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E-recruitment through social media: A regression analysis

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Abstract---The objective of the study is to investigate the mediating role of social media in order to communicate economic and development value of employer brand to create positive perception towards the organization attraction. In the proposed conceptual model we were trying to establish the relationship between these three key variables. For this, 255 responses were collected from the IT sector employee working in India. In order to test the mediation effect of social media, we performed step-wise regression on SPSS 24. Findings suggested that social media and economic and development value of employer brand dimensions are predictors of organization attraction and also mediating role of social media is positive and significant. The outcome of the study suggests that organization can use economic and development value of employer brand through social media to create pool of applicants.

Keywords---employer brand, mediator, regression, social media, organization attractiveness.

Introduction

Recruitment is a key activity performed by any organization for the survival in this competitive era (Muduli et al., 2020). The recruitment activity starts from the finding and attracting the potential candidate in order to make selection process successful (Breaugh& Starke, 2000). The main function of recruitment is to communicate about the job information, working conditions, values and culture of the company to the prospective employees and influence them to apply for the job (Muduli& Trivedi, 2020). In order to communicate recruitment messages to

the potential applicants organizations opted different media such as print media, job fairs, employee referrals, social media etc. It is also suggested that selection of right media for the communication purposes depend on the credibility and adequacy of the information (Allen et al., 2007; Feldman et al., 2006).

Several study suggested that nowadays organization are facing scarcity of the qualified candidates and failing to attract them due to increasing competition in all sectors company (McDonnell, 2011). There might be several reasons for the lack of potential candidates such as; poor working condition, limited resources, aging population (Buchan & Aiken, 2008). Current study shows that employer brand perception affects potential applicant's decision towards the recruitment messages and information (Collins & Kanar, 2014). Also those organizations trying to attract the talented applicant in the intense competitive labour market need to promote unique brand image in their target group (Carpentier et al., 2017). In this regard social media has emerged as a promising tool to promote and communicate employer brand and recruitment process (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015; Nikolaou, 2014). Organization can reach a vast range of active and passive job seekers with the help of social media (Nikolaou, 2014).

Apart from the quite popularity of social media uses, limited study has been done in context to the recruitment (Carpentier et al., 2017; McFarland & Ployhart, 2015). Most of the researches have been done on the effectiveness of social media as a method of recruitment (Aggerholm & Anderson, 2018, Nikolaou, 2014). But very few studies have been done on the relationship of employer brand with social media to attract the potential applicants (Sivertzen et al., 2013; Carpentier et al., 2017) and also study on the role of employer brand in Indian context is very sparse (Tanwar & Kumar, 2019). The present study focuses on the relationship between employer brand (i.e., economic and development value) and organization attractiveness where social media characteristics (advertisement and informativeness) act as a mediator. Therefore, the main objective of the study is:

- To find the effect of employer brand on organization attractiveness.
- To find the relation between employer brand and social media characteristics.
- To understand the how social media plays a mediating role between employer brand and organization attraction.
- To find the social media characteristics has relation with organization attraction.

This page should begin with the Introduction of your article and follow by the rest of your paper. Wilson (1990), stated that the Introduction explains the scope and objective of the study in the light of current knowledge on the subject. State the objectives of the work and provide an adequate background, avoiding a detailed literature survey or a summary of the results.

Materials and Methods

Employer brand

Employer branding refers to the creating an image of the company in the minds of potential applicant as a desirable place for work (Ewing et al., 2002). It is also said that company having strong employer brands has several benefits such as; reduce cost of hiring, attract applicants easily, enhance employee relations (Ritson, 2002). Ambler and Barrow (1996), defined the term 'employer brand' as 'the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company' (p.187). Further, they suggested that there are three dimensions of employer brand namely, psychological, functional, and economic benefits. Later on, Berthon et al. (2005) developed five dimensional employer attractiveness scale (EmpAt) derived from Ambler and Barrow's (1996). The EmpAt scale has 25 items in five dimensions namely, interest value, social value, economic value, development value and application value (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Interest value of EmpAt scale suggests the innovation and interest in the work, social value encompasses the working culture and employee relation in the company, economic value refers to the financial and economic benefits such as salary, perks etc., development value relates to the future career opportunity and application value refers to the implication of learning and knowledge in current work (Sivertzen et al., 2013). In the present work we consider only two dimensions of employer brand i.e., economic and development value for the study because these two dimensions of employer brand is very important and mostly searched by the applicant before joining the organization.

Organization attractiveness

Previous studies suggested that organization's initial impression is playing the key role in organization selection by the potential applicants (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). It is also found that effective organization image as an employer is strong predictor of applicants 'attraction' (Turban, Forret & Hendrickson, 1998) which in turn become job acceptance decision (Powell & Goulet, 1996). Some organization feature such as pay, opportunity to grow, job location influences application perception of job (Cable & Judge, 1994; Highhouse et al., 1999). These organizational attributes differentiate themselves from other competitors in early stage of recruitment. Lievens & Highhouse, (2003) suggested that applicant attracted to the particular type of organization due to positive perception about the organization such as; offered salary, working environment, career growth opportunity etc. Furthermore, several studies also suggested that applicant's attitude to apply for the job is also depend upon the organization attraction (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990) and also employer brand image play a significant role in talent attraction (Cable & Turban, 2001).

Social media and online recruitment

Social media is a digital platform provides web-based services which facilitate virtual interaction among the users (McFarland & Ployhart, 2015). Different researches and reports suggested that number of social media users has

increased in the high rate throughout the world. Among different social media platforms, Facebook and LinkedIn are quite popular platforms for job searching (Nikolaou, 2014). Many organizations nowadays are already using social media for employer branding purpose in order to attract and hire the talents (SHRM, 2016). Several studies also suggested that availability of information on social media about the organization and job information has created positive perception about the organization (Sivertzen et al., 2013) which turns into the organization attraction (Carpentier et al., 2017). Previous studies suggested that employer image on social media can influence the organization attraction. Social media widely used for promoting the employer brand image towards the mind of potential applicants (Mc Farland & Ployhart, 2015). Social media plays a significant role in conveying brand messages (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015). Hence, we are put forwarding following hypothesis based on the conceptual model (fig1(a & b))

- Hypothesis 1: Employer brand perception (economic & development value) is positively associated with the organization attractiveness.
- Hypothesis 2: The applicant's perception towards the employer brand is positively related to the social media characteristics (advertisement and informativeness).
- Hypothesis 3: social media mediates the relationship between employer brand perception and organization attractiveness.
- Hypothesis 4: social media (advertisement and Informativeness characteristics) is positively related to organization attraction.

Research Methodology

Sample

In this study, employees working in the Indian IT sector have been selected for the study and using social networking sites (web 2.0) for job search. For this survey, 450 employees were contacted through different social media platforms and the response rate was 56.67%. We got 255 complete and usable responses from the participants and we used 19 items for the study, which is greater than the threshold ratio of 1:10 as recommended by Hair et al., (1998). Out of the 255 respondents 63% were male and 37 per cent female and out of total respondents, 1.2 per cent respondent's age is below 20years, 22 per cent were between 21-30 age group and 76.6 per cent respondents were above 31 years. Further, 43 per cent respondents had no work experience, 36 per cent had work experience of less than two years, and 21 per cent had experience of more than two years. In order to check the adequacy of sample size

Measures

In this study total 19- items (three constructs) have been taken from the established standard scales and five- point Likert scale have been used to measure the items in which 1 represents 'strongly disagree' and 5 represents 'strongly agree'. Primarily, reliability of the scale have been checked and found Cronbach alpha of all three constructs were ranged 0.80 to 0.92 (table 1), shows that value is above the threshold level (0.7) as suggested by Hair, et. al., 1995.

Economic and Development value of Employer brand: To measure the employer brand Berthon et al., (2005) has developed EmpAt scale having five dimensions with 25 items. In the current study, we used the 8 items indicators of two dimension development value (“Gaining career-enhancing experience”), and economic value (e.g., “Good promotion opportunities within the organisation”). The value of Cronbach alpha was 0.89 for the economic value and .0.79 for development value (shown in table 1).

	Items	Factor loadings	alpha
Employer brand dimensions (Economic & development)	1. Good promotional opportunities in the organisation.	0.753	0.906
	2. Occupational security in the organisation.	0.800	
	3. A handsome basic salary.	0.856	
	4. A complete attractive compensation package.	0.808	
	5. Recognition from management.		
	6. Scope for future employment	0.713	
	7. Feeling worthy myself as a working for an organisation.	0.581	
	8. Gain experience to enhance my career advancement.	0.811	
SOCIAL MEDIA (advertisement & informativeness)	1. The organization profile in social media gave me detail information about job opportunities.	0.678	0.83
	2. The organization profile in social media caught my attention.	0.569	
	3. I have seen advertisement for jobs in social media.	0.639	
	4. The page allowed me to create a mental picture of this organization as an employer.	0.565	
	5. I think social media gave me accurate view of the organization	0.68	
	6. I feel social media provide useful information to evaluate a potential employer.	0.63	
ORGANIZATION ATTRACTION	1. I would recommend this organization to my friend who is looking for a job.	0.73	0.90
	2. This organization is one of my first choice as an employee.	0.81	
	3. I am highly convinced towards the said employer.	0.85	
	4. A job with this organization appeals to me.	0.74	
	5. This organization would be a good place to work for me.	0.77	

Organization attractiveness: In order to measure the construct 5-items were selected from Lievens, Van Hoyer, and Schreurs (2005). For instance, “This

organization would be a good place to work for me". The value of Cronbach alpha was 0.90. Social media: Role of social media in the present study was measured by total six items by its advertisement and dimensions; Informativeness (3-items) and social media advertisement (3-items). To measure the perceived Informativeness dimension we used three items from Williamson et. Al., 2003 and social media advertisement from Collins and Stevens, 2002. The value of Cronbach alpha was 0.83.

Results and Discussion

The main objective of the study was to investigate the mediation effect of social media in the relation between economic and development value of employer brand and organization attractiveness. To establish the relation empirically, we used step-wise regression with SPSS 24 to test the all four hypothesis (shown in table 3) and mediating effect of social media has checked by Hayes Process Model 4. The descriptive statistics of the study has showed, mean values and standard deviation of the constructs were 3.77 for employer brand, 3.6 for social media and 3.49 for organization attractiveness. Also standard deviation of employer brand, social media and organization attractiveness were 0.61, 0.57 and 0.86 respectively (shown in table 2). In our first hypothesis i.e., employer brand has significant effect on organization attractiveness we regressed dependent variable (org. attractiveness) on independent variable (employer branding). It was found that economic and development values of employer brand dimension was positively related to organization attractiveness ($\beta = 0.287$ at $p \leq 0.001$), thereby accepting the Hypothesis 1. In Model 2, social media characteristics was also considered as an independent variable was found to be positively related to organization attraction ($\beta = 0.312$ at $p \leq 0.001$), therefore accepting the Hypothesis 2.

In Model 3, both employer brand and social media characteristics were considered as independent variable and organization attraction as dependent variable. Both employer brand and social media characteristics were positively related to organization attraction ($\beta = 0.238$ at $p \leq 0.01$ and $\beta = 0.096$ at $p \leq 0.001$, respectively). The effect of economic and development value of employer brand declined from $\beta = 0.287$ (at $p \leq 0.001$) to $\beta = 0.096$ (at $p \leq 0.01$), (as suggested by Baron & Kenny, 2006) thus indicating the existence of partial mediation. Hence, Hypothesis 4 was partially accepted. Another set of regression step was performed to explore the relationship between employer brand and social media characteristics perceived, where employer brand dimensions are considered as independent and social media characteristics considered as the dependent variable. It was found that employer brand dimensions was to positively related to employee social media characteristics ($\beta = 0.171$ at $p \leq 0.001$). Hence, hypothesis 3 was also accepted.

Mediation Analysis

In order to test the mediating role of social media we used Hayes Process Model 4 (Hayes, 2018) and found the indirect effect of employer brand perception (IE= .03; 95% CI= .001, 0.07; ES= 0.02) on organization attraction. The findings of the study confirmed that SM mediates between EBP and org. attraction. The results

supported the hypothesis 4 as standardized indirect effect with 95 per cent bootstrapping confidence interval was 0.03, which ranging from 0.001 to 0.07.

Table 3
Results of the stepwise regression

	Dependent variable= org. attraction			DV= social media
Independent variable	Model 1 (direct relation) H1	Model 2 H3	Model 3 (indirect relation) H4	Model 4 H2
Employer brand	0.287***		0.150**	0.174***
Social media		0.195***	0.261***	
R ²	0.083	0.038	0.104	0.30
Hypotheses	H1	H3	H4	H2
Accept/ reject	accepted	accepted	Partially accepted	accepted

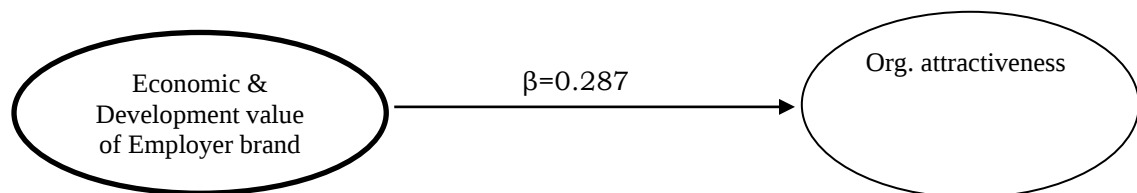


Fig 1(a). conceptual model of the study (direct relation between IV and DV and beta value)

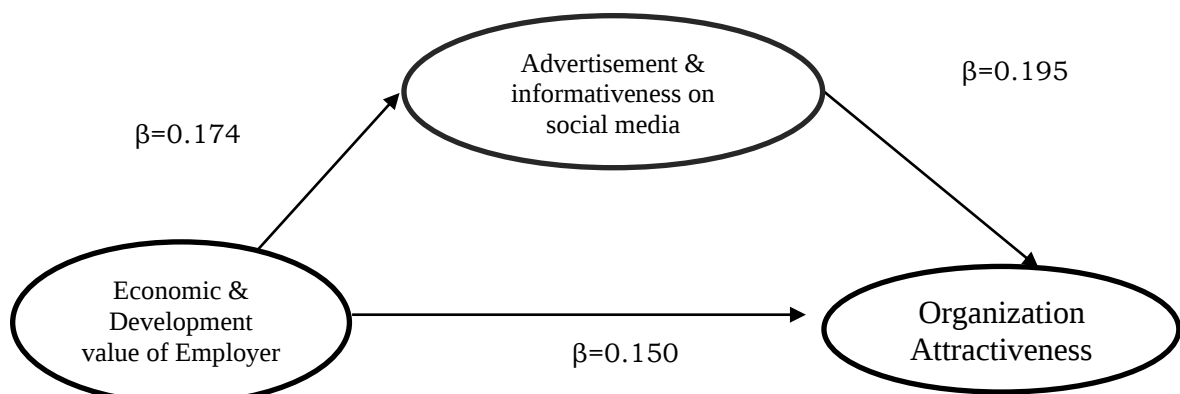


Fig 1(b). outcome value after regression

Fig 1(a) & 1(b) Final Model of the study (Indirect relation between IV and DV, with mediating variable and beta value)

Table 2
Mean & standard deviation of the constructs

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2
Employer brand	3.75	0.60		
Social Media	3.85	0.57	0.85**	
Organization Attract	3.39	0.85	0.70**	0.69**

Conclusion

The objective of current research work is to find out the direct and indirect relation between employer brand dimensions and organization attractiveness with the intervention of social media characteristics. In order to achieve the objective of the study four hypotheses has been developed to find the direct and indirect relationship between the variables. In our first hypothesis, we tested the direct relation between economic and development value of employer brand and organization attractiveness. It was found positive and significant ($\beta=0.287$), which indicates that economic and development values plays a significant role in talent attraction. In our second hypothesis, we tested the effect of social media characteristics on organization attraction. We applied regression analysis and found advertisement and Informativeness characteristics of social media have positive and significant effect on organization attraction ($\beta=0.195$), which suggested that social media characteristics is also a predictor of organization attraction. Our third hypothesis, states about the mediating role of social media characteristics between employer brand dimensions and organization attraction. We applied Hayes' process 4 model to check the mediation effect of social media in relation to employer brand dimensions and organization attraction. We obtained the result that the mediation effect was positive and significant ($\beta=0.150$), which suggested that employer brand and social media are the predictors of organization attraction.

Our fourth hypothesis was about to check the relation and effect of economic and development value of employer brand on social media characteristics (advertisement & informativeness). We found that employer brand dimension has positive and significant effect ($\beta=0.174$) on social media. Hence, the outcome after the regression analysis it was found that social media plays a mediating role between employer brand and organization attraction, which supports the previous, studies (Carpentier et al., 2017). The study has few limitations such as, this study conducted on the IT sector employee in India, to generalise the result in future same study must include different sectors. We used convenience and snowball sampling technique for the study and not considering the age group as one of the factor for decision making. In future study age group can be used as a moderator to explain the relationship between these variable. Lastly, the study is cross-sectional in nature in future it is suggested that researcher may focus on longitudinal study with these variables.

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