
Original Article

What do best employer surveys reveal about employer branding and intention to apply?

Received (in revised form): 11th July 2013

Gordhan K. Saini

is an Assistant Professor at the School of Management & Labour Studies at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. His research interests include employer branding, social marketing and consumer behaviour. He has published in journals such as *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, *Journal of Asia Business Studies*, *Journal of South Asian Development* and *Economic and Political Weekly*.

Purvi Rai

has completed her Masters in Human Resource Management and Labour Relations from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. She completed her B Tech in Information Technology from Jaypee Institute of Information Technology, Noida, and later she worked with Accenture Services Pvt. Ltd. for 11 months in SAP capability.

Manoj K. Chaudhary

is currently working as Management Associate with Edelweiss Financial Services Ltd. He completed his Masters in Human Resource Management and Labour Relations from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He has done his Bachelors in Hospitality Management from West Bengal University. He has worked with Oberoi Group of Hotels and interned at SAP Labs, Johnson and Johnson.

ABSTRACT Employer branding is an effective marketing tool that helps organisations in projecting their distinct image in the minds of potential applicants and positioning them as an employer of choice. Recently, organisations are increasingly participating in various best employer surveys (BES) to project themselves as great places of employment and subsequently attracting larger and better talent from the labour market. The literature confirms a positive relationship between employer attractiveness (or other similar measures) and prospective employees' intentions to apply to that organisation. In this article, we examine this relationship through the lens of BES in the Indian context. We measure the prospective applicant's intention to apply in a sample of 12 firms that appeared either consistently or once in BES during 2007–2011. Findings suggest that firms with a consistent or recent listing in BES receive a significantly higher intention to apply than firms present only in one or an older BES. Furthermore, organisation familiarity is one of the major predictors of intention to apply. We suggest consistent efforts in building and sustaining employer brand by combining the efforts of marketing and HR managers in the design and execution of relevant activities and their communication to the target audience in emerging economies.

Journal of Brand Management (2014) 21, 95–111. doi:10.1057/bm.2013.10;
published online 16 August 2013

Keywords: employer survey; employer branding; employer attractiveness; brand management; emerging economies

Correspondence

Gordhan K. Saini
School of Management and
Labour Studies, Tata Institute of
Social Sciences, V.N. Purav Marg,
Deonar, Mumbai, 400088,
Maharashtra, India.
E-mails: gksaini81@gmail.com;
gksaini@tiss.edu

INTRODUCTION

Recently, employer branding has been considered as a strategic lever (Moroko and Uncles, 2008) and desirable (Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Wilcock, 2005). The term employer branding suggests the differentiation of a firm's characteristics as an employer from those of its competitors (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Ambler and Barrow (1996) define employer branding in terms of benefits, calling it 'the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company'. A concept that has emerged within employer branding is 'employer attractiveness' (EA) (Ambler and Barrow, 1996; Gilly and Wolfenbarger, 1998; Ambler, 2000; Ewing *et al*, 2002). Berthon *et al* (2005, p. 156) define EA as the 'envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation' and argues that the 'more attractive an employer is perceived to be by potential employees, the stronger that particular organisation's employer brand equity'.

The creation of a successful employer brand is expected to bring several benefits such as reduced employee turnover, enhanced employee satisfaction, customer retention (Miles and Mangold, 2004) and the ability to sustain lower wages rates than the industry average (Ritson, 2002). However, the literature suggests that because of the growing and diverse aspirations of the new generation, long-term sustenance rather than creation of an employer brand may be a challenging task for practicing managers (Moroko and Uncles, 2008; Love and Singh, 2011) in increasingly competitive employment markets (Economic Intelligence Unit, 2008; Wilden *et al*, 2010, p. 56). Towards this end, human resource managers have put on a marketing cap to create and sustain an employer brand for attracting, retaining and motivating talented employees for their organisations.

Lately, employer branding has proved to be an effective marketing tool that helps in

projecting a distinct image of an organisation in the minds of the potential labour market and positioning it as an employer of choice or a great place to work (Branham, 2001; Ewing *et al*, 2002; Sullivan, 2004; Love and Singh, 2011). This explains the increasing participation of firms in best employer surveys (BES) to project themselves as great places of employment. More and more firms are striving to achieve 'Best Employer' status to draw the attention of the contemporary electronic and print media (for example, *The Economist*, 2003) that subsequently positively contributes to the firms' efforts to attract scarce, talented human resources (Branham, 2001; Conference Board, 2001; Sartain and Schumann, 2006). These BES, implicitly or explicitly, consider the major indicators of successful employer branding (see Moroko and Uncles, 2008), and therefore these surveys may be regarded as one of the good indicators to gauge the success or failure of a firm's employer branding efforts. Moreover, stakeholders such as prospective employees and industry have started placing huge importance on these surveys (Joo and McLean, 2006; Love and Singh, 2011). Thus, recently firms have become more serious in their efforts to participate in these BES, get listed in the same and obtain ranks better than their competitors.

In the last decade, several BES have emerged like the Great Place to Work Survey that evaluates firms using several EA parameters and ranks them in the list of great place to work or best place to work (Love and Singh, 2011). Most research, till date, has focused on the impact of EA attributes or other similar measures on the prospective employee's intention to apply to that firm; and have shown a positive and significant relationship between the two (for example, Collins and Han, 2004; Collins, 2007; Roy, 2008; Gomes and Neves, 2011; Wilden *et al*, 2010). However, an equally important issue that has been raised (for example,

Moroko and Uncles, 2008, p. 173; Love and Singh, 2011, p. 180), but hitherto unexplored, is – what happens to this relationship over time when firms disappear from the list of BES like the Great Place to Work? In other words, how sustainable is the advantage achieved through the BES rankings? How long does it last? Does it die after some time? In this article, we attempt to answer some of these questions mainly by comparing 12 firms (divided in three categories) with different employer branding efforts in an emerging economy – India.

This study is unique and thus expected to contribute to the literature because, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first attempt to explore the relationship between EA and intention to apply using existing BES. Moreover, we examine this issue in the context of an emerging market (that is, India) where bridging the talent gap is going to get tougher (Economic Intelligence Unit, 2008), which makes this study more pertinent.

In addition, the concept of EA has several other practical implications. For example, different organisations have diverse EA attributes that they project as their employee value proposition – (EVP) (EVP is used to denote a set of associations and offerings provided by an organisation in return for the skills, capabilities and experiences an employee brings to the organisation (Minchington, 2010)). These attributes significantly contribute to an applicant's intention to apply to a firm. Therefore, it is important to understand the specific role of various EA attributes and their contribution in building a positive image about the prospective employer. It also has practical implications for the firms participating in BES as they would like to maximise the returns from investments made in employer branding initiatives. Perhaps, this is more critical for the firms that want to sustain their EA and meet the fluctuating expectations and preferences of the dynamic target audience.

It may be noted that the specific image that organisations aim to project to its current and potential employees and other relevant stakeholders is the central component of employer branding (Branham, 2001).

Studying the concept of creation and sustenance of an employer brand in an emerging market like India is also pertinent because the strategies that work well in the developed world often fail in the context of emerging markets such as India, China and Brazil which are driven by different cultural, social and technological drivers (Hoskisson *et al*, 2000). Emerging economies have unique labour market patterns with glaring regional and national differences (Economic Intelligence Unit, 2008). To cope with these challenges, HR managers have been devising strategies to attract and retain talent by making and keeping compelling promises (Douglas *et al*, 2008), and it is anticipated that a strong employer brand will be a powerful magnet for potential employees (Economic Intelligence Unit, 2008).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

There are various factors that may influence a prospective employee's decision to apply to a firm. An applicant will be more likely to apply if the envisioned benefits that she sees in working for a particular firm match with the set of factors that are of importance to her. The personal determinants may influence her perception about a particular firm and lead to higher or lower intention to apply to that firm. If an applicant sees a particular firm offering these benefits, her perception about the firm may change, thereby influencing her intention to apply to that firm. This is why employers attempt to clearly communicate their distinct employer brand message to their prospective employees. Several scholars (for example, Balmer and Greyser, 2002) have cogently argued that incongruence between the different identities

and images of an organisation can cause problems for a firm with its relevant stakeholders. Thus, it may be important for organisations to create and communicate a common framework to accurately depict the various company identities and images (Lievens *et al*, 2007). The ability to use a brand to convey symbolic benefits to prospective employees makes employer branding useful (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). When the messages are consistent and credible, the internalisation process enables employees to better fulfil the explicit and implicit promises inherent in the brand name and organisational image (Greene *et al*, 1994).

Firms make conscious efforts to build themselves an attractive employer brand and communicate (for instance, through BES) their employer branding efforts and the outcome of such efforts to their relevant target audience. Several studies (for example, Employer Brand Institute, 2009; Wilden *et al*, 2010) have shown that firms invest in EA activities to build a stronger employer brand and one of the major reasons behind such efforts is to attract larger and better talent.

Several researchers have found a significant relationship between organisational image and early recruitment outcomes like intentions to apply to the organisation. Gatewood *et al* (1993) found a significant positive correlation between the image of an organisation and job seekers' likelihood of applying to that organisation. The literature (Collins and Stevens, 2002; Slaughter *et al*, 2004; Agrawal and Swaroop, 2009; Gomes and Neves, 2011) also confirms a positive relationship between the EA and a prospective applicant's intention to apply.

There is evidence that an attractive employment brand increases the number of applicants too (Douglas, 2007). According to Hewitt (2009), the best employers get nearly twice as many applications per

employee as other organisations. For example, companies listed on Fortune's '100 Best Companies to Work For' consistently outperformed the S&P 500 companies and received two times the number of job applications (Reed and Clark, 2004). Several firms participate in BES every year and compete to procure a better position or maintain their positions. The firms appearing in the BES rankings are perceived as the best places of employment. The presence or absence of firms on these surveys' lists may influence an applicant's intention to apply to them. This leads us to our first two hypotheses where we attempt to explain the relationship between an applicant's intention to apply as a function of EAs and the consequence of the presence of a firm in BES.

Hypothesis 1: Employer attractiveness attributes significantly influence the applicant's intention to apply to a firm.

Hypothesis 2: A firm's listing in BES significantly influences the prospective applicant's intention to apply to that firm.

Earlier research shows that employer familiarity affects a prospective employee's application behaviour (that is, intention to apply), and job seekers prefer familiar employers to unfamiliar employers because of the perceived legitimacy of the signals sent by the former (Gatewood *et al*, 1993). Organisational familiarity is the job seekers' awareness of or ability to identify a company as a potential employer (Cable and Turban, 2001). It is established in the recruitment literature that an organisation's overall familiarity is related to applicants' perceptions of a company's attractiveness as an employer, with more familiar organisations being perceived as more attractive (Turban and Greening, 1997; Cable and Graham, 2000; Cable and Turban, 2001). Previous research also reveals that there is a link between job seekers' organisational familiarity and their liking for

the hiring companies (Gatewood *et al*, 1993; Lemmink *et al*, 2003; Thompson *et al*, 2004). Therefore, we argue that the applicant's familiarity with an organisation may also influence their intention to apply to that organisation. It should be noted that recent researchers (for example, Gomes and Neves, 2011) advocate investigating the role of organisational familiarity in an applicant's intention to apply to a job vacancy.

Hypothesis 3: A prospective applicant's familiarity with an organisation may positively influence the applicant's intention to apply to that firm.

The literature reveals that one of the variables to measure the success of employer branding is the number of applicants compared with the industry average (Douglas, 2007; Moroko and Uncles, 2008). As stated earlier, the best employers get a higher number of applications per vacancy than other organisations (Hewitt, 2009; Reed and Clark, 2004). In addition, Google topped *Forbes* magazine's '100 Best Companies to Work For' for the year 2013, and received 58 times more applications than the positions it had in Australia (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2013). In other words, prospective applicants are more attracted towards the companies appearing in BES than to others, which are absent in BES. Therefore, though major research is missing, it can be argued that the firms appearing higher in the BES rankings are perceived as better places of employment than firms that are lower or absent in the rankings.

One of the primary goals of the firms that participate and secure ranks in BES is to signal to the target audience about the strong commitment of the firm towards providing the best place to work. Firms attempt to send a message that they respect and consistently meet the expectations of their current workforce, and are able to provide the attributes most valued and desired by the prospective employees in the

labour market. However, the fluctuations in the ranking of an organisation might have an effect on the applicant's intention to apply. This leads us to an unexplored area of study that tries to analyse the relationship between the presence or absence of firms in BES and the applicant's intention to apply. In this context, recently increasing importance is given by practitioners to the sustenance of these rankings by the firms; for example, articles like 'You can't be a seasonal best employer' (Business Today, 2011) and 'Being a great workplace is not a onetime affair' (Borate and Banerji, 2011). It is believed that employer branding cannot be just the flavour of one season and the truly great workplaces need to consistently outperform their peers. It is assumed that if a firm has been consistently appearing on these surveys, then it will be always (till it is present in BES) perceived as the best employer of choice by prospective employees leading to higher intention to apply. This phenomenon can be described as 'sustenance of employer attractiveness'. However, great human resource practices are inadequate unless they meet employees' regular expectations and needs; and even the best employers need to revisit their plans and constantly seek employee feedback to be aligned to employee expectations. One of the reflections of this fact is that only five organisations (that is, Classic Stripes, NTPC, Godrej Consumer Products, Intel and FedEx) could make it to the coveted list of 'India's Best Companies to Work For' continuously for the last six studies carried out by the Great Place to Work Institute India (Borate and Banerji, 2011). It should be noted that 'Great Place to Work Study 2011' states that 14 out of the top 50 have made it to this elite list of best workplaces for the first time, which shows that established best employers are continuously challenged by other organisations in order to gain competitive advantage.

At the same time, prospective employees will be able to recall the firms that have appeared in recent BES quickly (as they are recent in their memory), leading to higher intention to apply to such firms than to the firms that have appeared in old BES.

On the basis of the above discussion, we frame the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 4a: Firms which list consistently in consecutive BES will show a higher intention to apply than firms which list in BES only once.

Hypothesis 4b: Firms which list in recent BES will show a higher intention to apply than firms which list in old BES.

It has been observed that the attributes that are important to the labour market change with new developments, opportunities and trends. For instance, India's labour market will be in a vigorous shake up over the next few years (Kohli, 2010) and the inexorable march of market forces, and their interplay with the structural and political dynamics of the country, could end up drawing many unemployed persons into the job market. This pool of nascent talent places different importance to various factors while seeking employment. We argue that for an applicant, the significance of one EA attribute or a combination of EA attributes may change over time. This change occurs because of the change in the preferences of the applicants as well as the change in the perception of the firm *vis-a-vis* its competitors. A well-managed brand can be powerful enough to overcome almost any competitive advantage of its competitors. Today's global competition forces firms, irrespective of their sizes, to look for new sources of sustainable competitive advantage that are unique over time (Arnold, 2000), intangible in nature and protective (Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman, 2005). From the marketing perspective, brand equity stems from the

greater confidence that the external audience places in a brand compared with its competitors (Lassar *et al*, 1995). Several factors, including changing market forces, will influence the perception of a candidate about the available prospective employers and the relative importance she places on various EA attributes for each prospective employer. This change in the desirable attributes will significantly affect the applicant's intention to apply to a particular firm. In addition, a prospective candidate's expectations on various EAs may vary with time and from one firm to another. Hence, the effect of time on the intention to apply with respect to EA attributes will also be different. It may be noted that now there are online tools available that give a choice to applicants to select employers based on their preferences. For example, a tool 'BEST EmployersTM', certified by the CRF Institute, headquartered at the Netherlands, offers independent HR assessment and acknowledgement services and gives an option to find those best employers that meet the criteria (for example, monetary benefits, working conditions, career development and so on) that are most important to an applicant in her career at a particular stage. Such developments reflect the fact that the preferences of applicants, external as well as internal, may change over time and organisations which do not adapt to such changing preferences may lose their best employer tag, resulting in a low intention to apply. However, firms that are serious about the BES ranking would try to gauge (for example, internally through employee satisfaction surveys, exit interviews; and externally through market expectation studies) this changing pattern and attempt to align their HR strategy to the market requirements. There is anecdotal evidence that employer branding is considered as an example of a progressive HR practice and it is an important differentiator in emerging economies like India for talent management

(SHRM Research, 2010). Recent trends reveal the importance of having an effective employer brand to recruit and retain the right kind of talent needed by the firms to establish and retain its competitive advantage in the marketplace (SHRM Research, 2010). This signifies the importance of sustaining a firm's employer brand with time and considering the evolving EA attributes that contribute to the applicant's intention to apply. The above discussion leads to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5: Employer attractiveness attributes may have a different impact on the candidate's intention to apply in different time periods.

Hypothesis 6: Employer attractiveness attributes may have a different impact on the candidate's intention to apply for different firms.

Researchers (Cable and Judge, 1996; Powell and Goulet, 1996; Highhouse *et al*, 1999; Cable and Turban, 2001; Wilden *et al*, 2010) suggest that the importance of EA attributes and its influence on the candidate's intention to apply may fluctuate according to various characteristics of the labour market such as age, gender, location, education, current salary, work experience and individual or group preferences. Therefore, we include these variables as control variables in order to capture the true effect of EA attributes on the applicant's intention to apply.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Firm selection

To select firms for this study, we consider three major BES that are comprehensive and regularly conducted in India. These surveys are the Great Place to Work Institute's Survey of 'India's Best Companies to Work

For', Business Today's study of 'Best Companies to Work For' and The Aon Hewitt's 'Best Employers Survey in India'. The former two are carried out annually, whereas the last one is conducted bi-annually. We selected the firms that were present in either one or all of these three surveys. These surveys provide the list of firms that have been considered either great or the best place to work or good on EA indicators. Using these surveys, three sampling frames were generated: first, the firms that mainly appeared in relatively old (that is, Year 2007) surveys (total 22 firms); second, the firms that appeared mainly in recent (that is, Year 2011) surveys (total 30 firms); and third, the firms that were largely consistent from 2007 to 2011 in any of the three surveys (total 12 firms). To avoid overlap, a firm is counted only once although it may have appeared in more than one survey. Finally, four firms from each list were selected randomly (Table 1) and each set of firms is called a sample set.

Scale selection

Berthon *et al* (2005) provide a comprehensive 25-item scale to measure EA that has been tested for its reliability and validity. Two more items have been added by Roy (2008) in the Indian context. Thus, we use a 27-items scale that considers much wider range of attributes than organisational attributes (for example, Roberson *et al*, 2005) to measure EA (Table 2). A three-item scale and a two-item scale, drawn from the literature, have been used to measure intention to apply (Taylor and Bergmann, 1987; Roberson *et al*, 2005; Gomes and Neves, 2011) and organisation familiarity (Lievens *et al*, 2005; Collins, 2007), respectively. Respondents were asked to provide their response on a 7-point scale from 1 (that is, strongly disagree) to 7 (that is, strongly agree) for each firm in a sample set. Each respondent replied to only one sample

Table 1: Selected firms

Sample Set 1 (firms in 2007 BES)	Sample Set 2 (firms in 2011 BES)	Sample Set 3 (firms consistent from 2007 to 2011 BES)
Agilent Technologies	Fabindia Overseas Pvt. Ltd	American Express India Pvt. Ltd.
Birla Sun Life Insurance Comp. Ltd	The Oberoi Hotels & Resorts	Google
Gap International	Tata Power	Qualcomm
Sapient	Whirlpool India Ltd.	Marriott International Inc.

Table 2: EA attributes and their distribution across various EA dimensions

Category	EA attribute
Development value	Recognition/appreciation from management
	A great start for future employment
	Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organisation
	Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organisation
	Gaining career-enhancing experience
Social value	A fun working environment
	Having a good relationship with your superiors
	Having a good relationship with your colleagues
	Supportive and encouraging colleagues
	Happy work environment
Interest value	Working in an exciting environment
	Innovative employer – novel work practices/forward-thinking
	The organisation both values and makes use of your creativity
	The organisation produces high-quality products and services
	The organisation produces innovative products and services
Application value	Humanitarian organisation – gives back to society
	Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution
	Opportunity to teach others what you have learned
	Acceptance and belonging
	The organisation is customer-orientated
Economic value	Good promotion opportunities within the organisation
	Job security within the organisation
	Hands-on inter-departmental experience
	An above average basic salary
	An attractive overall compensation package
Company culture	Strong and clear company culture
Ethical organisation	An ethical organisation

Source: Compiled from Berthon et al (2005) and Roy (2008).

set (that is, four firms) and they, on average, took about 15 min to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was executed using the Web services of surveymonkey.com. Reliability statistics (Cronbach's α) for the EA scale was 0.972. In order to avoid any possible bias, particularly to the response on the dependent variable, respondents were not provided any information about the results of BES.

Berthon et al (2005) classifies 25 EA attributes into five categories, that is, development value, social value, interest value, application value and economic value. These five categories are the refined and extended version of the three dimensions (that is, functional, psychological and economic) proposed by Ambler and Barrow (1996). According to Berthon et al (2005), interest and social value capture the

'psychological benefits'; development and application value comprise the 'functional benefits'; and both operationalisations have an economic dimension. Thus, we follow the same classification to group the 25 EA items into five dimensions while the remaining two items are kept separately (Table 2). This resulted in a total of seven dimensions representing 27 EA attributes. In the analysis, the value of every EA dimension is the mean score of various items covered by that particular dimension.

Respondent

A total of 191 students (131 male and 60 female) from various B-Schools responded to the standard questionnaire. The students were pursuing professional degrees (MBA, PGDBM, B-Tech and so on); and 64 respondents were studying at the undergraduate level and 98 at the postgraduate level while the remaining 29 respondents were already employed (but looking for a job change) with work experience of 1 year or more. The student respondents were in the

final year of their studies and had either started searching or were planning to search for a job. Thus, the profile of selected respondents made them appropriate prospective employees for the external job market.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Descriptive statistics, correlation, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and ordinary least square regression analysis techniques were used to analyse the data and test the hypotheses. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics and between variable correlation. It can be observed that intention to apply shows significant correlation with four EA dimensions (that is, development value, social value, interest value and application value), while organisational familiarity has statistically significant correlation with development value and social value.

ANOVA was performed to examine the difference in mean scores of applicant's intention to apply in three sample sets. ANOVA results (Table 4) showed statistically significant differences (P -value 0.001 and F -value 7.12)

Table 3: Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Age	Experience	Group preference	Individual preference	Salary	Intention to apply	Organisational familiarity
Age	23.72	3.44	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Experience	1.37	2.80	0.811**	—	—	—	—	—	—
Group preference	3.07	1.49	-0.051	-0.061	—	—	—	—	—
Individual preference	3.85	1.64	-0.073	-0.130	-0.108	—	—	—	—
Salary	3.26	2.40	-0.189**	-0.247**	0.065	0.065	—	—	—
Intention to apply	4.14	0.85	0.066	-0.009	0.007	-0.043	-0.031	—	—
Organisation familiarity	4.08	1.11	-0.015	-0.041	-0.015	-0.045	-0.067	0.505**	—
Development value	3.62	0.91	0.051	0.060	-0.097	-0.017	-0.120	0.512**	0.435**
Social value	3.49	0.89	0.083	0.128	-0.041	-0.151*	-0.093	0.333**	0.228**
Interest value	3.26	1.13	0.078	0.167*	-0.074	-0.082	-0.105	0.190**	0.107
Application value	3.26	1.03	0.081	0.184*	-0.008	-0.129	-0.064	0.158*	0.131
Economic value	3.36	1.00	0.055	0.147*	-0.007	-0.059	-0.081	0.139	0.115
Company culture	3.23	1.21	0.054	0.163*	-0.045	-0.076	-0.116	0.113	0.058
Ethical organisation	3.31	1.30	0.031	0.119	-0.032	-0.032	-0.069	0.108	0.040

Note: * and ** correlations are significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels, respectively.

Table 4: ANOVA and t-test results (variable: intention to apply)

Sample set	Descriptive statistics				Source of variance	One-way ANOVA					T-Test Results	
	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	P-value	Sample set	Mean
1	49	3.76	1.016	0.145	Between groups	9.67	2	4.84	7.12	0.001	1	3.76
2	102	4.30	0.738	0.073	Within groups	127.64	188	0.68	—	—	2	4.30
3	40	4.19	0.768	0.122	Total	137.31	190	—	—	—	t-value: 3.69	P-value: 0.000

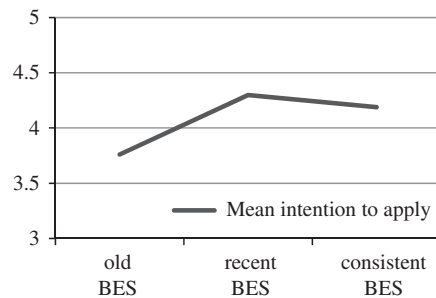


Figure 1: Mean intention to apply.

in the prospective applicant’s intention to apply across three set of firms (Figure 1). Firms consistently listed in BES recorded a significantly higher intention to apply (mean score 4.2) than the firms that appeared in old BES (mean score 3.7), thereby supporting Hypothesis 4a. However, surprisingly, the former recorded marginally lower intention to apply than the firms listed only in recent BES (mean score 4.3), but the differences were not statistically significant (*t* statistic 0.818 and *P*-value 0.415). Such a situation may arise because of higher organisational familiarity (mean score 4.3) with the firms in recent BES than to the firms in consistent BES (mean score 3.6). Moreover, the mean score of intention to apply for the firms that appeared in recent BES was 4.3, significantly (*P*-value 0.000) higher than the firms that appeared in old BES, thus supporting Hypothesis 4b (see Table 4 *t*-test results).

The seven EA dimensions were used as independent variables in the regression

analysis while the applicant’s intention to apply was considered the dependent variable. In addition, organisation familiarity was treated as an independent variable while the rest (that is, age, gender, experience, income, location and so on) were treated as control variables. Three dummy variables were generated for three sample sets, and Sample Set 3 (firms consistently appeared in 2007–2011 BES rankings) was taken as a reference category.

The regression results (Table 5) reveal that the firm’s listing in BES (*P*-value < 0.01 for Firm Dummies 1 and 2), development value and social value significantly contributed to the applicant’s intention to apply (*P*-value < 0.01 for all three variables) supporting Hypothesis 2 fully and Hypothesis 1 partially, respectively. Results imply that the applicant’s intention to apply was 0.574 point less in the firms that appeared in old (that is, 2007) BES compared with the firms which were, by and large, consistently in BES from 2007 to 2011. It was 0.303 point less for firms in recent (that is, 2011) BES compared with firms that were consistently in BES. Furthermore, development value had the largest impact (coefficient 0.468) on the candidate’s application intention followed by social value (coefficient 0.384). We did not find any support for other EA dimensions such as interest value, application value and economic value. The organisation familiarity was also significant (*P*-value 0.000; coefficient 0.219) which supports Hypothesis 3. This

Table 5: Regression results: dependent variable – intention to apply

<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Unstandardised coefficient</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>Standardised coefficients</i>
Constant	1.403**	0.628	—
Segment	−0.008	0.060	−0.010
Gender	−0.072	0.104	−0.040
Age	0.036	0.024	0.146
Location	−0.064	0.056	−0.065
Experience	−0.019	0.031	−0.063
Group preference	0.034	0.032	0.059
Individual preference	−0.006	0.030	−0.012
Salary	0.012	0.022	0.034
Organisation familiarity	0.219***	0.050	0.287
Development value	0.468***	0.088	0.502
Social value	0.384***	0.123	0.405
Interest value	−0.072	0.119	−0.096
Application value	−0.226	0.131	−0.276
Economic value	−0.172	0.118	−0.204
Company culture	−0.020	0.082	−0.028
Ethical organisation	0.012	0.060	0.018
Firm 2007 (Dummy 1)	−0.574***	0.139	−0.296
Firm 2011 (Dummy 2)	−0.303***	0.147	−0.179

Note: R^2 0.508; adjusted R^2 0.456.

** and *** coefficients significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels, respectively.

entails that one unit change in organisational familiarity increases application possibility by 0.219 points. No control variable was statistically significant.

Three separate firm-specific regressions were carried out to examine the influence of each EA dimension on applicant's intention to apply for each firm in a given sample set. Firm-specific regression analysis (Table 6) provides mixed results about EA dimensions. Development value, social value and company culture were statistically significant for any two of the firms in the Sample Set 1 (old BES), whereas the development value was the major EA dimension for the three firms in the Sample Set 2 (recent BES). Interestingly, for Gap International and Tata Power four dimensions, including development value, social value and company culture, significantly influenced the intention to apply. For the firms in Sample Set 3 (firms consistently appeared in BES), the intention to apply was determined by the different EA dimensions and no unique

pattern emerged. For example, for American Express social value and for Qualcomm economic value played an important role in determining intention to apply, while for Google and Marriott Hotels both development value and ethical organisation significantly influenced the intention to apply. Such a diverse pattern of significant or insignificant coefficients supports Hypothesis 6. Interestingly, organisational familiarity was one of the most important statistically significant variables across all three sample sets, suggesting its major and positive contribution to the intention to apply.

It should be noted that the significance of various EA dimensions varies for the firms in a sample set. For example, for Gap International (in old BES) four EA dimensions were significant, whereas for Oberoi Group (in recent BES) no EA dimension was significant. Furthermore, in the Sample Set 2 (recent BES) the development value was significant for three firms. Such a varying importance of EA dimensions

Table 6: Regression coefficient (unstandardised): dependent variable – intention to apply

Independent variable	Sample Set 1				Sample Set 2				Sample Set 3			
	Agilent	Birla Sun Life	Gap International	Sapient	FAB India	Oberoi Hotels	Tata Power	Whirlpool	American Express	Google	Qualcomm	Marriott Hotels
Constant	-1.827 (3.410)	5.466* (2.977)	0.570 (2.215)	1.438 (3.937)	-0.010 (1.267)	1.953 (1.215)	-0.368 (1.327)	2.158* (1.127)	-1.271 (5.643)	-7.077 (5.399)	3.601 (4.851)	-8.479 (7.269)
Gender	-0.159 (0.342)	-0.540* (0.305)	0.055 (0.228)	0.284 (0.369)	-0.143 (0.268)	0.161 (0.259)	-0.299 (0.289)	-0.181 (0.237)	0.496 (0.542)	0.225 (0.510)	-0.559 (0.454)	0.483 (0.688)
Age	0.092 (0.121)	-0.144 (0.107)	0.039 (0.080)	0.010 (0.138)	0.072 (0.047)	0.050 (0.045)	0.024 (0.051)	0.035 (0.042)	0.175 (0.193)	0.257 (0.180)	0.077 (0.163)	0.322 (0.251)
Location	-0.210 (0.306)	0.093 (0.289)	-0.174 (0.204)	-0.449 (0.353)	0.004 (0.107)	-0.016 (0.103)	-0.090 (0.115)	-0.251*** (0.094)	-0.207 (0.419)	0.957** (0.406)	0.616* (0.348)	0.216 (0.501)
Experience	0.168 (0.204)	0.104 (0.178)	-0.135 (0.134)	-0.005 (0.219)	-0.129** (0.057)	-0.134* (0.054)	0.100* (0.061)	0.068* (0.050)	-0.232 (0.214)	-0.013 (0.197)	-0.376** (0.178)	0.152 (0.258)
Group preference	-0.165 (0.135)	0.078 (0.119)	0.123 (0.089)	0.072 (0.146)	0.035 (0.075)	-0.053 (0.071)	0.028 (0.080)	0.065 (0.065)	0.009 (0.149)	0.013 (0.140)	-0.246* (0.123)	0.231 (0.183)
Individual preference	0.101 (0.121)	-0.010 (0.107)	-0.006 (0.080)	-0.065 (0.130)	0.022 (0.068)	-0.037 (0.065)	0.117 (0.073)	0.060 (0.060)	-0.105 (0.133)	-0.098 (0.125)	-0.322*** (0.112)	-0.031 (0.169)
Salary	0.201* (0.123)	-0.002 (0.100)	-0.097 (0.077)	-0.049 (0.122)	0.034 (0.051)	-0.036 (0.049)	0.059 (0.055)	0.025 (0.045)	0.041 (0.122)	0.070 (0.111)	-0.211** (0.102)	0.159 (0.148)
Organisation familiarity	0.373** (0.203)	0.426*** (0.126)	0.301*** (0.097)	0.296* (0.152)	0.294*** (0.092)	0.122* (0.093)	0.396*** (0.098)	0.159** (0.089)	0.359** (0.130)	0.125 (0.111)	0.281** (0.117)	0.300** (0.146)
Development value	0.221 (0.349)	0.127 (0.269)	0.554*** (0.198)	0.829** (0.310)	0.261* (0.182)	0.189 (0.177)	0.539** (0.216)	0.390** (0.171)	0.404 (0.457)	1.179** (0.443)	-0.193 (0.377)	0.549* (0.562)
Social value	1.262** (0.582)	0.406 (0.536)	0.639* (0.407)	0.210 (0.648)	0.260 (0.273)	0.236 (0.262)	0.756** (0.294)	0.164 (0.239)	0.604* (0.449)	-0.152 (0.404)	0.026 (0.373)	0.314 (0.543)
Interest value	0.218 (0.520)	0.655* (0.432)	0.117 (0.322)	0.610 (0.500)	0.001 (0.297)	0.169 (0.278)	0.568* (0.310)	-0.339 (0.253)	-0.139 (0.472)	-0.631 (0.436)	0.196 (0.391)	-0.330 (0.574)
Application value	-1.042 (0.699)	-0.075 (0.582)	1.166** (0.441)	-0.748 (0.703)	0.006 (0.329)	-0.350 (0.317)	-0.209 (0.353)	-0.209 (0.288)	-0.399 (0.387)	0.081 (0.348)	0.299* (0.327)	-0.422 (0.469)
Economic value	-0.198 (0.635)	-0.654 (0.541)	-0.011 (0.405)	0.525 (0.655)	-0.171 (0.305)	-0.142 (0.282)	-0.216 (0.314)	-0.115 (0.257)	-0.505 (0.388)	0.132 (0.345)	0.265 (0.329)	0.018 (0.466)
Company culture	-0.379 (0.373)	-0.106 (0.335)	0.377* (0.266)	0.714* (0.415)	0.084 (0.180)	0.022 (0.174)	0.368* (0.195)	0.132 (0.158)	-0.077 (0.344)	-0.117 (0.300)	-0.412 (0.284)	0.002 (0.407)
Ethical organisation	0.371* (0.234)	-0.208 (0.206)	-0.159 (0.157)	-0.203 (0.245)	-0.132 (0.141)	0.149 (0.134)	-0.060 (0.149)	0.122 (0.123)	0.118 (0.235)	0.416** (0.202)	-0.054 (0.190)	0.352* (0.274)
R ²	0.497	0.575	0.667	0.599	0.287	0.245	0.512	0.307	0.567	0.672	0.649	0.574
Adjusted R ²	0.268	0.381	0.516	0.416	0.163	0.114	0.427	0.187	0.297	0.467	0.430	0.308

*, ** and *** coefficients significant at the 0.1, 0.05 and 0.01 levels, respectively.

Note: Figure in parenthesis represents standard error.

Table 7: Summary of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Support/not supported	Level of significance
Hypothesis 1	Partially supported	—
Hypothesis 2	Supported	0.01
Hypothesis 3	Supported	0.01
Hypothesis 4a	Supported	0.01
Hypothesis 4b	Supported	0.05
Hypothesis 5	Supported	—
Hypothesis 6	Supported	—

in the intention to apply in the three different sample sets supports Hypothesis 5. See Table 7 for summary of hypothesis testing.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this article, we show, taking firms from BES, that EA attributes significantly influence the applicant's intention to apply which confirms the earlier findings (that is, Collins and Stevens, 2002; Agrawal and Swaroop, 2009; Gomes and Neves, 2011). However, all EA attributes are not equally important for the prospective employee while searching for a job. Development value and social value were two of the important EA dimensions that contributed the most to the intention to apply. These two dimensions cover various elements of 'functions benefits' and 'psychological benefits', respectively, and were originally proposed by Ambler and Barrow (1996) and later revised by Berthon *et al* (2005). Therefore, firms that aspire to attract a larger number of applicants may prefer to focus on the development value and social value aspects of EA dimensions. Consistent with previous research (Turban and Greening, 1997; Gatewood *et al*, 1993; Lemmink *et al*, 2003), organisational familiarity has emerged as a major determinant of the intention to apply to the prospective employer. This indicates that factors, which may increase an organisation's visibility,

other than employer branding activities may also be important. Some of these could be products and services produced/offered by the company, company reputation, firm size and geographical spread as suggested by Franca and Pahor (2012).

The results confirm that the candidate is more likely to apply to a firm present in BES (conducted recently or consistently in recent past) than to a firm not appearing in BES (or appearing in old BES). Thus, it may make sense to invest in employer branding activities and communicate the same through popular media such as BES. By doing this, companies will be able to attract a larger talent pool leading to better candidate selection, and subsequently higher engagement, higher employee productivity and low turnover (Douglas, 2007; Hewitt, 2009). Consider for instance that because of the economic recession, more than 3 million Americans lost their jobs in 2008, and yet 81 per cent of the top 100 companies in Fortune's 2009 list of 'Best Employers to Work For' had no layoffs in 2008 (Cascio, 2010). Furthermore, companies listed in Fortune's '100 Best Companies to Work For' consistently did better than the S&P 500, as they received two times the number of job applications and had half the turnover rate of their competitors. And 'The 100 Best' companies have had a 10.6 per cent annual return since 1998 compared with the 5.7 per cent return for the S&P 500 over the same period (Watson, 2002; Reed and Clark, 2004).

In the firm-wise regression analysis, we find that the development value is significant for seven firms out of a total of 12 firms, making it a major contributor to the intention to apply. Except development value, we do not observe a common pattern in the influence of other EA dimensions across the firms of three sample sets and the results are mixed. For example, for firms like Gap International and Tata Power four

EA dimensions are significant, whereas for the remaining firms (except Birla Sun Life, where no EA dimension is significant) either one or two dimensions contribute to the intention to apply. Such findings suggest that all employer branding activities may not result in higher intention to apply and some of the EA dimensions are discounted by the candidates while applying for a job. Attracting more candidates for a job advertisement may become more difficult because of such varying importance given to EA dimensions by the candidate. Hence, the firms should do a careful analysis to identify factors, whether related to employer branding or not, affecting the applicant's intention to apply. The organisational familiarity variable is statistically significant for all firms except two, supporting our common regression results and earlier research. This suggests that the candidate's familiarity and awareness about a firm has significant influence on their intention to apply. This is in line with signalling theory that suggests that any information that a job seeker views will influence their opinion about the prospective company. Although this information may not have a direct link with a job or an organisation, it can signal what it would be like to work for that organisation, including individuals' attraction to the organisation (Rynes *et al*, 1991; Turban, 2001).

In the light of this study, employers need to realise the increasing importance of building and communicating the employer brand in order to attract, recruit and retain talent. Given the paucity of talent, companies should be more receptive to the shift in the labour market – that is, the bargaining power is moving from the employers to the employees. Moreover, work force composition is undergoing a significant change with a mix of generations coexisting and working together in the same settings. Each set of employees comes with a unique set of preferences and expectations from their employers. It is imperative for employers to

understand these preferences and appreciate these differences by providing work spaces that cater to their expectations. Through employer branding efforts, firm may contemplate these differences and design an appropriate employee value proposition in order to develop an employer brand that resonates with these diverse set of expectations. This may help in attracting and retaining the best talent belonging to a varied range of educational backgrounds and generations.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In this study, we examine the relationship between EA attributes and intention to apply taking firms from BES. We conclude with the following major observations from our study. First, human resource professionals should recognise that in the short term employer branding definitely provides a competitive advantage in the labour market, but that may not be forever, and is expected to decline in the medium to long term. Therefore, continuous efforts on EA attributes may be needed in order to sustain the competitive advantage of employer branding. Second, the development and social value are the strongest predictors of intention to apply and therefore firms would like to focus more on these two EA dimensions to attract a larger talent pool. In addition, firms should make concerted efforts to improve their exposure to prospective candidates and thereby increase organisational familiarity of the candidates that contributes to the intention to apply. Third, the changing influence of EA attributes on applicants' intention to apply suggests that all EA attributes are not given equal weight by the prospective employees and a few of them may be discounted while applying for a vacancy. In such cases, employer branding efforts may need to be

more focused if they are mainly targeted at attracting a large pool of applicants. Fourth, there exist possibilities of creating synergies by combining efforts of marketing and HR managers in the design and execution of EA activities and their communication to the target audience (that is, potential employees) in emerging economies.

However, the generalisability of the findings may be questioned because of two of its major limitations. First, the study did not cover firms not participating in BES; and second, small sample sizes for the Sample Sets 1 and 3. The former limitation is partially tackled by considering three BESs rather than merely relying on one BES. Future studies with wider firm coverage and larger sample size may be suggested. Furthermore, specific studies examining the role of applicant characteristics such as segments (for example, fresh graduates and experienced), the effect of firm characteristics such as firm size, product/services offered, firm reputation, and industry sector (for example, manufacturing and services) on the intention to apply may be recommended.

REFERENCES

- Agrawal, R.K. and Swaroop, P. (2009) Effect of employer brand image on application intentions of B-School undergraduates. *Vision-The Journal of Business Perspective* 13(3): 41–49.
- Ambler, T. (2000) *Marketing and the Bottom Line*. London, UK: Financial Times/Prentice Hall.
- Ambler, T. and Barrow, S. (1996) The employer brand. *Journal of Brand Management* 4(3): 185–206.
- Arnold, D. (2000) Seven rules of international distribution. *Harvard Business Review* 78(6): 131–137.
- Backhaus, K. and Tikoo, S. (2004) Conceptualizing and researching employer branding. *Career Development International* 9(5): 501–517.
- Balmer, J.M.T. and Greyser, S.A. (2002) Managing the multiple identities of the corporation. *California Management Review* 44(3): 72–86.
- Barrow, S. and Mosley, R. (2005) *The Employer Brand*. London: Wiley & Sons.
- Berthon, P., Ewing, M. and Hah, L.L. (2005) Captivating company: Dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding. *International Journal of Advertising* 24(2): 151–172.
- Borate, A. and Banerji, J. (2011) Building a great place to work. Great place to Work Institute India, http://www.greatplacetowork.in/storage/documents/Publications_Documents/building_a_great_place_to_work_-_learning_from_indias_best_companies_to_work_for_in_2011.pdf, accessed 1 April 2013.
- Branham, L. (2001) *Keeping the People Who Keep You in Business: 24 Ways to Hang on to Your Most Valuable Talent*. New York: American Management Association.
- Business Today (2011) Top of the list in 'best companies to work for' survey, 6 February, <http://businesstoday.intoday.in/story/toppers-in-the-best-companies-to-work-for-survey/1/12568.html>, accessed 31 March 2013.
- Cable, D.M. and Graham, M.E. (2000) The determinants of job seekers' reputation perceptions. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour* 21(8): 929–947.
- Cable, D.M. and Judge, T.A. (1996) Person-organization fit, job choice decisions and organizational entry. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 67(3): 294–311.
- Cable, D. and Turban, D.B. (2001) Establishing the dimensions, sources and value of job seekers employer knowledge during recruitment. In: G.R. Ferris (eds.) *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*. New York: Elsevier Science, pp. 115–163.
- Cascio, W.F. (2010) If you must downsize, do it right. The Business School, University of Colorado Denver, <http://www.employmentpolicy.org/topic/21/research/if-you-must-downsize-do-it-right#>, accessed 22 March 2013.
- Collins, C.J. (2007) The interactive effects of recruitment practices and product awareness on job seekers' employer knowledge and application behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 92(1): 180–190.
- Collins, C.J. and Han, J. (2004) Exploring applicant pool quantity and quality: The effects of early recruitment practice strategies, corporate advertising, and firm reputation. *Personnel Psychology* 57(3): 685–717.
- Collins, C.J. and Stevens, C.K. (2002) The relationship between early recruitment-related activities and the application decisions of new labor-market entrants: A brand-equity approach to recruitment. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 87(6): 1121–1133.
- Delgado-Ballester, E. and Munuera-Aleman, J.L. (2005) Does brand trust matter to brand equity? *Journal of Product and Brand Management* 14(3): 187–196.
- Douglas, M.J. (2007) 50 best employers in Canada 2007: In Love, L. (online) Employer branding for tomorrow's Workplace, 11 June 2009, <http://www.cch.ca/public/Branding-QA.pdf>, accessed 20 March 2013.
- Douglas, A.R., Hill, L.A. and Conger, J.A. (2008) Winning the race for talent in emerging markets. *Harvard Business Review* 86(11): 62–70.

- Economic Intelligence Unit (2008) People for growth: The talent challenge in emerging markets, May, http://www.eiu.com/site_info.asp?info_name=SAP_talent_wars&page=noads, accessed 10 May 2013.
- Employer Brand Institute (2009) Employer branding global research study. March, <http://www.collectivelearningaustralia.com>, accessed 12 September 2012.
- Ewing, M.T., Pitt, L.F., de Bussy, N.M. and Berthon, P. (2002) Employment branding in the knowledge economy. *International Journal of Advertising* 21(1): 3–22.
- Franca, V. and Pahor, M. (2012) The strength of the employer brand: Influences and implications for recruiting. *Journal of Marketing & Management* 3(1): 78–122.
- Gatewood, R.D., Gowan, M.A. and Lautenschlager, G.J. (1993) Corporate image, recruitment image, and initial job choice decisions. *Academy of Management Journal* 36(2): 414–427.
- Gilly, M.C. and Wolfenbarger, M. (1998) Advertising's internal audience. *Journal of Marketing* 62(1): 69–88.
- Gomes, D. and Neves, J. (2011) Organizational attractiveness and prospective applicants' intentions to apply. *Personnel Review* 40(6): 684–699.
- Greene, W., Walls, G.D. and Schrest, L.J. (1994) Internal marketing: The key to external marketing success. *Journal of Service Marketing* 8(4): 5–13.
- Hewitt (2009) Point of view, what makes a company a best employer? http://www.aon.com/attachments/thought-leadership/pov_Best_Employer_Position_Paper.pdf, accessed 25 March 2013.
- Highhouse, S., Stierwalt, S.L., Bachiochi, P., Elder, A.E. and Fisher, G. (1999) Effects of advertised human resource management practices on attraction of African American applicants. *Personnel Psychology* 52(2): 425–442.
- Hoskisson, R.E., Eden, L., Lau, C.M. and Wright, M. (2000) Strategy in emerging economies. *Academy of Management Journal* 43(3): 249–267.
- Joo, B.K. and McLean, G.N. (2006) Best employer studies: A conceptual model from a literature review and a case study. *Human Resources Development Review* 5(2): 228–257.
- Kohli, R. (2010) India: Labour market's changing times. East Asia Forum, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/tag/structural-unemployment/>, accessed 12 September 2012.
- Lassar, W., Mittal, B. and Sharma, A. (1995) Measuring customer based brand equity. *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 12(4): 11–19.
- Lemmink, J., Schuijf, A. and Streukens, S. (2003) The role of corporate image and company employment image in explaining application intentions. *Journal of Economic Psychology* 24(1): 1–15.
- Lievens, F., Hoye, G.V. and Anseel, F. (2007) Organizational identity and employer image: Towards a unifying framework. *British Journal of Management* 18(S1): S45–S59.
- Lievens, F., Hoye, G.V. and Schreurs, B. (2005) Examining the relationship between employer knowledge dimensions and organizational attractiveness: An application in a military context. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology* 78(4): 53–572.
- Love, L.F. and Singh, P. (2011) Workplace branding: Leveraging human resources management practices for competitive advantage through 'best employer surveys'. *Journal of Business and Psychology* 26(2): 175–181.
- Miles, S.J. and Mangold, G. (2004) A conceptualization of the employee branding process. *Journal of Relationship Marketing* 3(2/3): 65–87.
- Minchington, B. (2010) *Employer Brand Leadership: A Global Perspective*. Australia: Collective Learning.
- Moroko, L. and Uncles, M.D. (2008) Characteristics of successful employer brands. *Journal of Brand Management* 16(3): 160–175.
- Powell, G.N. and Goulet, L.R. (1996) Recruiters' and applicants' reactions to campus interviews and employment decisions. *Academy of Management Review* 39(6): 1619–1640.
- Reed, P.S. and Clark, S.M. (2004) Win-win workplace practices: Improved organizational results and improved quality of life. Report to US Department of Labor Women's Bureau, September 2004, www.choose2lead.org/Publications/Study%20on%20Win-Win%20Workplace%20Practices.pdf, accessed 25 March 2013.
- Ritson, M. (2002) Marketing and HR collaborate to harness employer brand power. *Marketing* 24 (October): p. 24.
- Roberson, Q.M., Collins, C.J. and Oreg, S. (2005) The effects of recruitment message specificity on applicant attraction to organizations *Journal of Business and Psychology* 19(3): 319–339.
- Roy, S.K. (2008) Identifying the dimensions of attractiveness of an employer brand in the Indian context. *South Asian Journal of Management* 15(4): 110–130.
- Rynes, S.L., Bretz, R.D.J. and Gerhart, B. (1991) The importance of recruitment in job choice: A different way of looking. *Personnel Psychology* 44(3): 487–521.
- Sartain, L. and Schumann, M. (2006) *Brand from the Inside*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Slaughter, J.E., Zickar, M.J., Highhouse, S. and Mohr, D.C. (2004) Personality trait inferences about organizations: Development of a measure and assessment of construct validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 89(1): 85–103.
- SHRM Research (2010) Employer brand in India: A strategic HR tool, society for human resource management, http://www.shrm.org/research/futureworkplacetrends/documents/10-0028%20india_article_employer_brand_v5.pdf, accessed 10 September 2012.
- Sullivan, J. (2004) Eight elements of a successful employment brand, <http://www.ere.net/2004/02/23/the-8-elements-of-a-successful-employment-brand/>, accessed 10 August 2012.
- Taylor, M.S. and Bergmann, T.J. (1987) Organizational recruitment activities and applicants' reactions at different stages of the recruitment process. *Personnel Psychology* 40(2): 261–285.
- The Economist* (2003) Economic and financial indicators. 17 May, pp. 112.

- The Sydney Morning Herald* (2013) ABC tops most attractive employer list. 27 March, <http://www.smh.com.au/business/abc-tops-most-attractive-employer-list-20130327-2gtp2.html#ixzz2OsFLWXiD>, accessed 30 March 2013.
- (The) Conference Board (2001) Engaging employees through your brand, New York, <http://www.conference-board.org/publications/publicationdetail.cfm?publicationid=461>, accessed 12 August 2012.
- Thompson, L.F., Braddy, P.W. and Wuensch, K.L. (2004) E-recruitment and the benefits of organizational web appeal. Paper presented at the 19th annual meeting of the Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Chicago, IL.
- Turban, D.B. (2001) Organizational attractiveness as an employer on college campuses: an examination of the applicant population. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 58(2): 293–312.
- Turban, D.B. and Greening, D. (1997) Corporate social performance and organizational attractiveness to prospective employees. *Academy of Management Journal* 40(3): 658–672.
- Watson, N. (2002) Happy companies make happy investments stocks from our best companies to work for list trounced the S&P 500. 27 May, http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune_archive/2002/05/27/323684/index.htm, accessed 31 March 2013.
- Wilcock, R. (2005) Employer branding is key in fight for talent. *Personnel Today* 17(May): 4. Publication online 17 May 2005, <http://www.personneltoday.com/articles/17/05/2005/29929/employer-branding-is-key-in-fight-for-talent.htm4>.
- Wilden, R., Gudergan, S. and Lings, I. (2010) Employer branding: Strategic implications for staff recruitment. *Journal of Marketing Management* 26(1–2): 56–73.