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**METRICS & ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYER BRANDING**

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**ABSTRACT**

*In the competitive market place, organizations are fighting battles on all fronts i.e., building & retaining market share, stakeholder satisfaction and more importantly recruiting & retaining best talent. The war for talent is influenced by employer brand which in turn is influenced by employee value proposition (EVP). Organizations have been investing time, money and resources into building employer branding efforts, while investors and stakeholders increasingly becoming sceptical and are demanding for evidence of delivery at ground level. Also HR as a function is transitioning away from being a staff function to being a core and strategic contributor. The key anchor in this transformation process is the metrics driven approach. As is the case with other HR initiatives, HR functionaries have working towards metrics driven approach towards employer branding efforts. This paper presents perspectives and approaches that both researchers and practitioners can adopt to reap ROI on the investment that are being made towards Employer Branding.*

**KEYWORDS**

ROI, employer brand, employee value proposition, metrics, stakeholder satisfaction.

**INTRODUCTION**

According to Wikipedia, Employer Brand refers to the reputation of the organization as employer, and is influenced by the value proposition the organization offers to its employees. The term was introduced early 1990s. Minchington described it as “image of the organization” and as an “employer of choice” among the key stake holders (active and passive candidates, clients/customers and other key stakeholders), The core influencing factor of Employer brand is the Employee Value Proposition. The root word is Customer Value Proposition (CVP) which refers to a well-defined and persuasive marketing statement related to the product or service. It refers to the perceived/actual benefits that the customer would derive from buying the product or service. It is used to target and attract the customers and not to the distributors, staff and suppliers.

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To know the dimensions of Employer Branding.
2. To know the stakeholders involved in Employer Branding.
3. How do we assess ROI on investment on Employer Branding?

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research paper is based on descriptive study and is based on secondary data i.e., research carried out various researchers in the areas of Employer Branding, dimensions of employer branding, practices and approaches, business outcomes of employer branding initiatives.

**LITERATURE & CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

In the research study aimed at probing the impact of EVP on business outcomes (Heger Brian K, 2007) have identified that EVP influences employee engagement and retention, both of which have positive impact on the business results of an organization. McKinsey Quarterly have identified that superior EVP are able to identify and attract “right fit” talent. Another research paper has identified that employer brand refers to the efforts of an organization to promote itself both to internal and external employee segments. The research article titled “A stakeholder’s perspective of the value proposition concept” has identified that EVP helps in co-creation of value with the stakeholders. Pratiba Goswami (2015) in her research paper has identified that EVP helps in identifying and attracting right talent for the organization.

In the white paper (2015) Prof Paul and Dr Lillian have approached Employer Branding from the perspective of broader HR Proposition and studied it from three dimensions 1) as a form of psychological contract, 2) form of social identity and 3) form of two-way signalling to existing and prospective employees. They have identified Employer Branding as a 3 step process 1) Development of value proposition based on organization’s culture, style of management, profile of existing employees, and quality of products and service quality of the organization. 2) External marketing of the value position of the brand primarily to attract right-talent 3) Internal marketing of employer branding on the “brand promise” embedded into the culture and its commitment of the values and goals to the employees.

Dr Chitramani & Deepa (2013) in their study of employer brand of three Indian IT firms Infosys, TCS and Wipro have identified they have developed their Employer Brand as USP based on HR practices and culture. Infosys had leveraged on “middle-class turning into millionaires”, Wipro is viewed as ‘take-off point for entrepreneurs’ and TCS is viewed as “training ground for freshers”. Chlo’e & S’eabastien (2013) in their research study in France, on Gen Y Preferences and its impact on Employer Branding have identified that they prefer Job Security and relaxed environment and that their expectations are heterogeneous.

Prieska Kharisma in her research study on Employer Branding, has identified that it is important that organization works on creating unique brand identity (social identity) that for employer branding, employees (both current and prospective) identify with the brand identification features. These features include socially constructed through thoughts, feelings, and comportments of individuals and group members.

Suman & Suparna (2010) in their research on employer branding and studied internal and external branding practices of Indian organization like TATA steel, Ceat, TCS and have leveraged on their inherent strengths and practices to create an employer brand,

Gaye (2015) in his research on engagement & retention of millennials has identified that HR practices have a major role in internal branding. He studied the employee expectations from the cohorts of baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y. The expectations of millennials are 1) meaningful employment 2) Technology integrated workplace 3) Flexible work environment and 4) fast track career opportunities.

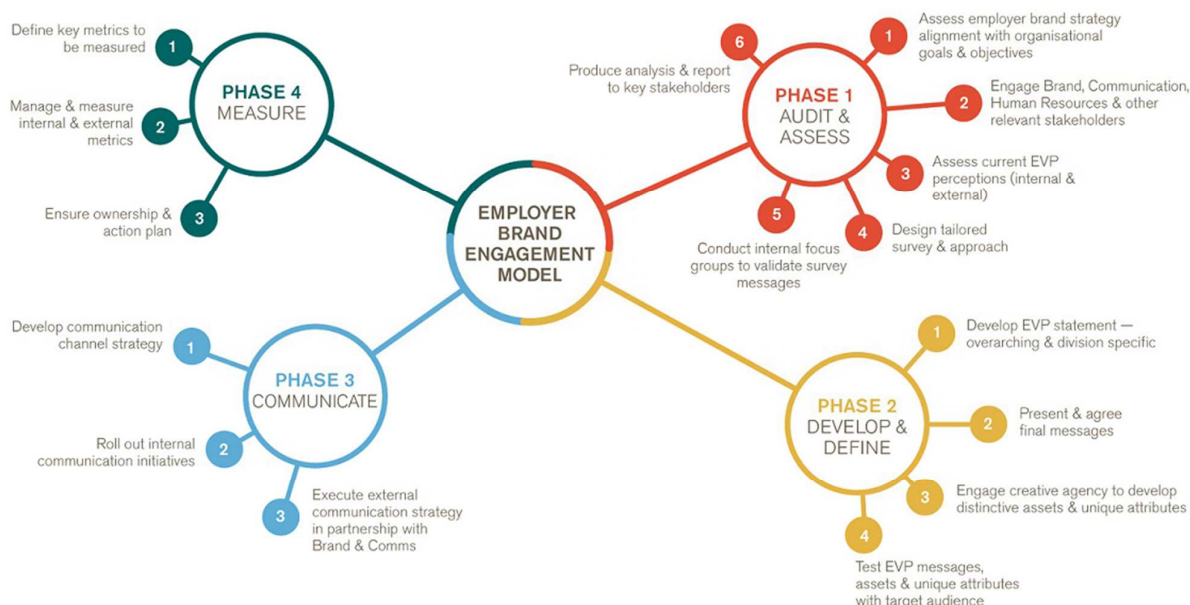
Dr. Venkatesh (2015) in his comparative study of CSR practices has identified that organization ethos, leadership and culture have a deep influence on CSR practices of organization and also on the People Practices in organization.

CIPD in their survey on Employer branding has identified the various practices being adopted by organizations for the purpose of employer branding i.e., 1) Campus Hiring 2) Diversity Communications 3) Compensation & benefits Strategy 4) IT Technology and communications 5) Physical working environment 6) Public Relations 7) Performance Management 8) Career Website 9) Leadership & Management Behaviours 10) Learning & Development opportunities/initiatives 11) Employee Communications 12) Recruitment advertising. The expected outcomes of employer brand as identified by participating organizations in the survey in the order of priority are 1) Alignment to Vision/Values 2) Improve Recruitment Performance 3) Compete for Talent (labour) 4) Increase Employee Satisfaction 5) Improve productivity/delivery 6) Reduce attrition and 7) Reduce HR Costs

Hudson in their Employer Brand Engagement Model have tracked it through the four stages i.e., 1) Audit & Assessment of Current State 2) Develop and define the Employer Brand 3) Communication the brand proposition to target segments and 4) measuring the impact of branding initiatives.

FIG. 1

## Hudson Employer Brand Engagement Model



Hudson | RPO

Most of the Employer Branding Frameworks have the following stages and components:

TABLE 1

Phase I	Actionable
Phase I : Audit & Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define People Strategy, Organizational goals &amp; objectives</li> <li>Understand the current EVP Perceptions and channel effectiveness</li> <li>Consultation with Internal focus groups, management teams and employee surveys</li> <li>Compiling of audit report, analysis and findings identification</li> </ul>
Phase II : EVP Strategy Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of unique EVP attributes &amp; statements</li> <li>Cross checking the developed EVP</li> </ul>
Phase III : EVP Testing & Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test EVP statements across divisions and regions</li> <li>Development of communication strategy plans</li> </ul>
Phase IV: Alignment & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment of EVP process</li> <li>Internal engagement &amp; communication</li> <li>External communication &amp; roll-out</li> </ul>
Phase V : Management & Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification &amp; implementation of reporting structure and assigning of responsibilities across functions</li> <li>Tracking effectiveness and efficiency metrics for internal and external metrics</li> </ul>

### EMPLOYER ATTRACTIVENESS & EMPLOYER BRANDING

Peirre (2005) in his research on employer attractiveness has developed an employer attractiveness scale with dimensions covering the areas of 1) Recognition/appreciation from management 2) working environment (Happy, fun & exciting) 3) springboard for future employment 4) Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organisation 5) Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organisation 6) Gaining career-enhancing experience 7) Having a good relationship with superiors 8) relationship with your colleagues (good, supportive and encouraging) 9) Progressive work practices 10) Value and support to employee creativity 11) Quality of products & services of the organization 12) Career Progression opportunities 13) Humanitarian organisation (gives back to society) 13) Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution 14) Opportunity to teach others what was learnt 15) Climate of acceptance and belongingness 16) Customer-centricity of the organization 17) Job security within the organisation 18) Hands-on inter-departmental experience 19) Above average basic salary & attractive overall compensation package

**EMPLOYER BRANDING – INTERNAL & EXTERNAL**

The employer branding efforts of the organization has two dimensions i.e., internal and external and the initiatives under both the dimensions are captured below:

**TABLE 2**

<b>External</b>	<b>Internal</b>
Visibility of Senior Leadership in Media	Vision, Values & culture of the organization
Quality of Products & Services	Organizational Initiatives towards quality products & services
Customer speak on products and services	Walk the talk by senior leaders
Brand presence across media (print/TV/social spaces)	Accessibility of leaders to employees
Presence of organisations on Job Portals/career sites	<b>People Practices of the organization</b>
Campus activities & presence	1) Managerial support to employees
Employee speak on social media like glass door	2) Performance Management system
Recruitment advertisements in print media	3) Learning & Development Opportunities
Recruitment process and treatment of applicants	4) Career Progression Opportunities
Employer of Choice awards	5) Employee Communication
Best People Practice awards	6) Compensation & Benefits
Awards for organizational excellence	
Organizational initiatives for community cause	

**PARTNERS/STAKEHOLDERS IN EMPLOYER BRANDING**

Employer branding is no longer the exclusive domain of HR professionals. In the changed paradigm, HR professionals are partnering with Top Management, Corporate Communications, Marketing & Branding team members, Managers keeping in view the visibility of 360 visibility of the brand both to the internal and external stakeholders.

**METRICS FOR EMPLOYER BRANDING**

In the changed paradigm, employer branding is part of organizational strategy and branding initiatives and the efforts of employer branding are to be linked to the business outcomes. The priorities/objectives of employer branding will vary based on the context of the organization. The metrics are mapped to internal and external branding efforts and metrics are:

TABLE 3

Dimension & Metrics	Metric Definition
<b>External</b>	
Visibility of Senior Leadership	Extent to which the senior leadership are seen in external media/events
Overall Company Rating	The company rating can be given by investment rating agencies, glass door surveys
CEO Approval Rating	The rating that CEO received on professional sites such as Glass Door
Business Outlook for the organisation	Business outlook that is realised by corporate communications team, or stock market analysts
No of Media Rich post on social networks	The number of posts made/influenced by the organization and the hits/views for such post
Clear EVP in Posts & Competitive Differentiation	Ability of organization to present its value proposition to candidates. Efforts to ensure that target audience is able to clearly understand EVP after reading the posts
"Product" Testing:	Process of organization to complete any process or review any information as an employee or candidate
No of recruitment advertisements	No of advertisements that the organization has published across media. This will help target candidate pool to view/preview the organization as a "happening organization"
Awareness among potential hires (Basic, Recall, Top of the Mind)	The awareness can be assessed by carrying out surveys. The awareness can vary from Basic (i.e., awareness of the organization brand) ; Recall (ability of candidate to recall the brand in the segment such HLL/Nestle in FMCG, in Amazon/Flipkart Ecommerce etc.)
No of applicants	The number of applicants for position that position adverts receive. This indicates if the brand is aspirational.
Candidate job acceptance rate	This is indicated by the number of candidates to whom jobs have been offered Vs their acceptance rate
Participation in campus activities/hiring events	The presence of the organization in hiring events such as campus hiring, online hiring carnivals
<b>Image Survey on campus</b>	The image survey can be carried out among potential candidates on parameters such as (innovation, attractiveness, ethical standards, financial strength, market leadership, and social responsibility
Organizational Personality Assessment	This can carried out during semantic differential based on organizational attributes such as innovative, quality of products
<b>Internal</b>	
Visibility of Senior Leadership in Townhall	The availability of Senior Leaders such as CXOs in the town hall meetings to share the vision and organizational priorities, connect with employees
Employee Feedback	Employee Feedback is taken on Employer Branding initiatives and the effectiveness
Cost Per Hire	The average cost incurred by the organization in hiring candidates. The higher the employer brand awareness, lower will the cost per hire. This is due to fact that organization can reach out to larger candidate pools and motivate them to go through the selection process.
Time to Hire	This is measured by the average time taken by the organization to hire a candidate for the position.
Candidate quality	This is measured by the ratio of qualified applicants to total applicants for an advertised position
Cost-per-qualified-candidate	This metric is assessed by the cost incurred by the organization to hire quality candidate
% of employee referrals	The cost that the organization is incurring in sourcing candidates through channels such as internal job posts or paid sourcing from external sources
Retention rate	The retention of employees in general and those from talent pools
Employee Engagement/satisfaction Surveys	The engagement/satisfaction score of organization across various dimensions. These surveys can be carried out either internally or through third party
Absenteeism	The absenteeism of employees
Promotion readiness rating	This is measured by the number of available candidates for next level promotion. The underlying assumption being that in an organization with higher employer brand appeal, talent retention is high and consequently the availability of talent readiness for next level
Performance ratings of newly promoted managers	The performance ratings of newly promoted managers indicates the quality of internal talent
Manager/executive failure rate	The number of managers/executives who tend to fail in their roles. This is based on the underlying assumption that in case of organization with higher level of employer brand awareness would result in higher quality talent retention and consequently the lower failure rate of managers/executives

## CONCLUSION

In the competitive world, the key differentiator is the quality of talent that the organization attracts and retains. The enabling parameter is employer brand. Organizations have realized the imperativeness and are directing efforts to build and nature employer brand. However, organizations are now focussing on quality of efforts, impact and ROI aspects for their efforts. It is this context that this research paper based on secondary and descriptive research presents the metrics along with interpretation. The metric can be used by organization, based on their strategic priorities.

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