

Assessing the Role of Demographic Variables on Employer Branding.

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies the influence of demographic variables like age, gender, qualification and work experience for the impact of early recruitment activities (ERA) and employer brand knowledge (EBK) on Organization attractiveness (OA) and Firm Performance (FP). The questionnaire was administered on 750 final year students of MBA, MCA and BE. The companies were chosen on the basis of NASSCOM top 20 IT-BPM employers in India 2015-16. It was observed that early recruitment activities (ERA) have significance negative impact and Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) have significance positive impact on Organization attractiveness (OA) for both the age groups and both the genders, for only MBA students and with nil and 1-2 years of experience. While only Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) have significance impact on Firm Performance (FP) for both the age groups and both the genders and nil level of experience. When designing the advertisement and publicity campaign, the employer need to be very careful as it can lead to negative effect on attractiveness of organization. They should focus more on developing employer brand knowledge with respect to brand awareness, reputation and image. The originality of the review is its uniqueness in showing how different demographic can play important role in deciding the employer brand strategies for any organization which can help in focusing the right target groups for employer brand building.

Keywords: Employer Branding, early recruitment activities (ERA), employer brand knowledge (EBK), internal branding, organization attractiveness (OA) and Firm Performance (FP).

INTRODUCTION

Veloutsou & Guzman (2017) with the thorough analysis of the JPBM journal's contribution discussed about employer brand for attracting employees and role of human like brand characteristics including brand personality. The concept of Employer Brand (EB) has gained lot of attention in recent years. Van Mossevelde (2010) suggested that companies with strong employer brands attracts more applicants in the labor market and afford to pay less salary as compared to companies with poor employer brands for the similar position. Minchington, (2008) suggested that conceptualizing and managing the employer brand of the organization requires sufficient expertise in communication. The employer brand helps in communicating the desired benefits available for working for a specific and its unique employee value proposition (EVP) to all the employees i.e potential and current employees (Love and Singh, 2011). Martin et al. (2011:3618) conceptualized employer branding as "a generalized recognition

for being known among key stakeholders for providing a high-quality employment experience, and a distinctive organizational identity which employees value, engage with and feel confident and happy to promote to others". Employer branding leads to reduced recruitment costs as the process of recruitment is shortened and become more flexible. This is due that more employees wants to work for the firm, and therefore it becomes easy to attract the potential employees (Heilmann et al., 2013; Kalyankar, Mathur, and Bakshi, 2014a). A strong employer brand works as a "crisis shield" when there are problems as reputed employer brand will be given the benefit of the doubt, a privilege not usually provided to anonymous or poorly regarded brands (Kalyankar, Mathur, and Baski, 2014b). A good employer brand supports the right workforce to apply. Therefore the firm can avoid those candidates whose goal and objectives do not fit with the organization (Heilmann et al., 2013; Gupta et al., 2014).

Many researchers have shown keen interest in studying the role of demographic variables on employer brand building and overall organization attractiveness. Mencl and Lester (2014) studies shows that there are differences regarding career development, diversity management, and fast feedback and quick recognition, which were more valued by Generation Y. According to Newbury et al. (2006) attractiveness is "in the eyes of the beholder" and many factors like contextual and demographic characteristics like age, gender, ethnicity, income, and education influence people's perceptions of how attractive is an organization.

Bigoness(1998) recorded the job attribute preferences of MBA students with respect to gender of United States. It was found that female respondents placed larger importance on career or professional growth than the male. While males gave more importance to pay or salary. It was seen that there was no major differences in perception for work environment across the two genders (Bigoness, 1988). Chew & Teo (1993) explored differences in male and female for job and organization attributes among undergraduates in Singapore. They found that the job attribute preferences are influenced by gender and are influenced by age, work experience, ethnicity and professional training area. Tolbert & Moen (1998) studies the changes brought by age over time across gender preferences for five important job attributes—job security, working hours, high income, promotion opportunities and meaningful work. With respect to men, women put more importance to jobs which give a sense of accomplishment than those that provided promotions or security for the job. It was also seen that women put meaningful work as a first preference, and men ranked promotion and career growth and security with the job higher (Tolbert & Moen, 1998). Konrad *et al.* (2000) studies conducted in US showed small but significant differences in preferences for job attribute for men and women. Men give more importance to earnings, leadership, freedom, and challenge, power and career growth than women. Women valued good relationship with the others, ease of commute, good hours and assisting others more than men. Gokuladas (2010) also showed that the female employees rated career development in company as crucial indicator for accepting a specific job than their male colleagues. This finding contradicts the acceptable norm for men giving importance to their career, and this shows that career is as important to women employees.

Tuzuner and Yuksel (2009) also showed perception of potential employees for an organization attractiveness differs across gender. Females like work environment which is non-competitive, while work place which is brand oriented are preferred by males. The study conducted by Robertson and Khatibi (2013) found a strong relationship between organization showing strong employer brand and level of productivity of the employees. The results indicated that there is important role of senior managers in building employer brands. Alnaicike and Alnaicike (2012) found significant difference between the factors of employer attractiveness dimensions among the different genders. The female gave higher importance to social value, application value, cooperation value and market value but not to the economic value and

workplace environment when compared to males. It was also found that there was weak but significant and positive association between the age and market value dimension.

Various studies have shown that Gen Y employees demand high salary and benefits (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Hess & Jepsen, 2009). Studies have also shown that excellent salary was considered most important for the job and organizational attributes (Ng & Burke, 2006; Phillips *et al.*, 1994; Tolbert & Moen, 1998). As also given by Morton (2002), good organization culture, proper training and equity in salary attracts Gen Y employees to organizations. Meier *et al.* (2010) suggested work place environment as the most crucial factor by Gen Y when deciding on the organization they want to work for which give them a place to be successful and provide a good time. Previous research are focusing on factors of employer attractiveness dimensions or benefits obtained among the different groups with respect to gender, age, qualification and work studies (Tuzuner and Yuksel, 2009; Alnaicike and Alnaicike, 2012; Gokuladas (2010)). There are very few studies which look into effect of age, gender, qualification and work experience on the early recruitment activities like publicity, word of mouth, advertising and sponsorship as given by Collins and Stevens (2002) and see its effect on Organization Attractiveness and Firm Performance.

This study is also focusing its attention to effect of age, gender, qualification and work experience on employer brand knowledge as given by Cable and Turban (2001) which consist of employer awareness or familiarity, employer image or job association and employer reputation on Organization Attractiveness and Firm Performance. This study is trying to fill the gap as how early recruitment activities (ERA) and employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) effect Organization attractiveness (OA) and Firm Performance (FP) across different groups. No other studies have explored this area of employer branding and using multi group analysis have seen the difference across different categories of respondents. The organization may benefit through this research in understanding how to designed focused strategy for each group.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational attractiveness (OA):

'Employer attractiveness' concept is closely related to 'employer branding'. This concept is frequently discussed in the area of vocational behaviour (Soutar & Clarke 1983), management (Gatewood *et al.* 1993), applied psychology (Jurgensen 1978; Collins & Stevens 2002), communication (Bergstrom *et al.* 2002) and marketing (Ambler & Barrow 1996; Gilly & Wolfinbarger 1998; Ambler 2000; Ewing *et al.* 2002). Berthon *et al.* (2005) described 'employer attractiveness' as the "envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation". Many studies that have studied early recruitment stages and potential applicants' attraction have found that organizational attraction is decided by perception of applicants of organizational and job characteristics like, opportunities for promotion, location, organizational structure, salary and career growth programmes (Highhouse *et al.* 1999; Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997; Lievens, Decaestecker, Coetsier, & Geirnaert 2001; Cable & Graham, 2000; Lievens & Highhouse 2003; Turban & Keon, 1993). Many researchers have shown that decisions to apply to an organization are decided by the general impression that applicants have about the company's overall attractiveness (Belt & Paolillo, 1982; Rynes, 1991; Fombrun & Shanley, 1990).

Firm Performance (FP):

Fulmer *et al.*, (2003) study showed that the time and resources spent to create and facilitate positive employee relation is always an important and worthwhile investment. As positive employer reputation is difficult to copy and remain over a time period, they give unique and sustainable competitive advantage for the organization (Robert & Dowling, 2002). Hence even

though there is additional cost required to provide employee friendly practices, the benefits are much greater which can compensate for the extra cost (Fulmer et al.,2003).Therefore creating positive employee relations is very challenging task, but those firms who are engaged continuously and blocking investment into this practice are not regret this decision(Romero,2004). Some of the common practices of Fortune's 100 Best in (2004) included training and development, onsite athletic facilities, cafeteria, free or low-cost health care and recognition of excellent performance(Romero,2004).By using content analysis of website of Fortune's 100 best companies, Joyce(2003), argued that Fortune's 100 best companies are differentiated by employee development and engagements, fun work environment and diversity initiatives (p.77).Companies which are part of Fortune's 100 best companies list have better market values and higher return than matched firm which are not part of the list (Ballou et al.,2003; Fulmer et al., 2003).

Employer branding(EB):

For attracting, motivating, and retaining talented employees, many organizations try to become employer of choice where they are always the first choice for top talented candidates due to their reputation and status for their HR practices and corporate culture (Sutherland et al.,2002). The efforts of an organization for recruiting job seekers are same as the organization's efforts in attracting consumers for the product and services purchases.(Cable &Turban, 2001).Employer branding can be called as "the package of functional, economical and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company" (Barrow, Ambler, 1996 quoted by Wilkinson, 2008).Ewing, et al (2002, p. 14) suggested that employment brand equity as "a set of employment brand assets linked to an employment brand, its name and symbol that add to (or subtract from) the value provided by an organization to the organisation's employees". Sullivan (2004) conceptualized Employer branding as a focused strategy to handle perception or image of potential employees, existing employees, and all stakeholders for a given organization. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) suggested that final result of employer branding is brand loyalty which contributes towards increasing employee productivity. Tanwar. K. and Prasad. A. (2016) used qualitative analysis of an IT company and found how the employer branding efforts leads to increase retention among employees. The research also showed that employer branding play an important role in building brand advocates who spread positive word of mouth about their organization. Kashyap.V. and Rangnekar.S. (2016) investigated the interrelationships among employer brand perception (EBP), trust in leaders (TRT) and turnover intentions (TI) and showed that that EBP and subordinate's TRT were negatively associated with TI.

Employer branding does not only aid in hiring but also helps companies to retain the top talent by continuously defining itself by internal feedbacks from its employees (Biswas& Suaur, 2016).It is difficult to understand how companies brand themselves as great place to work. According to Ghadeer(2016) it is a "magic spell that allows organizations to differentiate themselves from others in the market place." Not only it provides consumer product or services but also sustainable workplace culture which is maintained through its interaction with employees and top management which provide its uniqueness (Verma & Ahmad,2016).The companies can always work better when they listen to the feedback given by employee's (Vatsa,2016).Sengupta, Bamel & Singh(2015) found out six factors for internal employer branding and five factors for external employer branding. The study also showed that demographic values do effect the work value preferences. Kuchero and Zamulin(2016) studied the IT companies in Russia for understanding how employer branding can be used to attract and retain the talent. According to them HRD managers have to identify the appropriate employer branding strategy by analyzing the core benefits (functional, economic, and psychological) provided by employment.

Aurand et al. (2005) indicate that internal branding and employer branding are synonymous and constitute the components of HRM and internal communication. According to Saleem & Iglesias (2016) internal branding and employer branding both concepts are distinct yet very overlapping. For example, Edwards (2009) suggests that employer branding activities are the application of branded HR activities towards current and potential employees. Similarly, Kimpakorn and Tocquer(2009) conceptualized employer brand as the processes that employees encounter in their daily work, such as HRM practices and management styles. Mosley(2007) also use the term “employer brand” in referring to the internal process that leads to successful consumer–brand interactions. Hence some researcher see employer brand as a process targeted towards potential employees to deliver the brand promise while other researcher see employer branding as an internally targeted process. Internal branding is also seen that begins with the recruitment of potential employees and extends to the training and management of existing employees (M’zungu et al., 2010), showing that internal branding focus across the complete life cycle of employees’ from pre-employment to post-employment.

Saleem & Iglesias (2016) found that internal branding consist of five key components as a part of corporate culture (brand ideologies, brand leadership, brand-centred human resource management (HRM), internal brand communication and internal brand communities). They also suggested that internal branding is related to employer branding with respect to its discipline, focus, components, outcome and role. Internal branding is used mostly in marketing and brand literature while employer branding is specially used in human resource management discipline, management and personnel management area. Second difference is their goal as internal branding goal is the co-creation of brand value between different stakeholders through all-encompassing internal processes whereas employer branding goal is to differentiate the brand in the minds of prospective employees and make the organization an appealing place to work and also aims to position the brand as an attractive choice in terms of talent acquisition (Rampl and Kenning, 2014). With respect to focus the internal branding facilitates employee co-creation of value with multiple stakeholders of the brand and specially towards existing employees (Mahnert and Torres, 2007). But the focus of employer branding is more towards existing and prospective employees (Knox and Freeman, 2006; Lloyd, 2002). The internal branding consist of brand ideologies, brand leadership, brand-centred HRM, internal brand communication and internal brand communities. While employer branding focus on recruitment and talent attraction by differentiating a firm from its competitors (Edwards, 2009; Wilden et al., 2010). The role of internal branding is a facilitator of employee-stakeholder relationships by providing tools to co-create brand value with the stake holders whereas employer branding act as a differentiator of corporate identity and communicator of symbolic and instrumental beliefs.

Early recruitment activities(ERA):

Collins and Stevens(2002) studied the students perception about how favourable they were towards particular organization and their applying intention for a job at these given organizations. It was seen that students have more positive attitudes towards organization that sponsor events at their institute and university and that have higher favourable corporate profile. Collins and Stevens (2002) suggested that four early recruitment activities like publicity, word of mouth, advertising and sponsorship focussed exposure will affect the decision to apply for a particular organization.

Publicity

Publicity is defined as information regarding a product or service communicated by the editorial media which is not paid by the organization (Cameron, 1994) and considered as very effective way of enhancing product brand image (Aaker, 1991). Although such publicity is

beyond the control of an organization, they can surely control the publicity received through public relations campaigns and press releases (Cameron, 1994).

Sponsorship

Corporate sponsorship activities are quite often used to increase consumers' brand awareness (Aaker, 1996). Some studies have shown that corporate sponsorships can improve both corporate images and brand by creating positive affect among people who become aware of the sponsorship activities and attend sponsored events (Johar & Pham, 1999). Hence sponsorship shows larger impact on applicant general attitudes than their job attributes or brand image perceptions.

Word-of-mouth endorsements

Word-of-mouth endorsements can play important role in also be enhancing Brand images, which is a usual approach for creating consumers' brand knowledge (Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, & Donthu, 1995). Research have shown that consumers like to reduce the risks of their purchases by gathering information from credible sources, like relative and friends or people having relevant expertise (Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995). Such sources can provide both general attitudes and specific attributes information about available brands.

Advertising

Advertising refers to "paid, professionally designed messages, channelled through various media outlets, that are used to modify consumers' perceptions" (Aaker, 1996). As advertising is directly managed by employers, it can be used to form brand-attribute associations which are favourable in mind of the consumers (Boulding, Lee, & Staelin, 1994) as well as to create favourable image toward the brand (Milgrom & Roberts, 1986; Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995). Recruitment advertising can be in the form of job postings and brochures which is used by the employer to distribute information about openings in the organization (Rynes, 1991).

H1: There is a significant difference in effect of early recruitment activities (ERA) on organization attractiveness (OA) among applicants of different age groups, gender, qualification and work experience.

H2: There is a significant difference in effect of early recruitment activities (ERA) on Firm Performance (FP) among applicants of different age groups, gender, qualification and work experience.

Employer Brand Knowledge(EBK):

Collins and Stevens (2002) on the basis of consumer brand equity research have shown that there are two dimensions of employment brand equity namely: employer associations and employer awareness. Collins and Stevens (2002) suggested that brand associations further consists of both attributes and attitudes. They described attitudes "as the level of general positive feelings that job seekers hold toward an organization and perceived attributes as job seekers' beliefs about specific aspects of the job and work environment of the organization". Previous research have shown the importance of employer awareness or familiarity with the employer reputation which influence the perception about attractiveness when choosing a potential employer (Collins & Stevens, 2002; Lievens, Decaestecker, Coetsier & Geirnaert, 2001). The perception about an organization is shown by its overall corporate reputation that may attract the applicants and they would like to pursue employment with the organization (Turban & Cable, 2003; Ng & Burke, 2006). Keller (1998) also showed that knowledge of brand consists of its image and awareness of the given brand. Where brand image enhances the associations which are related to either product or non-products attributes, benefits (economical, functional and symbolic) and attitudes. On similar lines Cable and Turban (2001) described "employer knowledge as job seeker's memories and association with respect to an

organization as a (potential) employer". Employer knowledge provides applicants with a template for storing and recalling organization related information. They divided employer knowledge into three broad dimensions: employer awareness or familiarity, employer image or job association and employer reputation. These related dimensions of employer knowledge impact applicants' level of attraction for an organization as a great place to work.

Employer familiarity or Awareness

Employer familiarity or the level of awareness that an applicant have about the organization is the first dimension (Cable & Turban,2001;Collins & Stevens,2002).Employer's familiarity is decided by the perception of the attractiveness by the applicants as an employer, and more familiar is the organizations more it is perceived attractive (Cable & Graham, 2000; Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993; Turban, 2001; Turban & Greening, 1997; Brooks, Highhouse, Russell, & Mohr, 2003).

Employer image

Employer knowledge's second dimension is employer image. This dimension showcase the beliefs acquired and formed by the applicant about an organization as an potential (Cable & Turban, 2001; Highhouse et al., 1999). Cable and Turban (2001) suggest that potential applicants have beliefs about job attributes which are objective of the organization which include employer information with respect to location, size, and geographical dispersion and level of centralization.

Davies et al.(2001) distinguished identity from image and said that identity is the view held by employees of the company while image as the view held by external stakeholder(e.g customers) Many researchers (Aaker,1997) have discussed the ideas of organizations having personality characteristics like symbolic and instrumental personality characteristics. Lievens and Highhouse(2003) refers to refer to organizational and job attributes as instrumental attributes as they describe the organization or job in terms of objective, factual and concrete attributes that a organization or a specific job either possess or not. Lievens et al. (2007) states that "employer branding is a specific form of managing corporate identities by creating both within and outside the firm an image of the firm as a distinct and desirable employer".Lievens and Highhouse(2003) showed that symbolic dimension of image had incremental variance above instrumental attributes in predicting bank's attractiveness as perceived by the employees. Slaughter et al.(2004) confirmed that symbolic dimensions of image were related to organizational attractiveness and specific traits assigned to organizations for students personality traits. Lievens, Van Hove and Schreurs(2005) also showed the incremental variance of symbolic image over instrumental image component in explaining students' attraction toward any organization.

Aaker (1997) developed a 42-item Brand Personality Scale (using a 1 = not at all descriptive to 5 =extremely descriptive Likert scale). Davies et al. (2001a) then went on to develop their own instrument with seven main personality dimensions: agreeableness, enterprise, competence, chic, ruthlessness, informality, machismo. Chun and Davies (2006) used that instrument to compare customer and employee perceptions of corporate brands. Slaughter et al. (2004) used various personality instruments to develop five factors, which they called: Boy Scout, innovativeness, dominance, thrift and style. Davies(2008) explored the effect of employer brand on differentiation, affinity, satisfaction and loyalty as perceived by the employee. Brand personality is a holistic view of brand association by using the metaphor of brand as a person and applying personality test to the brand. Srivastava.K. and Sharma. N.K.(2016) studied Airtel brand personality in India using Aaker's brand personality measurement framework (1997). The study measured five brand personality dimensions, namely, sincerity, excitement,

competence, sophistication and ruggedness. Results showed that the items under 'sophistication' dimension such as feminine, good-looking, glamorous and smooth were not relevant with Airtel brand personality. Thus, the remaining four dimensions, namely, sincerity, excitement, competence and ruggedness were combined to form a higher order construct, namely, Brand Personality. These dimensions were found to be important in Indian context.

Rampl, & Kenning(2014) study results indicated that employer brand trust and affect are both influenced by the brand personality trait sincerity. Further, employer brand affect was positively affected by the traits excitement and sophistication, while negatively affected by ruggedness. Hence ruggedness brand personality trait can negatively affect the employer brand. Research has also found that perceived brand personality is considered by potential employees when considering working for a company, as well as it affects the performance of current employees (Gammoh et al., 2014).

Employer Brand reputation

The Cable and Turban's (2001) third dimension of employer knowledge refers to the public image audit of an organization or overall employer reputation. Many times overall employer reputation is described by its economic success (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990), some studies recently provided an innovative trait-oriented perspective to employer reputation (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse, & Mohr, 2004). These studies have indicated that potential employees reliably and meaningfully associate traits to organizations. The examples could be that people may refer to some employers as trendy and chic, while others as prestigious. As given by Lievens and Highhouse(2003) and Lievens et al.(2007), employer brand's symbolic image describes the organisation in with respect to its "subjective, abstract and intangible attributes" which is linked to the image of the organization (Lievens et al., 2007 p. S48).

H3: There is a significant difference in effect of Employer Brand knowledge (EBK) on organization attractiveness (OA) among applicants of different age groups, gender, qualification and work experience.

H4: There is a significant difference in effect of Employer Brand knowledge (EBK) on Firm Performance (FP) among applicants of different age groups, gender, qualification and work experience.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Total nine IT companies were chosen to assess their external organizational attractiveness. These companies were mix of companies having different reputations. The companies were chosen on the basis of their ranking on NASCOMM top 20 IT-BPM companies in India 2015-16. The questionnaire was circulated to 1000 students and completely filled 750 surveys were collected. Thus the respondent rate was 75.00 %. The students were chosen from different courses, age group and gender. The students were classified into three categories as those pursuing MBA, MCA and final year B.E (computer science, electronics) students. The data was collected from eight different colleges in Mumbai. Out of 750 data, 148 were collected by google form and 602 were collected by circulating hard copy of forms.

The demographic profile of 750 student's respondents. It is seen that 53.2% are in age group of 20-22 years and 40.8% are in age group of 23-25 years, 5.2% in 26-28 years and 0.8 % are in 29-31 years. With respect to gender 42.4 % are female and 57.6% are male. 10.8% are pursuing B.E, 78.3 % are pursuing MBA and 10.9% are pursuing MCA. 57.6% have no experience, 18.9 % have 1-2 years and 11.5 % have 3-5 years and 7.2% have more than 5 years. When asked how do they look for employment 51.1 % students said from internet, 22.8% from

networking,10.8% from recruitment agencies,4.7% from classified,5.9% from word of mouth and 4.8% from any other source.

Questionnaire:

Demographic details of the respondents with respect to the age, gender, qualification and work experience were collected. Employer Brand knowledge (EBK) was measured by scale used by Collins (2007) having three dimensions of employer image (job information) with eight items, employer familiarity with four items and employer reputation with four items. Respondents were ask to rate items for each measure on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Early recruitment activities(ERA) was measured by scale developed by Collins and Stevens (2002) having publicity with two items, word-of-mouth endorsements with four items, sponsorship with three items and advertising with four items. All the 13 items were measured on scale ranging from 1 {strongly disagree} to 5 {strongly agree}. Organizational attractiveness (OA) was measured by three items measuring perceived organizational attractiveness proposed by Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar (2003).Firm Performance (FP) was measured by scale adopted from Chun (2001b).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The reliability values were good for all the variables namely ERA as 0.819,EBK as 0.875, OA ex as 0.833 and FP as 0.792.With respect to early recruitment activities (ERA) publicity has highest mean value of 3.69 followed bu word of mouth with 3.49.When considering employer brand knowledge, Functional Job Association has value of 3.75 and Employer Reputation has value of 3.65.Both External Org Attractiveness and Firm Performance have around 3.9 mean value.

Table 1:Non-parametric test for Demographic variables

	PUB	SPON	WOM	ADV	EBA	ER	FJA	OA	FP
Age						sig			
Gender	sig						sig	sig	sig
Qualification	sig	sig	sig	sig	sig	sig	sig	sig	sig
Work experience				sig	sig				

Table 1 depict that for the demographic variable of Gender there is significance difference between the variables Publicity, Function job association, Organization Attractiveness and Firm Performance. It is seen that for the demographic variable of Age there is significance difference between the variables Employer Reputation. It is also seen that for the variable Qualification there is significance difference between the all variables of ERA(Publicity, Sponsorship, advertisement and word of mouth),EBK(Employer Reputation, Employer Brand awareness and Function job association), Organization Attractiveness and Firm Performance. Similarly from Table 1 it is seen that for the variable years of experience there is significance difference between the variables Advertisement and Employer Brand Awareness.

Multi- level analysis

Figure 1: SEM- Employer Branding (General Model)

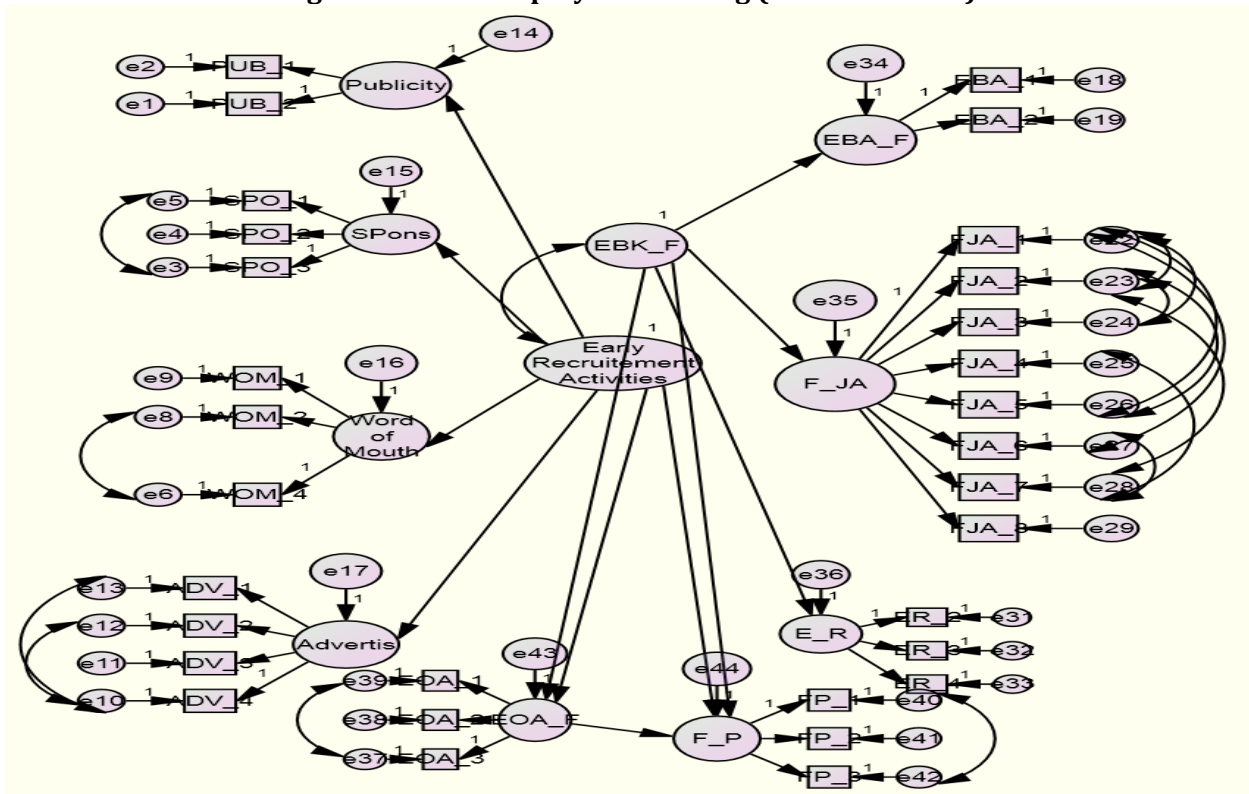


Table 2: Model fit Summary for all the Demographic variables

Variable	CMIN/DF	RMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Age	1.918	0.067	0.873	0.845	0.832	0.898	0.911	0.036
Gender	1.970	0.068	0.876	0.849	0.836	0.898	0.911	0.036
Qualification	2.065	0.069	0.828	0.789	0.770	0.844	0.864	0.038
Work Experience	1.827	0.081	0.833	0.796	0.778	0.866	0.883	0.035

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing for Age and Gender

Hypothesis		Age 20-22 years		23-25 years		Gender Male		Female	
		Beta values	P	Beta values	p	Beta value	p	Beta value	p
H1	(ERA) --- (OA)	-.349	*** -ve	-.408	***	-.365	***	-.404	** *
H2	(EBK)---- (OA)	1.089	*** +ve	1.137	***	1.154	***	1.036	** *
H3	(ERA)- (FP)	-.413		-.362		-.369		-.506	
H4	(EBK)-- (FP)	1.315	**	1.244	**	1.262	**	1.513	**

***-1% significance level

**-.5 % significance level

As shown in table 2 model fit summary for the Age gives CMIN/DF value 1.918.RMR is 0.067 and GFI value is 0.873.The AGFI value is 0.845 which should be greater than or equal to 0.80 as suggested by Chau and Hu (2001).NFI value is 0.832 which should be around 0.90 as per Hair et al.(1998).TLI value is 0.898 and CFI value is 0.911 as both should be greater than 0.90 according to Bagozzi and YI (1988).RMSEA value is 0.036 which should be less than 0.08 as suggested by MacCallum et al.(1996).

As seen in the path diagram shown in figure 1 sponsorship, word of mouth, advertisement and publicity all are significantly contributing to early recruitment activities (ERA). Similarly employer reputation, employer awareness and job association are significantly contributing to employer brand knowledge (EBK). From table 3 it seen that early recruitment activities (ERA) have significance negative impact and Employer Brand Knowledge(EBK) have significance positive impact on Organization attractiveness (OA) at 1% sig level and Employer Brand Knowledge(EBK) have significant positive effect on Firm Performance (FP) at 5% sig level for both the age groups of 20-22 and 23-25 years. Hence hypothesis H1, H3 and H4 are supported while H2 is not supported for both the groups.

The model fit summary for the Gender as shown in table 2 gives CMIN/DF value 1.970. RMR is 0.068 and GFI value is 0.876. The AGFI value is 0.849 which should be greater than or equal to 0.80 as suggested by Chau and Hu (2001). NFI value is 0.836 which should be around 0.90 as per Hair et al. (1998). TLI value is 0.898 and CFI value is 0.911 as both should be greater than 0.90 according to Bagozzi and Yi (1988). RMSEA value is 0.036 which should be less than 0.08 as suggested by MacCallum et al. (1996)

From table 3 it seen that early recruitment activities (ERA) have significance negative impact and Employer Brand Knowledge(EBK) have significance positive impact on Organization attractiveness (OA) at 1% sig level and Employer Brand Knowledge(EBK) have significant positive effect on Firm Performance (FP) at 5% sig level for both the Male and Female. Hence hypothesis H1, H3 and H4 are supported while H2 is not supported for both the groups.

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing for Qualification and years of Experience

Hypothesis		Qualification MBA		MCA		B.E		Work Experience Nil		Less than 1 year		1-2 year	
		Beta values	p	Beta values	p	Beta values	p	Beta values	p	Beta values	p	Beta values	p
H1	(ERA) --- (OA)	-0.516	***	-0.006		-0.561		-0.457	***	-		-0.887	
H2	(EBK)---- (OA)	1.263	***	.885		1.156		1.130	***	28.406		1.800	**
H3	(ERA)- (FP)	-1.415		.788		-0.860		-0.367		0.666		.102	
H4	(EBK)-- (FP)	3.669		.099		1.821		1.120	**	-0.572		.170	

***- 1% significance level
 **- 5% significance level

The model fit summary for the Qualification as given in table 2 gives CMIN/DF value 2.065. RMR is 0.069 and GFI value is 0.828. The AGFI value is 0.789 which should be greater than or equal to 0.80 as suggested by Chau and Hu (2001). NFI value is 0.770 which should be around 0.90 as per Hair et al. (1998). TLI value is 0.844 and CFI value is 0.864 as both should be greater than 0.90 according to Bagozzi and Yi (1988). RMSEA value is 0.038 which should be less than 0.08 as suggested by MacCallum et al. (1996).

From table 4 it seen that for MBA student's early recruitment activities (ERA) have significance negative impact and employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) have significance positive impact on organization attractiveness (OA) but not on Firm Performance. The early recruitment activities (ERA) and employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) do not have significance impact on organization attractiveness (OA) and Firm performance (FP) for both MCA and B.E students. Hence H1 and H3 are supported only for MBA students. Hypothesis H2 and H4 are not supported for all three groups.

The model fit summary for the Work experience as shown in table 2 gives CMIN/DF value 1.827. RMR is 0.081 and GFI value is 0.833. The AGFI value is 0.796 which should be greater than or equal to 0.80 as suggested by Chau and Hu (2001). NFI value is 0.778 which should be around 0.90 as per Hair et al. (1998). TLI value is 0.866 and CFI value is 0.883 as both should be greater than 0.90 according to Bagozzi and Yi (1988). RMSEA value is 0.035 which should be less than 0.08 as suggested by MacCallum et al. (1996)

From table 4 it is seen that early recruitment activities (ERA) have a significant negative impact on organization attractiveness (OA) for nil level of work experience and employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) have a significant positive impact on organization attractiveness (OA) for nil level at 1% and 1-2 years at 5% sig level. The employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) has a significant impact on Firm performance (FP) for nil level of work experience at 5% sig level. Hypothesis H1 is for nil level of experience while H3 is supported for nil and 1-2 years of experience. H4 is supported only for group with nil experience and H2 are not supported for all the three groups.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

Early recruitment activities like Publicity, sponsorship, word of mouth and advertisement as identified by Collins and Stevens (2002) play an important role in creating the Employer Brand knowledge (EBK). The study shows that the Early recruitment activities (ERA) have a significant impact on Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK). As given by Collins (2007) Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) has three important dimensions: Employer image (job information), Brand awareness or familiarity and employer reputation.

It is seen that for the demographic variable of Age there is a significant difference between the variables Employer Reputation. Hence students with different age groups have a difference in perception about employer reputation. For the demographic variable of Gender there is a significant difference between the variables Publicity, Function job association, organization attractiveness and firm performance. With respect to gender male and female have different views regarding job association they are looking in the organization. For the variable Qualification there is a significant difference between all the variables of ERA, EBK, Organization Attractiveness and Firm Performance. Similarly with respect to work experience there is a significant difference between the variables advertisement and Employer Brand awareness. Hence students with different work experience react differently to advertisements and have varied levels of awareness about employer.

It was observed that sponsorship, word of mouth, advertisement and publicity all are significantly contributing to early recruitment activities (ERA). Similarly employer reputation, employer awareness and job association are significantly contributing to employer brand knowledge (EBK). The study shows that early recruitment activities (ERA) have a significant negative impact and Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) has a significant positive impact on Organization attractiveness (OA) while Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) has a significant positive impact on firm performance (FP) for both the age groups of 20-22 and 23-25 years and both genders. Hence early recruitment activities like Publicity, sponsorship, word of mouth and advertisement are having a negative impact on organizational attractiveness as students are not perceiving too much of publicity and advertisement as a good indicator of an employer but employer brand knowledge (EBK) is effecting both OA and FP positively as employer reputation and image leads to better perception about organizational attractiveness and firm Performance.

For MBA student's Early recruitment activities (ERA) have significance negative impact and Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) have significance positive impact on organization attractiveness(OA) but not on Firm Performance(FP). Early recruitment activities (ERA) and Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) do not have significance impact on organization attractiveness(OA) and Firm Performance(FP) for both MCA and B.E students. This may be due to MBA students are more aware about concept like publicity, advertisement and sponsorship than other students. This show that management students are already aware about early recruitment activities used by employer and do not react too positively to them but employer brand knowledge in term of employer brand image and reputation may affect their perception about organization attractiveness and firm performance.

It was also seen that Early recruitment activities (ERA) have significance negative impact on organization attractiveness (OA) for nil level of work experience while Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) have significance impact on Firm Performance for nil and 1-2 years of work experience. Employer Brand Knowledge (EBK) have significance impact on on Firm Performance (FP) for nil level of work experience. Organizations should focus to this fresher who would react to positive to employer brand knowledge and create positive image of the organization in mind of the potential employees. The organization need to take the cues from this research and focus on these group to promote and project themselves as attractive employers.

CONCLUSION

The skilled job seeker in a volatile labor market react very similar to consumers in market. Research on Brand equity suggest that firms can use their marketing mix to manage the brand image in mind of consumers about their products which in terms affects customer-based brand equity. Although it is seen in this study that that exposure to early recruitment activities are negatively related to organization attractiveness but employer brand knowledge and the elements of brand knowledge like employer reputation and employer image (job association) are significantly influencing organization attractiveness and firm performance. Hence employer need to consciously use and investment in recruitment activities such as publicity, sponsorship, and advertising when promoting themselves in the market. It is seen that recruitment efforts are not always decided by a thorough image audit of what factors make an organization an attractive employer (Arnold et al., 2003; Highhouse et al., 1999). Hence it is often complicated to decide the characteristics which should be promoted by the organization to enhance its attractiveness as an employer. As shown by Mencl and Lester (2014) there are differences regarding career growth, work force diversity, and continuous recognition and feedback, which were more valued by Generation Y. According to Newburry et al. (2006) attractiveness is "in the eyes of the beholder" and demographic variables like age, gender, education, race and income decided people's perceptions on organizations' attractiveness. Tuzuner and Yuksel (2009) found that potential employees' perception about employer attractiveness differentiated on the basis of gender. Females values more non-competitive work environment, whereas males preferred a more brand-oriented workplace. Alnaicike and Alnaicike (2012) found significant difference between the factors of employer attractiveness dimensions among the different genders. The female gave higher importance to social value, application value, cooperation value and market value but not to the economic value and workplace environment when compared to males. It was also found that there were significant positive but weak relationship between the age and market value dimension. Our study supports all these studies and provide and shows that age, gender, qualification and year of experience do effect the employer branding activities and employer need to focus sharply on these aspects to promote their employer brands. Those who are designing the employer brand

communication should keep in mind the different age groups, gender, qualifications and work experience

The organization focus should be to understand that employer branding efforts will help them not only in creating positive employee attitudes and attractiveness but also sustained competitive advantage which is difficult to copy in long run. The study shows that demographic variables play important role in deciding the employer branding initiatives and organization need to focus differently on different group based on age, gender, qualification and work experience for talent acquisition.

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