


An Empirical Study of the Most Preferred Attributes of Employer Branding: The Study of Engineers in Delhi NCR

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ABSTRACT

The current study is based on the preferred attributes of employer branding and their influence in the decision-making process of the engineers (BTech graduates) from the different branches. This study attempts to fill the gap by providing a scale on employer branding attributes. To test the scale for employer brand attributes, two studies were conducted. Study 1 applied exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation, and Study 2 used second-order confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The statistics were drawn from 362 students of BTech from four major branches like computer science, electrical, civil, mechanical engineering in Delhi NCR. Results show that the two employer brands attributes—job security and fringe benefits—have the highest impact on the decision-making process of the students. The current study provides the pragmatic approach from the students of four chosen branches of engineering in selecting the right employer.

KEYWORDS

Employer Attractiveness, Employer Branding, Engineering Branches, Scale Development, Social Identity Theory, Students

1. INTRODUCTION

Employer branding emerged as a marketing strategy to attract and retain talent, post-globalization. This largely refers to “As the ‘sum of the company’s efforts to communicate to existing and the prospective staff that it is a desirable place to work’ (Lloyd, 2002). “The employer as a brand influences how current and potential candidates interact with a company’s brand image as an employer” (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Ewing et al., 2002). It is indeed a strategic tool across all the sectors to attract and retain the best suitable employees in the organization. For many years now employer branding has been playing out as a long-term security needs for talented employees to attract and retain them for a longer period.

Engineering graduates currently are more prone to get identified as a part of the reputed brand or the social groups with more possibilities of the upgrade in the future. Therefore, employer branding

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for employees overall has comparatively got much attention but the employer branding perception of engineering students that influenced their choice of the branches based on working for the top brands and the employer branding strategies has been overlooked. In the previous literature also, the various researchers have tried to understand the employer branding attributes based on criteria of choosing both the firm-related as well as the job-related attributes “which significantly effect a candidate’s job application decisions, based on ‘intention to apply’ and ‘best companies to work for’” (Saini, Gopal, & Kumari, 2015).

According to most of the reports claiming to study engineering graduates are generally more positive about all the sectors than the average, with IT, consulting, and automobile being ranked as their top three in terms of employer attractiveness.

As per the 2020 Randstad report (Global) on employer branding for engineers:

- The “U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics” expects employment growth for engineers, with nearly 140,000 new jobs until 2026. Whereas the expected new jobs for the civil engineers are around 23%, closely followed by the mechanical and industrial engineers (each representing ~18% of new wave jobs).
- The current trend for many engineering workers is to further specialize and become more knowledgeable in a specific area, therefore there is a need to focus on the internal training programs, and decreased further education might represent an influential factor when choosing their future employer.
- When compared to the global average, employees in this sector are more interested in a job that allows them to grow professionally, with the difference between what engineering professionals want vs global results representing one of the highest gaps.

For instance:

1. Attractive salary and benefits (57% (2019), has increased to 62% in 2020).
2. Job Security (44% (2019), has increased to 46% in 2020).
3. Work-life balance (45% (2019), has remained the same 45% in 2020).
4. Career Progression (35% (2019), has increased to 44% in 2020).
5. Financially healthy (34% (2019), has increased to 40% in 2020).

The findings of Randstad’s report elaborates on the expectations of engineering professionals seek like an attractive salary and benefits, work-life balance, financially healthy, career progression, pleasant work environment, job security, interesting job content, gives back to society, very good name, and uses the latest technology.

Since this study has been done in India in the Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR). We have looked at the Randstad 2019 India report as well and it was found that 37% of gen z (18-24) are specifically looking for the employer who offers good training and the 25% of millennials (25-34) are seeking for an employer who offers the interesting job content. We have tried to focus on the attributes which are most commonly used by engineering graduates and have the highest impact on their decision-making process as a whole. It has been studied in the various research articles that the more attractive employee value proposition an employer offers, the more candidates intend to join the organization (Manjunath & Chaitra, 2019), But studies capturing the preferences of engineering graduates based on the skills that they have chosen as the major specialization during their graduation can also lead to the major impact while choosing the right brand to pursue as their first job has been discounted.

This study intends to explore the most used attributes of employer branding that attract the four different branches of engineering graduates and, to develop a measurement scale of those attributes to

fill the research gap. It is based on the objective to understand the most important attributes causing the decision-making on choosing the right employer, followed by checking the “reliability and validity” of the developed scale to analyze the importance of each attributes based on the branches: Computer science, electrical, civil, and mechanical engineering. This research study results may help the recruitment process of the organizations and it can help the organizations to stand out from their competitors. (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003), and also, it may help in selecting the best human capital to attain organizational success.

The structure of this paper is as follows: first, a theoretical conceptualization which involves “employer branding and the social identity theory”, and their attributes are presented; second, scale development methodology is being explained; third, presentation of analysis and discuss results and finally, ending with the implications based on theory and practice, limitations, and the future scope.

2. THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

2.1 Social Identity Theory

There are several theories in this field to justify, why the social identification and categorization of the individuals work as prestige and play an important role in making the stereotype insights of individuals in the group. One of the most common theories used in this field is “Social identity theory” which proposed that “people tend to classify them-selves and others into various social categories, such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender, and age cohort” (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), which means that, people want to be the member of several social groups based on his/her social perception about its known value, brand name, qualities, skills, etc.

Generally, the individual identity is not just limited to the organization, but other different workgroups, various departments, fast-track groups, social groups, and the like. According to the study done on the concept of employer branding, this theory is more closely relevant and throws important aspects of becoming part of the group or become a member of the good brand. Other than social identity theory, there is Expectancy theory which describes the perceptive development process under which the existing employee, as well as the prospective candidates, go through a certain time to make the choices regarding whether to join the organization or retain in the organization in terms of their career advancement process (Vroom, 1964).

2.2 Employer Branding: Conceptualization

Employer brand is indeed an opportunity for a successful brand name, whereas it has been said that employer brand establishes an emotional bond for the employee, who wants to work for the respectable employer, and want to keep the true idea about it, the concept behind keeping the psychological contract is to have the information before making the employment decision. Employer branding has gained importance because, in the last twenty years, the organization’s good returns and achievements have been subject to winning the talent war, to attract and retain the best talents (Bonaiuto, Illia, Dominicis, & Canovas, 2013).

The beginning of employer branding dates back to Ambler and Barrow from the 1990s, who addressed branding from the corporate outlook of the product and services. As per Minchington in 2007 the business environment of employer branding was to gain, encourage, and retain the best talents. The brand promotion inside the company will lead to a strengthening of employee dedication, while the outside promotion of brands will make it striking to the potential workforce. “One of the keys aims of an employer-branding program is to encourage existing employees to identify with the organization” (Bonaiuto, Illia, Dominicis, & Canovas, 2013).

Although there is a huge scope of highs and lows while thinking about the job market in the globe for the employees, large and small level companies manage their requirement based on the situation, sometimes it is not easy for them to attract the most qualified one with the low reputation

rate in the job market, there is an intensified competition in the market, companies have a huge risk about maintaining their image, stand unique among others at the same time, that makes it a tough job to retain the best employees and attract the new ones, and that is why the hottest strategy they try to apply is “Employer branding”. At last, a suitable definition that describes the idea of a brand; “a brand is a mixture of attributes, tangible and intangible, symbolized in a trademark, which if managed properly, creates value and influence” as this definition demonstrates that the brand is made up of the factors that provide the customer or the employees the best and unique experience, that’s the job it does to create the value and the influence (Swystun, 2007).

Employer attractiveness is a process that makes the employer more attractive and attracts the best employees. It tries to fill the gap by providing the newcomers the best value proposition, for example, attractive salary, benefits, personal skill-development opportunities, status in the workplace, etc (Jha & Pingle, 2015). After all, the overall expectations of the potential employees are always about the company’s attractive components along with the firmographics and its influence on employer branding (Tuzuner & Yuksel, 2009). Attractive features of the companies involve scope for timely raise, work-life balance, market achievement, interesting tasks, work environment, innovation, career progress, compensation package, and firm repute, whereas, firmographics include company and the location. So, while it is used in maintaining the corporate identity, building the positive image, and an end to end communication with the current as well as the existing employees (Luthans & Peterson, 2002), found that employees who are positively engaged with the organization, and satisfied with the work environment tend to be more performance-oriented and achieve success.

The present study has also tried to understand the important attributes individually from the aspirants on what they look for in an organization before they decide to join the organization. The following are the attributes of the employer branding derived from the previous research and reports.

2.2.1 Social Media Platforms

Off late social media platforms are playing a vital role in influencing the perception and reflected in the behavior of users (Kapoor, 2017). “Communication takes place primarily between humans who already are a part of their extended social network” (Boyd & Ellison, 2008), what makes this platform more interesting is that it allows the users to know more about their social status through their social media sites, and make it an easy job for them while choosing the different job-related options at the same time. The intention to choose the employer is based on the quality and the perceived brand image of the organization, although the impact of the social media platform may not work fruitfully if the image is poor.

According to Brett Minchington in 2012 “Due to its potential size, scope, and scale, social media has become appealing to businesses of all sizes around the world. Successful use of social media has a positive impact on employer brand”, it demonstrates that social media platforms with its wide scope have a direct impact in making the positive employer branding for the employers. Social media is becoming the number one priority to check job availability (Sivertzen, Nilsen, & Olafsen, 2013). everything we wish to know about the company including bad reviews is available online now. According to a report by Deloitte in 2009, it says that 74% of employers think that you can easily destroy the reputation of the organization through social media. It may be possible that social media platforms could be used the other way round and we cannot deny the fact that through this we get to see the real picture of the business taking place around us.

2.2.2 Brand Image

According to Steve Forbes in an article for Forbes on (Feb 9th, 2020) “Your brand is the single most important investment you can make in your business”. That’s true, either the company creates the employer brand or it just gets disappears from the frame. It is rightly explained by the early writers as well that “In making an employer brand image, employer branding focuses on the functional, economic, and psychological benefits of employment and identification with the company” (Ambler &

Barrow, 1996). David Aaker was among the first scholars who identified the brand as a management tool with which one manages the entire organization (Aaker, 1996).

At last, it's just not always the name that works, a company with a brand name stands out in the market due to their unique policies that makes them the one among them all, for instance, the companies with a good brand reputation never give up on motivating the employees, by providing them the best work culture, where they feel comfortable and get to learn new skills, ideas among their co-workers.

2.2.3 Work Environment

“The employees respond positively to a fast-paced result-oriented and organized work environment that is accessible and convenient and one that could offer them financial opportunities and stability” (Emeliza Torrento Estimo, 2017). Usually, the employees prefer companies with a dynamic culture, a place where there is a negligible hierarchy. According to the recent report given by IBM, employees nowadays enjoy a transparent work environment where job-related politics are kept down to a minimum. Employees deserve an environment where they get the freedom to interact smoothly with others and learn new aspects of life. In the meantime, it involves a lot more positivity in the work outcome as well and enhances employee commitment, performance, motivation as well as empowerment (Madhavkumar & B, 2015).

2.2.4 Fringe Benefits

The concept of fringe benefits providing to the employees in the organization has a very encouraging impact on work performance. Benefits are the major expenses for employers as it is about one-third of wages as well as salaries (Dessler, 2005), “A good compensation administration program is comprehensive and flexible and ensures optimum performance from employees at all levels”. It has grown intensively in a form of remuneration from the employer to the employees. The fringe benefit is a part that is provided to the employees so that they are positively attracted and retained in the organization. It includes compensations with a cafeteria of rewards. Apart from the benefits salary has a big impact on the mindset of the employees, it can make the difference while choosing the employer to drop the plan of not choosing it due to less weightage given to the salary package.

Fringe benefits come under indirect compensation, because it is usually not given directly for the performance but are extended as a condition for employment (Sharma & Jaiswal, 2018). So, if the new employee before joining the job, has entire information about the salary packages the employer is offering and the bonus and incentives as per the role. Several other offers are given in the form of fringe benefits for example health insurance, transportation facilities, travel opportunities, gifts at the festivals, etc. Primarily the role of the fringe benefit is “to motivate and encourage the workers for an increased level of output and higher coherence” (Steyn, 2010).

2.2.5 Job Security

According to James, “Job security is defined as the assurance in an employee’s job continuity due to the general economic conditions in the country” (James, 2012). “It is the assurance that the company provides to their employees that they will keep the employees employed with them for a reasonable period without being wrongly dismissed” (Adebayo & O, 2012). Job security also sometimes depends on the requirement of the particular skills, if the skill is no more required, leads to no job and no security. According to the survey done by KPMG (2010) on “job security” found out that “more than 75% of participants considered job security their top priority while searching for a job as a result of the uncertain economic environment those time”, and the scenario remains the same, participants still looking for job security in one of their top five priority lists.

“Employee job security regarded as a vital element in the organization in increasing their job performance which ultimately fosters the organization’s total productivity” (Ahmed, Haderi, Ahmed, & Walter, 2017). Moreover, job security plays an important role in improving the overall work performance of the employees, it certainly boosts the work motivation one can offer. while some

people want the organization to be oriented with an amicable environment with an extra enthusiasm based on the role, they choose to do, but all they need, when it comes to the workplace desire is to make the job more secure, as well as reliable.

When a new candidate joins the job at first, the expectations are based on the kind of role, if the role has a long-term scope, and is the role valued by the management if you are getting for what you deserve, in short people want to feel safe and secure. According to the various companies' reports, it has been said that job security helps in building the brand reputation. The employers, as well as the employees, need to maintain substandard behavior in the organization because there is no substitution for both the poor administration as well as the poor performance for the organization.

2.3 Brief Information About the Engineering Profession and the Specializations

Engineering is a field of education that comprises the application of Science, Technology, and Mathematics to transform, project, advance, and maintain machines, structures, software, hardware, and systems. This field offers a range of career opportunities across all industries, making it one of "the most sought-after courses" pursued by undergraduates after Class XII, especially those from the Science stream. There are around 55 engineering branches in the world, but according to the "Ministry of Human Resource Development's" (MHRD), "All India Survey on Higher Education" (AISHE) report, the most popular ones are computer science, mechanical, civil, and electrical engineering.

3. SCALE DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

To develop a consistent and effective scale of employer branding, a two-step scale development process is followed which summaries the process, that consist of a qualitative study; "item generation and expert review; a quantitative study for the purification of the scale; and a quantitative study for the finalization of the scale". This segment defines the "scale development process" following traditional measures supported in existing literature (e.g Churchil, 1979; Netemeyer, et al., 2003).

3.1 Step 1- Item Generation and Expert Review

The items to measure the employer branding attributes were constructed based on the five dimensions (extracted from the previous research) that have been considered to understand the perception of the students. Those five dimensions as mentioned in (Table-1), were the brand image, work environment, social media platforms, fringe benefits, and job security. Each dimension constituted of minimum 5, the overall final items generated from each dimension were 28 from the extant literature. Which were thoroughly reviewed from the 10 experts of two sectors, 5 from senior academicians and the rest 5 from the recruitment and training department head from the corporate organizations. At this phase, several matters were taken into concern like the language clarity, spelling check, format of the questionnaire, correct meaning. The process took place with the help of the content validity of the items in a "5-point assessment scale" in terms of the word simplicity, the format of the questionnaire, and the overall representativeness. After this stage, 25 items that score above 3 out of 5 in all classifications were reserved as given in (Table 1).

3.2 Step 2- Scale Purification and Refinement

Once an item is thoroughly reviewed, pared, and modified by the experts. Pilot testing is conducted for face validity on 30 samples from an applicable population. The purification and refinement have been done by testing the scale to decrease the number of items in an initial pool to a more feasible number by removing due to not fulfilling the psychometric measures. For the pilot testing, convenience samples were taken from the college and university students.

Next, EFA analysis with varimax rotation has been executed to decrease the number of items and test the principal proportions of the construct. By using psychometric criteria (Wrightsmann, Robinson,

Table 1. Summary of Items

S. No	Factor Name	Scale Items	References
1.	Brand Image	Brand image has a very important role in life	Turban et al. 1998, Berthon, Ewing (2005), Srivastava & Bhatnagar, (2010)
2.		Brand image is a way of offering the status assurance	
3.		I would like to work for a brand that has great success in the market	
4.		I think that brand image has a major role in selecting the right employer	
5.		I think selecting a brand based on their reputation helps in keeping the positive encouragement towards the career growth	
6.	Fringe Benefits	I would like to get a salary and compensations based on my qualifications	Chapman & Webster, 2005, Bernstein, 2008
7.		I need to choose the organization that helps in maintaining the ideal work-life balance	
8.		I would prefer an organization with additional benefit opportunities like gifts, bonuses, incentives, etc.	
9.		I believe that health protection benefits and insurance should be the compulsory part to be provided by the organization	
10.		An organization should care about the employees well being	
11.	Social Media Platforms	I trust the social media reviews of the organizations	Williamson et al. (2002) Cable and judge (1994) and Aiman-Smith et al. (2001)
12.		I think the organizations with the great social media ratings has a different vibe overall	
13.		Social media provides the polished image of the corporate culture to the applicants	
14.		I believe that social media platforms play a very important role in choosing the right employer	
15.		I prefer organizations based on their search engine optimization value	
16.	Work Environment	Positivity has a direct impact on the employee's productivity in the organization	(Cable & Judge, 1996) and (Aiman-Smith, et al., 2001), (Williamson, et al., 2002), (Feldman, 1978)
17.		I want to work in a transparent work environment with the less job-related misunderstandings	
18.		The organization runs better with the active work environment	
19.		I need to choose the organization that helps in maintaining the ideal work-life balance	
20.		I would like to work for a company that allows a flexible work environment for the employees	
21.	Job Security	I am looking for a secure job	Jurgensen, 1978, (Bundy & Norris, 1992, Aiman-smith et al., 2001, Williamson et al., 2002, Bernstein (2008)
22.		It is important to understand if the job is reliable	
23.		It is important to understand that if you are essential for the job role based on your skills and qualifications	
24.		Job security is a necessary aspect to have job satisfaction	
25.		I think that job security guarantees the overall organizational commitment	

& shaver 1991) the analysis was based on such as evading of cross and factor loadings ranging between 0.40 and 0.90 and the corrected item to a total correlation of 0.50 and above, 3 items were deleted items like, “I want to work in a reputed organization”, “It is important to know that you are being offered the permanent job and not the temporary”, “I believe that working for the brand that has a positive influence in the society makes a good image overall” as they did not meet the standards. A concluding set of 25 items were taken for the next and final stage of the “scale development process”.

3.3 Selection of the Respondents

In this study, four major branches (computer science, civil, mechanical, electrical) were chosen to develop a basic scale. The selection of these branches was based on two criteria. First, the branches had a major role in the differences of opinion due to the numerous job roles usually provided by the various sectors. E.g., perhaps the student from the mechanical branch gets fewer job offers from the reputed companies than the computer science branch student. There is huge psychological insight in the minds of the students on each of the attributes of employer branding. Second, after going through the various colleges and universities report on the popular branches that a maximum number of science students pick up after their high schools were only these four branches the criteria of choosing the students from each branch was based on the total minimum score in their finals (i.e., 50%).

Further, three criteria were used in selecting the colleges in the Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR). First, the availability of the chosen all the four branches in the one college. Second, the top 3 tier colleges were preferred, and all the colleges should be “All India Council for Technical Education” (AICTE) approved. The shortlisted colleges and universities were used to get the questionnaire distributed among all the four branches and then the data was further used to get the results.

A formal questionnaire was calculated on a “5-point Likert scale” with 1 “strongly disagree” and 5 “strongly agree”. We collected data from 4 major branches of engineering students from top tier colleges of the Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR). The data collection was web-based, through which the questionnaire was sent to the students on their mail id’s, from the 800-questionnaire sent, 362 were found to be usable questionnaires which represented a 45.25% response rate.

4. ANALYSIS AND RESULT

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 2, illustrates the demographic profile of the selected customers in the sample study. The responses were collected from 362 students out of which 65.78% are females and 34.22% are males. The majority of students who have filled the questionnaire are from the computer science background (38%), electrical engineering (27%), mechanical engineering (19%), civil engineering (16%). All these respondents have immense knowledge about employer branding strategies and their importance for choosing the right employer for themselves.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Sample (Student Profile (N=362))

Variable	Categories	Response (%)
Course	Engineering (BTech final year)	362 out of 800 (45.25%)
Branches	Computer science	38%
	Mechanical	19%
	Civil	16%
	Electrical	27%
Gender	Female students	65.78%
	Male students	34.22%

4.2 Reliability Assessment and Dimensionality

An “Exploratory Factor Analysis” (EFA) with varimax rotation depicted 5 significant factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. These extracted factors explain 65.947% of the total variance (Table 3). All the loadings were more than .50. Thus, all five factors satisfied the requirements of EFA where all items have significant factor loadings on a single factor suggesting that all five factors are useful for the study. The final employer branding attribute scale now consists of a total of 25 items. The internal consistency and reliability of these extracted four factors are estimated with the help of Cronbach alpha. KMO value is supposed to be greater than .5, as it specifies that a matrix is “unacceptable” for factorization, however using Kaiser and Rice’s (1974) terminology, “the factorability of a matrix can be considered with the following ranges in mind: .50 (miserable), .60 (mediocre), .70 (middling), .80 (meritorious), .90 (marvelous, excellent)”. A value above .70 usually means the sample size is fine (Table 5). The values of Cronbach alpha for the different dimensions of employer branding namely brand image (0.850), social media platforms (0.863), work environment (0.882), fringe benefits (0.859), job security (0.888) which are found to be satisfactory (Table 5). Thus, as a result of the internal consistency reliability of all the factors are greater than the required value of 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein 1994). Table 1 represents a complete list of all the statements retained for the scale measuring the employer branding attributes concerning their respective indicators.

4.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

After the extraction through the “exploratory factor analysis”, the “confirmatory factor analysis” was applied in the process of developing the scale for employer branding scale. The confirmatory factor analysis was done to ascertain the emergent factor structure in the EFA. The measurement model is

Table 3. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Item Code	Factor Loading	Eigen Value	Communalities	Factor Name
(JS4)	.842	8.349	.764	Job Security
(JS2)	.788		.712	
(JS3)	.778		.672	
(JS1)	.714		.617	
(JS5)	.708		.605	
(WE5)	.787	2.844	.706	Work Environment
(WE2)	.767		.677	
(WE4)	.754		.679	
(WE3)	.750		.716	
(WE1)	.662		.603	
(BI4)	.774	2.013	.639	Brand Image
(BI3)	.770		.650	
(BI1)	.769		.639	
(BI5)	.758		.613	
(BI2)	.729		.570	
(SMP1)	.802	1.796	.708	Social Media Platforms
(SMP4)	.769		.675	
(SMP2)	.759		.675	
(SMP3)	.748		.648	
(SMP5)	.638		.545	
(FB3)	.771	1.485	.711	Fringe Benefits
(FB2)	.766		.671	
(FB1)	.754		.718	
(FB4)	.645		.628	
(FB5)	.564		.644	

Table 4. KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO Statistic		.904
Bartlett's Test	Chi-Square	4764.414
	Df	300
	P value	.000

Table 5. Reliability Estimate Table

Item Code	Construct Names	Cronbach Alpha
BI5	Brand Image	0.850
BI4		
BI3		
BI2		
BI1		
SMP1	Social Media Platforms	0.863
SMP2		
SMP3		
SMP4		
SMP5		
WE1	Work Environment	0.882
WE2		
WE3		
WE4		
WE5		
FB1	Fringe Benefits	0.859
FB2		
FB3		
FB4		
FB5		
JS1	Job Security	0.888
JS2		
JS3		
JS4		
JS5		

developed consisting of all the factors along with the statements. Table 6 depicts that the estimated values of CMIN/DF is 2.445, and the required values should be less than 3. Followed by the value of “goodness of fit index” (GFI) is 0.871 and the required values should be more than 0.8, followed by the “adjusted goodness of fit index” (AGFI), which is 0.842 with the required value not less than 0.8, then the “comparative fit index” (CFI) is 0.917, and the required value should be more than 0.9,

Table 6. Model Fit Indices

CMIN/Df	(CFI)	(NFI)	(GFI)	(AGFI)	(RMSEA)
2.445	0.917	0.905	0.871	0.842	0.063

the “normed fit index” also came out to be 0.905, as per the requirement of not less than 0.9, and the last one is the “root mean square error of approximation” (RMSEA) is 0.063 and the required value should be less than 0.08, therefore the measurement model is a good fit model and fulfills the model fit indices criteria of the scale.

4.4 Convergent and Discriminant Validity

The measurement model was observed for “convergent” as well as “discriminant validity”. As the discriminant validity is about “assess the degree to which measures of different concepts are distinct” (Bagozzi & Todd, 1994). (Table 7) shows that the composite reliability estimate of each construct came out to be more than 0.7, followed by the average extracted estimate of each construct is more than the value 0.5, as per the criteria, the average value extracted estimate of each construct should be more than the maximum shared variance estimate. The divergent validity results are interpreted as the square root of the average value extracted, which is shown in (table 7) is found to be greater than the correlation of the construct with the remaining constructs.

4.5 Performance Analysis

The current study has developed the scale and validated it through the help of scale development analysis, the result in (figure 2) of the study is clear that there are no biases in the data hence, fulfilled the criteria of scale development. Now to understand each branch perception of the employer branding attributes, the researchers have done the performance analysis of each dimension, and as the results say that, the students from each branch have chosen “job security” as the most important attribute before choosing the employer, which is (3.75), fringe benefits is the second best attribute that attracts them, in terms of getting the extra benefits and compensation takes up all the burden away (i.e. 3.66), followed by the various social media platforms influence (3.64). according to the analysis, this has been proved that these attributes play a major role in the graduate student’s perception of employer branding before choosing the right employer for themselves.

5. DISCUSSION

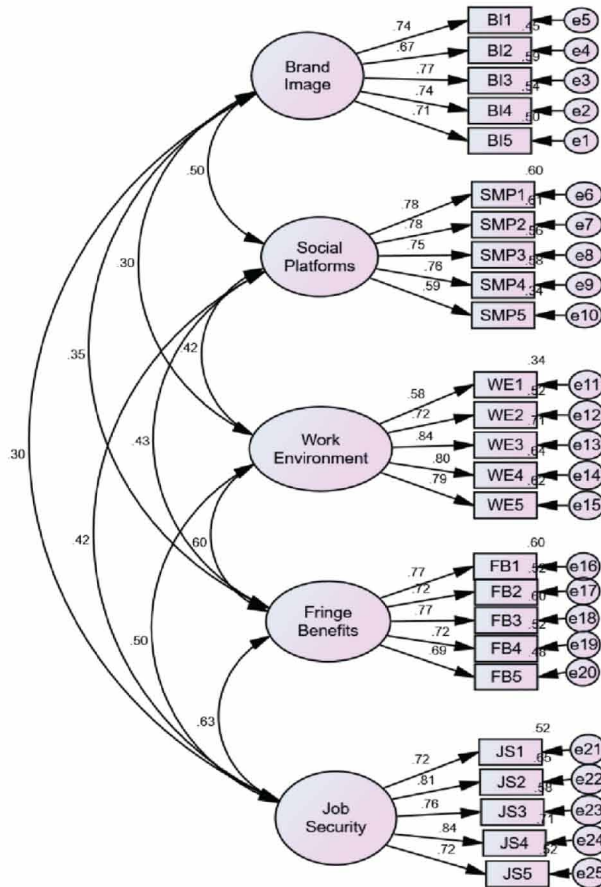
The factors that have developed after the factor analysis are as follows:

Table 7. Convergent and Discriminant Validity

	Composite reliability	AVE	MSV	Fringe Benefits	Brand Image	Social Platforms	Work Environment	Job Security
Fringe Benefits	0.856	0.544	0.392	0.737				
Brand Image	0.847	0.527	0.250	0.353	0.726			
Social Platforms	0.853	0.540	0.250	0.428	0.500	0.735		
Work Environment	0.866	0.567	0.356	0.597	0.303	0.416	0.753	
Job Security	0.881	0.597	0.392	0.626	0.300	0.424	0.503	0.773

Note: AVE = average variance extracted, MSV = maximum shared variance

Figure 1. CFA Model and results for the employer branding scale



Note:

Number of distinct sample moments: 325

Number of distinct parameters to be estimated: 60

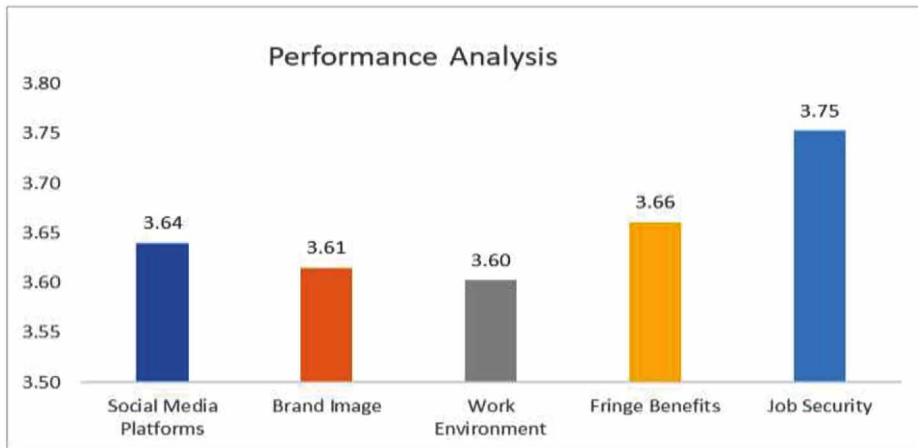
Degrees of freedom (325-60): 265

Chi-square= 648.035

Probability level= .000

1. Factor one represents the brand image and the reputation of the organization, which make the biggest impact in the life of the newcomers, for example, items like (Srivastava & Bhatnagar, 2010), “I want to work in a reputed organization”, “I think the brand image has a major role in selecting the right employer” has got the reliability estimate Cronbach alpha is 0.850.
2. Factor two is labeled as the positive work environment in the organization, the newcomers are perhaps all prepared to live the culture that has to get offered (Williamson, Cope, Foster,

Figure 2. Performance Analysis of Employer Branding Dimensions



Note: In the above figure 2, job security scored the highest rating (3.75), followed by fringe benefits (3.66), social media platforms (3.64), brand image (3.61) and work environment with the least point rating (3.60).

- & Wuensh, 2002), for example, items like, “Positivity has a direct impact on the employee’s productivity in the organization”, “I want to work in a transparent work environment with the less job-related misunderstandings”, and “Organization runs better with the active work environment”. The reliability estimate for this factor Cronbach alpha is 0.882.
3. Factor three deals with the various kind of fringe benefits provided by the employer and its importance level for the newcomers (Nisar & Siddigui, 2019), and the items like “I would like to get the salary based on my qualifications”, “I believe that health protection benefits and insurance should be the compulsory part to be provided by the organization”, “Organization should care about the employee’s well-being”. The reliability coefficient Cronbach alpha is 0.859.
 4. Factor four represents social media platforms and various networking sites, through which candidates get the information regarding the job postings, job roles, and the positions of the organization overall through the online reports and publications (Szwajca, 2017) and the items like, “I prefer organizations based on their search engine optimization value”, “I think the organizations with the great social media ratings has a different vibe overall”, “Social media platforms are the number one place to visit to understand the internal and external system of the organization”. The reliability coefficient Cronbach alpha is 0.863.
 5. Factor five focuses upon job security, which refers to the probability that if the individual would like to continue the same job, or if the economy is facing the downfall would lead the person to have a small chance of losing it, although it may have various issues that may create the situation to either way (Jurgensen, 1978), for example, the items like, “I’m looking for the secure job”, “It is important to understand if the job is reliable”, “It is important to understand that if you are essential for the job role based on your skills and qualifications”, and “It is important to know that you are being offered the permanent job and not the temporary”. And the reliability coefficient Cronbach alpha is 0.888.

Although the prior research studies widely discussed employer branding, there has not been any research done based on the various branches of engineering students in the employer branding literature. To fill this research gap, this study was commenced. The objective of this paper was to develop a valid and reliable scale for measuring employer branding attributes. This scale captures

five dimensions: brand name, work environment, social media influence, fringe benefits, and job security. Results of this study confirm that the employer branding scale is reliable and has content, convergent, and discriminant validity.

This study has many important implications for both researchers and experts. Because the developed scale could be used further to provide a theoretical foundation leading to a better understanding of the way both students and employers can relate to employer brands in the context of choosing and offering the best they can. On the other hand, the proposed scale will help employers in attracting and retaining the best talents in terms of talent acquisition and profit enhancement to the firm.

5.1 Implications for Theory and Practice

The current research study has done a thorough literature review of the attributes of employer branding and has prepared and validated the questionnaire items based on each attribute, to measure the most perceived attributes by the engineering graduates based on their branches (computer science, electrical, mechanical, civil), although after the performance analysis of each attribute, turns out that “job security” is the most important attribute that they look for before joining the organization followed by the fringe benefits, its social media image, brand name and lastly the work environment (Sharma & Jaiswal, 2018).

In actuality, this research study at hand highlights the importance of employer branding and its attributes for the potential engineering graduates from four different branches and tried to enhance their perception through the measuring scale on each attribute. This study provides students with a tool that enriches their understanding to gauge functional aspects of employer branding attributes which then will be helpful in the decision-making process for choosing the right employer.

The findings of the study would be useful in making the employer branding strategies to attract the young talents from the crowd, and the companies which are trying to recruit talented engineers should be able to build their recruitment strategy based on such evaluation. At the same time, it would also benefit young engineering graduates to understand the reasons behind choosing the factors that should be considered while making the important decision.

5.2 Limitation and Future Scope

This research study also has some limitations. First, the current study only collected the engineering graduates’ data responses from Delhi and “National Capital Region” (NCR) India, further, the sample can be increased and taken from other wide regions of India as well. Second, the current study has been done only by engineering students and their major branches, future research should address other professional courses and their branches too. Third, the present study has tried to find out the perspective of engineering students only, although this scale would be useful for the management graduates as well, and future study should be on the comparative study of both the professionals based on their perception of the attributes of employer branding. Forth, the present study has only chosen the four branches of engineering, the future study should add more engineering specializations.

At last, this research adopted literature review and analysis of attributes based on the preferences of the engineers and the perception has been measured with the help of the validated questionnaire using the limited sample data to draw the weightage of the most important attributes for the graduates from the four important branches of engineering in their decision-making process for choosing the right employer, in future the sample size can be increased.

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