223| .628        |         |      |
| Total                         | 140.626        | 226|             |         |      |
| **Working in an exciting environment** |        |    |             |         |      |
| Within Groups                 | 171.845        | 223| .771        |         |      |
| Total                         | 172.300        | 226|             |         |      |
| **The organization produces high-quality products and services** |        |    |             |         |      |
| Within Groups                 | 189.997        | 223| .852        |         |      |
| Total                         | 191.410        | 226|             |         |      |
| **The organization produces innovative products and services** |        |    |             |         |      |
| Within Groups                 | 185.384        | 223| .831        |         |      |
| Total                         | 186.256        | 226|             |         |      |
| **Humanitarian organization** |                |    |             |         |      |
| - gives back to society       | 202.998        | 223| .910        |         |      |
| Total                         | 205.718        | 226|             |         |      |
| **Opportunity to teach others what you have learned** |        |    |             |         |      |
| Within Groups                 | 184.705        | 223| .828        |         |      |
| Total                         | 185.410        | 226|             |         |      |
|                              | Between Groups | Within Groups | Total     |
|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| Acceptance and belonging     |                |               |           |
| Total                         | 156.519        | 156.855       |           |
| The organization is          |                |               |           |
| customer-orientated           | .379           | 3             | .126      |
| Total                         | 211.621        | 223           | .949      |
| Job security within the       |                |               |           |
| organization                  | .191           | 3             | .064      |
| Total                         | 187.806        | 223           | .841      |
| An above average basic        |                |               |           |
| salary                        | .379           | 3             | .126      |
| Total                         | 134.849        | 223           | .605      |
| An attractive overall         |                |               |           |
| compensation package          | 1.031          | 3             | .344      |
| Total                         | 145.877        | 226           | .650      |
| Recognition/appreciation      |                |               |           |
| from management               | 3.887          | 3             | 1.292     |
| Total                         | 140.430        | 226           | 2.058     |
| Feeling good about            |                |               |           |
| yourself as a result of       | 1.095          | 3             | .365      |
| working for a particular      | Total           |               | .536      |
| organization                  | 151.980        | 226           | .682      |
| Feeling more self-            |                |               |           |
| confident as a result of      | .064           | 3             | .021      |
| working for a particular      | Total           |               | .035      |
| organization                  | 133.337        | 226           | .598      |
| Gaining career-enhancing      |                |               |           |
| experience                    | .588           | 3             | .196      |
| Total                         | 97.967         | 223           | .439      |

**REFERENCES**

1. Aaker, D. A. (2009). Managing brand equity. Simon and Schuster.
2. Aaker, D. A., & Joachimsthaler, E. (2000). The brand relationship spectrum: The key to the brand architecture challenge. California management review, 42(4), 8-23.
3. Agrawal, R. K., & Swaroop, P. (2009). Effect of employer brand image on application intentions of B-school undergraduates. Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective, 13(3), 41-49.
4. Alınıçık, E., & Alınıçık, Ü. (2012). Identifying dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding: effects of age, gender, and current employment status. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 58, 1336-1343.
5. Amblen, T., & Barrow, S. (1996). The employer brand. Journal of brand management, 4(3), 185-206.
6. Arachchige, B. J., & Robertson, A. (2011). Business student perceptions of a preferred employer: A study identifying determinants of employer branding. The IUP Journal of Brand Management, 8(3), 25-46.
7. Backhaus, K., & Tikoo, S. (2004). Conceptualizing and researching employer branding. Career development international, 9(5), 501-517.
8. Barber, A. E. (1998). Recruiting employees: Individual and organizational perspectives (Vol. 8). Sage Publications.
9. Barrow, S., & Mosley, R. (2005). The employer brand. England: John Wiley&Sons Ltd, 132-145.
10. Behling, O., Labovitz, G., & Gainer, M. (1968). College recruiting: A theoretical basis. Personnel Journal, 47, 13–19.
11. Bellou, V., Chaniotakis, I., Kehagias, I., & Rigopoulos, I. (2015). Employer brand of choice: an employee perspective. Journal of Business Economics and Management, 16(6), 1201-1215.
12. Berthon, P., Ewing, M., & Hah, L. L. (2005). Captivating company: dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding. International journal of advertising, 24(2), 151-172.
13. Branham, L. (2005). Planning to become an employer of choice. Journal of Organizational Excellence, 24(3), 57-68.

14. Burmann, C., Schaefer, K., & Maloney, P. (2008). Industry image: Its impact on the brand image of potential employees. The Journal of Brand Management, 15(3), 157–176.

15. Cable, D. M., & Turban, D. B. (2003). The value of organizational reputation in the recruitment context: A brand-equality perspective. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 33(11), 2244-2266.

16. Catanzaro, D., Moorhead, H., & Marshall, T. R. (2010). The impact of organizational culture on attraction and recruitment of job applicants. Journal of business and psychology, 25(4), 649-662.

17. Chapman, D.S, Uggerslev,K.L, Carroll,S.A, Piasentin, K.A, and Jones, D.A. (2005). Applicant Attraction to Organizations and Job Choice: A Meta-Analytic Review of the Correlates of Recruiting Outcomes. Journal of Applied Psychology 90(5) 928–944

18. Christiaans, L. (2012). International Employer Brand Management: A Multilevel Analysis and Segmentation of Students’ Preferences. Springer Science & Business Media.

19. Collins, C. J. (2007). The interactive effects of recruitment practices and product awareness on job seekers’ employer knowledge and application behaviors. Journal of applied psychology, 92(1), 180.

20. Collins, C. J., & Han, J. (2004). Exploring applicant pool quantity and quality: The effects of early recruitment practice strategies, corporate advertising, and firm reputation. Personnel psychology, 57(3), 685-717.

21. Collins, C. J., & Stevens, C. K. (2002). The relationship between recruitment-related activities and the application decisions of new labor-market entrants: a brand equity approach to recruitment. Journal of applied psychology, 87(6), 1121.

22. Davies, G. (2008). Employer branding and its influence on managers. European Journal of Marketing, 42(5/6), 667-681.

23. Davison, H. K., Maraist, C., & Bing, M. N. (2011). Friend or foe? The promise and pitfalls of using social networking sites for HR decisions. Journal of Business and Psychology, 26(2), 153-159.

24. Devendorf, S. A., & Highhouse, S. (2008). Applicant–employer similarity and attraction to an employer. Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 81(4), 607-617.

25. Edwards, M. R. (2009). An integrative review of employer branding and OB theory. Personnel review, 39(1), 5-23.

26. Ewing, M. T., Pitt, L. F., de Bussy, N. M., & Berthon, P. (2002). Employment branding in the knowledge economy. International Journal of Advertising, 21(1), 3–22.

27. Foster, C., Punjaisri, K., & Cheng, R. (2010). Exploring the relationship between corporate, internal and employer branding. Journal of Product & Brand Management, 19(6), 401-409.

28. Gatewood, R. D., Gowan, M. A., & Lautenschlager, G. J. (1993). Corporate image, recruitment image and initial job choice decisions. Academy of Management journal, 36(2), 414-427.

29. Gehrels, S. A., & de Looij, J. (2011). Employer branding: A new approach for the hospitality industry. Research in Hospitality Management, 1(1), 43-52.

30. Gritz, B. (2018). Place to Work; https://www.greatplacetowork.org/best-work-places/best-companies-to-work-for-2018/ Website accessed on 22 May, 2019.

31. Grunig, J. (1993) ‘Image and substance: from symbolic to behavioural relationships’, 32. Harold, C. M., & Ployhart, R. E. (2008). What do applicants want? Examining changes in attribute judgments over time. Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 81(2), 191-218.

32. Harris, M. M., & Fink, L. S. (1987). A field study of applicant reactions to employment opportunities: Does the recruiter make a difference?. Personnel Psychology, 40(4), 765-784.

33. Herman, R. E., & Gioia, J. L. (2000). How to become an employer of choice. Oak Hill Publishing Company.

34. Hieronimus, F., Schaefer, K., & Schroder, J. (2005). Using branding to attract talent. The McKinsey Quarterly, 3, 12-14.

35. Highhouse, S., Lievens, F., & Sinar, E. F. (2003). Measuring attraction to organizations. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 63(6), 986-1001.

36. Hillebrandt, I., & Ivens, B. S. (2013). Measuring employer brands: an examination of the factor structure, scale reliability and validity. In 2013 Winter Marketing Educators Conference.Schlagert et al., 2011.

37. Iacovou, C. L., Shirland, L., & Thompson, R. L. (2011). Job selection preferences of business students. Journal of Applied Business Research (JABR), 20(1).

38. Jain, N., & Bhatt, P. (2015). Employment preferences of job applicants: unfolding employer branding determinants. Journal of Management Development, 34(6).

39. Jiang, T., & Iles, P. (2011). Employer-brand equity, organizational attractiveness and talent management in the Zhejiang private sector, China. Journal of Technology Management in China, 6(1), 97-110.

40. Johnson, M. (2000). Winning the people wars: Talent and the battle for human capital. Prentice Hall.

41. Judge, T. A., & Cable, D. M. (1997). Applicant personality, organizational culture, and organization attraction. Personnel Psychology, 50(2), 359-394.

42. Kapferer, J.-N. (2008). The New Strategic Brand Management: Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term (4th ed.). London: Kogan Page

43. Karp, H., Fuller, C. and Sirias, D. (2002). Bridging the Boomer-Xer Gap: Creating Authentic Teams for High Performance at Work, Intercultural Press

44. Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. the Journal of Marketing, 1-22.

45. Keller, K. L. (2008). Strategic Brand Management (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

46. Knox, S., & Freeman, C. (2006). Measuring and managing employer brand image in the service industry. Journal of Marketing Management, 22(7-8), 695-716.

47. Kucherov, D., & Zavyalova, E. (2012). HRD practices and talent management in the companies with the employer brand. European Journal of Training and Development, 36(1), 86-104.

48. Lievens, F. (2007). Employer branding in the Belgian Army: The importance of instrumental and symbolic beliefs for potential applicants, actual applicants, and military employees. Human Resource Management, 46(1), 51-69.

49. Lievens, F., & Highhouse, S. (2003). The relation of instrumental and symbolic attributes to a company’s attractiveness as an employer. Personnel Psychology, 56(1), 75-102.
51. Lievens, F., Hoye, G., & Schreurs, B. (2005). Examining the relationship between employer knowledge dimensions and organizational attractiveness: An application in a military context. Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 78(4), 553-572.

52. Lievens, F., Van Hoye, G., & Anseele, F. (2007). Organizational identity and employer image: towards a unifying framework. British Journal of Management, 18(1), S45-S59.

53. Lloyd, S. (2002). Branding from the inside out. Business Review Weekly, 24(10), 64-66.

54. Madera, J. M. (2012). Using social networking websites as a selection tool: The role of selection process fairness and job pursuit intentions. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 31(4), 1276-1282.

55. Mangold, W. G., & Miles, S. J. (2007). The employer brand: Is yours an all-star?. Business Horizons, 50(5), 423-433.

56. Martin, G., & Hetrick, S. (2009). Employer branding and corporate reputation management in an international context. Handbook of International Human Resource Management. Integrating People, Process, and Context. Chichester, 2009, 293-320.

57. Martin, G., Beaumont, P., Doig, R., & Pate, J. (2005). Branding:: A New Performance Discourse for HR?. European Management Journal, 23(1), 76-88.

58. Maurer, S. D., Howe, V., & Lee, T. W. (1992). Organizational recruiting as marketing management: An interdisciplinary study of engineering graduates. Personnel Psychology, 45(4), 807-833.

59. Meister, J.C. and Willyerd, K. (2010). The 2020 Workplace: How Innovative Companies Attract, Develop, and Keep Tomorrow's Employees Today. HarperCollins Publishers.

60. Minchington, B., & Thorne, K. (2007). Measuring the effectiveness of your employer brand. Human Resources Magazine, 12(4), 14-16.

61. Montgomery, D. B., & Ramus, C. A. (2007). Including corporate social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and ethics in calibrating MBA job preferences. Graduate School of Business, Stanford University.

62. Moroko, L., & Uncles, M. D. (2008). Characteristics of successful employer brands. Journal of Brand Management, 16(3), 160-175.

63. Moroko, L., & Uncles, M. D. (2009). Employer branding and market segmentation. Journal of Brand management, 17(3), 181-196.

64. Moy, J. W., & Lee, S. M. (2002). The career choice of business graduates: SMEs or MNCs?. Career Development International, 7(6), 339-347.

65. Nunnally, J. (1978). C.(1978). Psychometric theory, 2.

66. Ployhart, R. E. (2006). Staffing in the 21st century: New challenges and strategic opportunities. Journal of Management, 32(6), 868-897.

67. Public Relations Review, 19 (2): 121–39

68. Rampi, L. V. (2014). How to become an employer of choice: transforming employer brand associations into employer first-choice brands. Journal of Marketing Management, 30(13-14), 1486-1504.

69. Reis, G. G., & Braga, B. M. (2016). Employer attractiveness from a generational perspective: Implications for employer branding. Revista de Administração, 51(1), 103-116.

70. Ritson, M. (2002). Marketing and HR collaborate to harness employer brand power. Marketing, 18-18.

71. Rosengren, S., & Bondesson, N. (2014). Consumer advertising as a signal of employer attractiveness. International Journal of Advertising, 33(2), 253-269.

72. Roy, S. K. (2008). Identifying the Dimensions of Attractiveness of an Employer Brand in the Indian Context. South Asian Journal of Management, 15(4).

73. Rynes, S. L., & Barber, A. E. (1990). Applicant attraction strategies: An organizational perspective. Academy of Management Review, 15(2), 286-310.

74. Sartain, L., & Schumann, M. (2008). Brand from the inside: Eight essentials to emotionally connect your employees to your business. John Wiley & Sons.

75. Schiffmann, E., Tambe, N., Gelles, M., Azaroff, R., Goldfarb, E., & Siemon, H. (2010). Deloitte millennial model. An approach to Gen Y readiness. Deloitte Development LLC, 3.

76. Schlager, T., Boddidas, M., Maas, P., & Luc Cachelin, J. (2011). The influence of the employer brand on employee attitudes relevant for service branding: an empirical investigation. Journal of Services Marketing, 25(7), 497-508.

77. Sedighi, F., & Loosemore, M. (2012). Employer-of-choice characteristics in the construction industry. Construction Management and Economics, 30(11), 941-950.

78. Sivertzen, A. M., Ragnhild Nilsen, E., & H. Olafsen, A. (2013). Employer branding: employer attractiveness and the use of social media. Journal of Product & Brand Management, 22(7), 473-483.

79. Smith, K., Gregory, S. R., & Cannon, D. (1996). Becoming an employer of choice: Assessing commitment in the hospitality workplace. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 8(6), 3-9.

80. Sokro, E. (2012). Impact of employer branding on employee attraction and retention. European Journal of Business and Management, 4(18), 164-173.

81. Srivastava, P., & Bhatnagar, J. (2010). Employer brand for talent acquisition: An exploration towards its measurement. Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective, 14(1-2), 25-34.

82. Sutherland, M. M., Torricelli, D. G., & Karg, R. F. (2002). Employer-of-choice branding for knowledge workers. S Afr J of Business Manage, 33(4), 13-20.

83. Tanwar, K., & Kumar, A. (2019). Employer brand, person-organisation fit and employer of choice: Investigating the moderating effect of social media. Personnel Review.

84. Thornbury, E. E., & Brooks, M. E. (2010). Signals of employer impressiveness and respectability to job market entrants. Corporate Reputation Review, 13(3), 172-183.

85. Turban, D. B. (2001). Organizational attractiveness as an employer on college campuses: An examination of the applicant population. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 58(2), 293-312.

86. Turban, D. B., & Dougherty, T. W. (1992). Influences of campus recruiting on applicant attraction to firms. Academy of Management Journal, 35(4), 739-765.

87. Turban, D. B., Forret, M. L., & Hendrickson, C. L. (1998). Applicant attraction to firms: Influences of organization reputation, job and organizational attributes, and recruiter behaviors. Journal of vocational behavior, 52(1), 24-44.

88. Tuzuner, V. L., & Yuksel, C. A. (2009). Segmenting potential employees according to Firm’s employer attractiveness dimensions in the employer brand context. Journal of Academic Research in Economics (JARE), 62.

89. Walker, P., & Higgins, A. (2007). Employer branding: A no-nonsense approach. Retrieved October, 14, 2008.
90. Wickham, M., & O’Donohue, W. (2009). Developing ‘employer of choice’ status: exploring an employment marketing mix. Organization Development Journal, 27(3), 77-95.

91. Zemke, R., Raines, C., & Filipczak, B. (1999). Generations at work: Managing the clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in your workplace. Amacom.

92. Zhu, F., Wang, Z., Yu, Q., Hu, T., Wen, Y., & Liu, Y. (2014). Reconsidering the dimensionality and measurement of employer brand in the Chinese context. Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal, 42(6), 933-948.