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Value proposition framework: implications for employer branding

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Abstract Employer branding has drawn the maximum attention of researchers and industry practitioners in recent days. Retaining and attracting current and potential employees essentially require the employers to understand the work value preferences of employees which vary across time and culture. This paper has twin objectives (a) to identify the value proposition frameworks for internal and external employer branding from work value preferences of Indian workforce; and (b) to analyse the effects of demographic variables and their interactional effects on work value preferences of employees. Data were collected from 302 Indian employees from different Indian organisations. Findings suggested six-factor model for internal employer branding and five-factor model for external employer branding. Further analyses (MANOVA) for demographic variables and their interactional effects on work value preferences also revealed significant findings. Value proposition framework and their policy implications in Indian context are discussed in detail.

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Introduction

Managing intangibles—brand and talent of the organisation is crucial for earning competitive advantage. Integrating the two, Ambler and Barrow coined the term 'employer branding' in the year of 1996. The construct is found to be highly relevant with today's organisations which irrespective of their sizes are actively engaged in talent war and thus has received major attentions of the industry practitioners and academicians in recent days. To retain star performers and attract new talents, organisations need to establish their images as 'great place to work', or 'employer of choice' (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Jiang and Iles 2011). According to Sullivan (2004), employer branding is "a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm". This is a strategic tool for the organisation to market their unique employment offerings or value propositions to the internal and potential employees. Value propositions are the central message of employer brand (Eisenberg et al. 2001). The concept of value propositions is borrowed from the field of marketing management where it has been defined as the promises a seller makes to his/her

customers in terms of value-in-exchange and value-in-use (Lusch et al. 2007). It is also said in the consumer studies that an organisation may offer value propositions, but it is the customers or other beneficiaries who decide its acceptability (Holttinen 2014). This indicates that effective relationships between customers and organisation may exist if value propositions are aligned with customers needs for values. Similar arguments may be effective between employees and organisations. Employees who look for jobs are found highly conscious about the values offered by the employers as similar to the consumers for product/service values (Marriott 2001). "Values are seen as source of motivation for individual action" (Gursoy et al. 2013, p. 41) thus leading to talent retention and attraction.

Valentine (2000) states the relevance of person-job fit, person-organisation fit, and cultural differences in determining recruitment success. Studies have revealed that culture is a differentiating factor between work values (Hofstede 1980; Pelled and Xin 1997; Schneider and Barsoux 1997; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1998; Holden 2002; Jaw et al. 2007). Indians, being members of relationship-oriented vertical culture may project different work values than western culture. Indian employees are used to prefer organisational stability, employee welfare, value obedience more as compared to England and the US employees (Chatterjee and Pearson 2000). "It is important that organizations continue to grow and evolve newer perspectives in terms of their values and redefine their linkages with the society. In doing so the organisations should acknowledge the emotional expectations and personal values of the employees which influence their attitude to work and their behaviours. Unfortunately, these dimensions of socio-cultural reality are either ignored or rarely considered in designing organisations or in socialising the employees" (Prakash 1995, p. 200). With time, changes are evident in the socio-cultural aspects of a country. Therefore, it is essential for the organisations to introspect the relevance of their employment offerings or value propositions from time to time. Age or other demographic variables also play significant roles in value preferences (Gursoy et al. 2013). A very few studies are available in this direction in recent times in India. The current picture of value preferences of Indian workforce may help the Indian as well as MNCs to design their value propositions

towards employer branding. This is perhaps the crucial time for Indian employers to use employer branding as a strategic tool. This paper focuses on identifying internal and external employer branding models (value proposition framework) as directed from work value preferences of current and potential employees in Indian context.

Literature review

Employer branding

Employer branding was conceptualised by Amber and Barrow (1996) by applying the concept of brand, "a mixture of attributes, tangible and intangible, symbolised in a trade mark, which if managed properly, creates value and influence" (Swystun 2007, p. 14), in the context of HR field in terms of employment experience. Amber and Barrow (1996) defined it as "The package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company" (p. 187). According to Dell and Ainspan (2001), employer brand creates the image of the organisation based on their offerings in terms of values, systems, policies, and behaviours for attracting, motivating, and retaining the current and potential employees. It communicates to the targeted employees as 'great place to work' (Ewing et al. 2002; Lloyd 2002). Researchers often bring another concept into picture while dealing with employer branding—organisational attractiveness (Sherry 2000) which may be defined as "the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation" (Berthon et al. 2005, p. 156). Envisioned benefits are not only relevant to the potential employees to get attracted to a potential employer, but may also be significant to the existing employees for their current employer. External employer branding (EEB) aims at attracting potential talents towards organisation, whereas internal employer branding (IEB) facilitates star performers that other organisations find difficult to imitate (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004).

External and internal employer branding

EEB is often overshadowed by corporate external branding. Corporate external branding includes the

moral practices of leaders, organisation's activities towards fulfilling the social responsibilities, building trust, and trustworthiness to shareholders and customers by being authentic. IEB, on the other hand, is one by which an organisation creates the culture of trust between employer and employees by keeping the 'promise' made to the recruits at the time of interview (Frook 2001), or by establishing strong moral corporate values which make their employees proud to be a member, or by satisfying its current employees by fulfilling their psychological contracts (Moroko and Uncles 2008). It helps the organisation to retain their talents (Ambler and Barrow 1996). Satisfied employees are the best source of employer branding. Quick growth, systematic career management, economic benefits, work-life balance (Deery 2008), jovial and innovative work culture, recognising and rewarding achievements (Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Scheweyer 2004), employee development, employee engagement (Hughes and Rog 2008; Bhatnagar 2007) are some of the methods by which organisations create their corporate internal branding. Not only satisfying current employees, but employees-alumni activities can also add value to attract potential employees. The more an employee can associate his/her values with the organisational offered values, the more he/she will feel attracted towards the organisation (Schneider 1987; Cable and Judge 1996; Judge and Cable 1997).

Work values and value proposition framework

Work values are the end-state or worth employees look for from their jobs (Super 1980; Elizur 1984). Dose (1997) states work values as perception of preferences of the employees that influence their attitudes and behaviour in the workplace. Organisational researchers support different preference sets of individuals for work values according to their orientations—intrinsic and extrinsic (Akhtar 2000; Cotton et al. 1997; Vansteenkiste et al. 2007). Intrinsically oriented individual prefers to the values like self-actualisation, development, growth, harmonious relationships, challenging tasks, etc.; and externally oriented individuals focus on status, pay and facilities, power, hierarchical position, rewards and incentives, etc. (Amabile et al. 1994; Sheldon and Kasser 1995; Vansteenkiste et al. 2007). Self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000) suggests that individuals have natural preferences towards

feeling autonomous (Deci 1975), related (Baumeister and Leary 1995), and competent (White 1959); and not meeting these preferences may lead to the negative psychological consequences (Vansteenkiste et al. 2007). Research reveals that there may be the influence of personal and social characteristics, for example, age and period on work values (Parry and Urwin 2011); even studies support that older individual have more intrinsic and less extrinsic orientations (Sheldon and Kasser 2001). There also exists evidence for culture having significant influence on work values and attitudes (Hofstede 1993; Adler and Jelinek 1986). Therefore, it is essential for any organisation to understand deeply the dynamics of value preferences of its current and potential employees who belong to a specific national culture. Value proposition framework or employment offerings should be designed in line with those value preferences so as to retain and attract current and potential employees.

Borrowed from the field of marketing management, the concept of value proposition is defined as "a promise the seller makes that value-in-exchange will be linked to value-in-use. When a customer exchanges money with a seller s/he is implicitly assuming the value-in-exchange will at least result in value-in-use that meets or exceeds the value-in-exchange" (Lusch et al. 2007, p. 13). Similar exchange relationship exists between employee and employer as suggested by the theory of psychological contract (Millward and Brewerton 1999). It is suggested by Cliffe (1998) that right value proposition may attract the right talent in the organisation. Employee values congruent with organisational offerings may lead to job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Glazer et al. 2004). Value proposition framework has been considered interchangeably as factors of organisational or employer attractiveness. For example, Berthon et al. (2005) identified five factors for employer attractiveness, namely, interest value, social value, economic value, development value, and application value. According to Barber (1998), job and work characteristics, total rewards, and corporate image are important value proposition for recruitment and are most often found in recruitment advertisements. Most of these earlier studies focused on identifying the factors of attractiveness for potential employers and the scholarly inquiries on attractiveness factors for current employers are limited. Therefore, present study intends to add value to the body of employer branding knowledge by

identifying factors of attractiveness for both potential and current employers in Indian context.

Value proposition and demographic variables

Findings support the influence of demographic variables on work values of individuals as mentioned earlier. There exists generational impact on job outcomes as well as the personal values of the individual (Gursoy et al. 2013). Generation X has affection for work centrality and power as compared to Baby Boomers and Millennial (Gursoy et al. 2013). Sullivan et al. (2002) also stated that younger generation are more concerned about the fulfilment of their individual values while looking for potential employers. Older generation, on the other hand, have more strong ethical values and commitment than younger one (Rhodes 1983; Joyner 2000). According to Ma and Ni (1998), younger generation have preference for vocational work values and multi-directional thinking as compared to the older one. In their study on Chinese employees, Li et al. (2008) reported significant impact of age, education, position, and gender on work values. They identified that in Chinese context older employees prefer to rate work values high, especially in terms of work-life balance and self-development; departmental managers favour work values like making contributions and self-development. Therefore, enterprises should consider these demographic variables while designing their value propositions.

Research setting

Researchers also acknowledge that value proposition is user as well as context specific (Ballantyne et al. 2011; Johnson et al. 2008) and these offerings are perceived through cultural lenses (Overby et al. 2005). Different nations have different value sets as suggested by Hofstede (1998). For example, Italians are loyal to their functional bosses, Africans prefer sequenced promotions (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1998); Asians give more weightage to protocol, status, and rank (Harris and Moran 2000). Indian workforce is more oriented towards tighter control and supervision (Gopalan and Rivera 1997), group cooperation, and problem solving (Cray and Mallory 1998). Indian work values, mostly derived from traditional ethos, have been impacted by different periods, namely, ancient times, British colonialism, post-independence period, economic reforms, and globalisation. With the rising phase of multinational corporations and technological advancement, lifestyles of Indian workforce are undergoing rapid changes so as to their work value orientations. Educational, political, and managerial reforms are also contributing to this direction.

Therefore, it is essential for the organisations working in Indian context to understand the value orientations of Indian workforce in recent times in order to properly design their value proposition framework. It should also be noted from the reality that there may be variations in work value preferences of the employees from the current and potential employers. This paper intends to draw the directions for value proposition framework for Indian workforce—current and potential. The former may be termed as IEB and latter as EEB.

In the light of the above discussion on value proposition framework for internal and external employer branding, this study attempts to analyse following objectives.

Research objective 1

To identify the value proposition framework for current and potential employees (IEB and EEB) in Indian context.

Research objective 2

To identify the value proposition framework as impacted by demographic variables, viz. age, gender, types of organisations, hierarchical positions, and their interaction effects.

Method

Sample and procedure

Data were collected from 302 Indian working people from different organisations across the nation (public = 120; private = 182) with the age range of 20–57 ($M = 29.52$; SD = 7.42) from all four regions of India—North, South, East, and West. Range of their work experience varies from 1 year to 33 years ($M = 8.00$; SD = 7.38); educational qualification from graduation to masters level and above

$(M = 16.25; SD = 1.19)$. The ratio of male to female in the sample is 177:125. Hierarchy wise—102 were taken from junior level, 108 from middle level, and 92 from senior level managers. Random sampling method was followed in collecting data. Organisations were chosen both from service and manufacturing sectors, namely, steel producing companies, Indian nationalised and private banks, railways, aviation, and hotels.

In the first step, 50 working individuals of different age groups were given a list of work values which were identified from earlier literatures, to mark as their preferences from current job and future potential job on the scale of 'preferable for current job', 'preferable for future job', 'preferable for both', and 'not preferable'. This helped us to prepare the scale for internal and external employer branding. In the second step, 500 working individuals were asked online to rate their value preferences on the scale of internal and external branding. Among 500, 302 finally responded to the questionnaires in 6 months time period starting from September, 2014.

Questionnaire

Participants were asked two questions with the list of factors identified from the existing literature. IEB Scale: what do you look for from your current job? EEB Scale: what do you look for when you apply for a new job? IEB includes 21 values and EEB consists of 20 values. In both the cases respondents were required to rate their preferences from a set of values. Values were chosen from the literatures as discussed above; the existing scales (e.g., Berthon et al. 2005; Li et al. 2008); and the interviews of Indian managers. Respondents were asked to rate the values based on a scale of "Neither essential nor desirable = 0" to "Highly essential and highly desirable = 4". All constructs had Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.60 (Nunnally 1967), suggesting the internal consistency of items to measure each construct. For IEB, the scale $M = 2.8$ and SD = 0.46; whereas for EEB, the scale $M = 2.87$ and SD = 0.21 *were reported*. Sum of value of each construct of the respondent was assessed by dividing the number of items in that construct to keep the value of the construct within the range of the response scale (0–4). Both the constructs had $M \geq 2.5$ as the marker to high preference of the respondents for both the value proposition frameworks (IEB and EEB).

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 1 and 2 lists the mean and standard deviation score of internal and external employer branding values, respectively.

Research objective 1: to identify the value proposition framework for current and potential employees (IEB and EEB) in Indian context

IEB values

Principal component analysis (PCA1) with PROMAX rotation was computed using SPSS 21.0 to identify IEB values for Indian working population. PROMAX was used as a prerequisite for computing MANOVA in order to identify the influences of demographic variables on the extracted factors [research objective (ii)]. PROMAX are normally used when extracted factors from PCA are expected to be correlated with each other (Gorsuch 1983; Brown 2009). Before employing PCA, we check for if the data fulfil the basic assumptions of factor analysis. We computed correlation score which were found significant at $p < 0.05$ and 0.01 with mean correlations above 0.3 for all the items. Secondly, the Bartlett test of sphericity which was found significant at $p < 0.001$; and the *KMO score* 0.818 clearly indicated the relevance of PCA with the given data set (Hair et al. 2011).

Six components or latent factors were extracted with eigenvalues more than 1.0 (Table 3). Total variance of 63.54 % was accounted for by the six factors together. IEB value proposition framework is presented in Table 4 and Fig. 1.

Interpreting and renaming extracted factors in PCA1 Factor 1 had been extracted based on five variables. Those were—based on the high to low factor loading—'quick growth' (factor loading = 0.88), 'recognition of potential' (factor loading = 0.81), 'skills utilisation' (factor loading = 0.66), 'continual training and development' (factor loading = 0.52), and 'challenging and interesting work' (factor loading = 0.51). From the communality values, it can be said that factor solution accounted for 73 % of variability in quick growth, 77 % in recognition of potential, 69 % in skills utilisation, 46 % in

Table 1 Descriptive statistics for internal employer branding values	Internal employer branding values	M	SD
	Competitive pay and facilities (CPF1)	3.36	0.75
	Scope of balancing work and personal lives (WLB1)	3.33	0.73
	Challenging and interesting work (CIW1)	3.31	0.77
	Working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor (WE1)	3.21	0.78
	Skills utilisation (SU1)	3.19	0.87
	Job security (JS1)	3.11	0.93
	Recognition of potential (ROP1)	3.11	0.95
	Moral practices of managers (MPM1)	3.06	0.89
	Transparent company policies (TCP1)	3.05	0.91
	Continual training and development (CTD1)	3.03	0.89
	Company keeps the promises made at the time of interview (KP1)	2.90	1.12
	Scope of diversified learning (DL1)	2.88	0.94
	Company brand (CB1)	2.81	1.07
	Hierarchical position (HP1)	2.81	0.90
	Scope of contributing to organisational objectives (COO1)	2.79	1.06
	Office infrastructure (OI1)	2.77	0.91
	Duty hours (DH1)	2.69	0.91
	Quick growth (QG1)	2.65	0.98
	Stretched assignment (SA1)	2.26	0.96
	Feeling emotionally connected with the organisation and job (ECOJ1)	2.20	1.14
	Transferability of the job (TOJ1)	2.00	1.25

Table 2 Descriptive statistics for external employer branding values	External employer branding values	M	SD
	Competitive pay and facilities (CPF2)	3.45	0.72
	Hierarchical position (HP2)	3.26	2.65
	Challenging and interesting work (CIW2)	3.24	0.80
	Scope of balancing work and personal lives (WLB2)	3.21	0.89
	Job security (JS2)	3.19	0.89
	Working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor (WE2)	3.17	0.83
	Company brand (CB2)	3.11	0.90
	Continual training and development (CTD2)	2.95	0.89
	Quick growth (QG2)	2.90	0.93
	Recognition or reward policy (RRP2)	2.89	1.00
	Scope of diversified learning (DL2)	2.88	0.93
	Moral practices of managers (MPM2)	2.85	1.00
	Duty hours (DH2)	2.83	0.90
	Office infrastructure (OI2)	2.73	1.03
	Location of the posting (LOP2)	2.64	1.04
	Duration of assignment in case of project-based job (DAJ2)	2.58	1.03
	The nature of job advertisement given by the company (JA2)	2.56	1.15
	Attrition rate (AR2)	2.52	1.13
	Referred by somebody whom you trust (RST2)	2.25	1.27
	Referred by employee of the organisation—present or past (REO2)	2.22	1.25

Table 3 Extracted factor loadings after PROMAX rotation in PCA1 (pattern matrix)

Values	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
QG1	0.88					
ROP1	0.81					
SU1	0.66					
CTD1	0.52					
CIW1	0.51					
TCP1		0.85				
MPM1		0.82				
COO1		0.64				
WE1		0.42				
ECOJ1			0.77			
SA1			0.71			
TOJ1			0.62			
DL1			0.42			
KP1				0.69		
JS1				0.54		
WLB1				0.46		
DH1					0.81	
OI1					0.70	
CB1						0.66
HP1						0.64
CPF1						0.58
Variance explained (eigen value)	28.15 (5.9)	38.98 (2.2)	46.77 (1.6)	52.89 (1.2)	58.39 (1.1)	63.53 (1.1)

Source primary data

continual training and development, and 52 % in challenging and interesting work. Considering the relative importance in mind from communality values, Factor 1, thus was renamed as "Career Potential Values".

Factor 2, based on high to low factor loading, consisted of 'transparent company policies' (factor loading = 0.85), 'moral practices of managers' (factor loading = 0.82), 'scope of contributing to organisational objectives' (factor loading = 0.64), and 'working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor' (factor loading = 0.42). Communality values indicated that 69 % of variability was accounted for transparent company policies by the factor solution, 71 % in moral practices of managers, 65 % in scope of contributing to organisational objectives, and 61 % in working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor. Factor 2 was renamed as "Justice Values".

Factor 3, based on high to low factor loading, included "feeling emotionally connected with the organisation and job" (factor loading = 0.77), "stretched assignment (factor loading = 0.71), "transferability of the job" (factor loading = 0.62), and "scope of diversified learning" (factor loading = 0.42). Inference can be drawn from the communality values that 66 % of the variability was accounted for both in feeling emotionally connected with the organisation and job, and stretched assignment by the factor solution, 57 % in transferability of the job, and 55 % in scope of diversified learning. Thus, Factor 3 was renamed as "Employee Engagement Values".

Factor 4, based on high to low factor loading, consisted of "company keeps the promises made at the time of interview" (factor loading = 0.69), "job security" (factor loading = 0.54), and "scope of balancing work and personal lives" (factor loading = 0.46). Communality values indicated that 70 % of

Table 4 Value proposition framework for internal employer branding in India

IEB values	Operational definition	Dimensions
Career potential values	Values which offer opportunities to grow faster and realize true potentials	Quick growth
		Recognition of potential
		Skills utilisation
		Continual training and development
		Challenging and interesting work
Justice values	Values which offer fair judgements and moral practices to create harmonious relationships	Transparent company policies
		Moral practices of managers
		Scope of contributing to organisational objectives
		Working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor
Employee engagement values	Values which foster employees to feel attached with the job and organisation that leads to employee engagement	Feeling emotionally connected with the organisation and job
		Stretched assignment
		Transferability of the job
		Scope of diversified learning
Feel-good values	Values which offer trust security and balance that leads to happiness	Company keeps the promises made at the time of interview
		Job security
		Scope of balancing work and personal lives
Comfort values	Values which offer comfortable working environment	Duty hours
		Office infrastructure
Esteem values	Values which offer status and identity in the society	Company brand
		Hierarchical position
		Competitive pay and facilities

variability in company keeps the promises made at the time of interview, 60 % in job security, and 51 % in scope of balancing work and personal lives was explained by the factor solution. Thus, Factor 4 was renamed as "Feel-Good Values".

Factor 5, based on high to low factor loading, included "duty hours" (factor loading = 0.81), and "office infrastructure" (factor loading = 0.700). Communality values indicated that factor solution accounted for 72 % of variability in duty hours, and 56 % in office infrastructure. Factor 5 was thus renamed as "Comfort Values".

Factor 6, based on high to low factor loading, consisted of "company brand" (factor loading = 0.66), "hierarchical positions" (factor loading = 0.65), and "competitive pay and facilities" (factor loading = 0.58). Communality values revealed that factor solution accounted for 55 % of

variability in company brand, 65 % in hierarchical positions, and 75 % in competitive pay and facilities. Thus, Factor 6 was renamed as "Esteem Values".

Assessing statistical significance of findings of PCA1 Findings revealed that range of factor loadings varied from 0.42 to 0.88 which were found significant with $N = 302$ (Hair et al. 2011, p. 152).

EEB value proposition

Another PCA2 with PROMAX rotation was computed using SPSS 21.0 to identify the factors of choice of Indian employees in potential jobs, i.e. external employer branding values.

Majority of the items of EEB correlations were found significant at $p < 0.05$ and 0.01 with mean correlations above 0.3; the Bartlett test of sphericity significant at $p < 0.001$; and *KMO score was* 0.78

Fig. 1 Value proposition
model for internal employer
branding
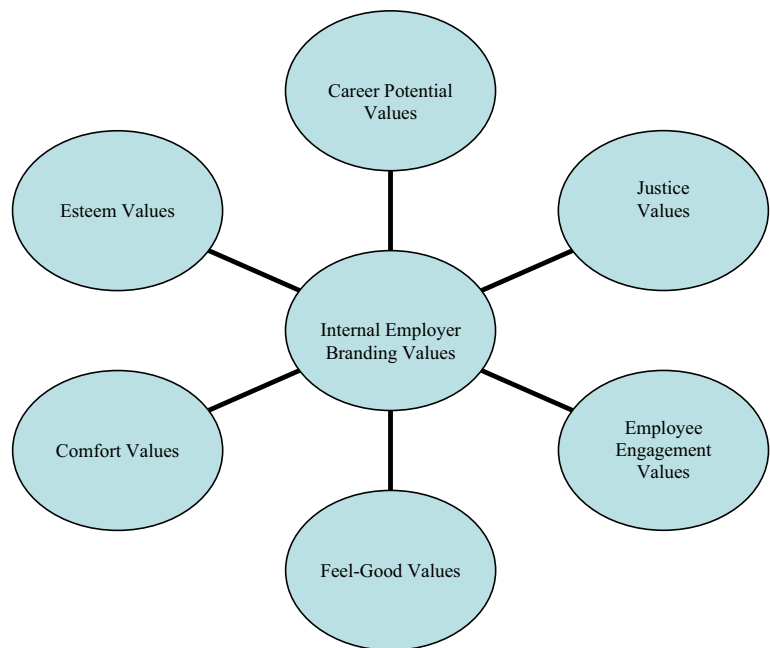
which clearly indicated the relevance of PCA with the given data set (Hair et al. 2011).

Five components or latent factors were extracted (eigen values more than one) after PROMAX rotation. Factor loadings are displayed in Table 5. Total variance of 70.05 % was accounted for by the five-factor model (Table 5; Fig. 2). Operational definitions of EEB value proposition framework are presented in Table 6.

Interpreting and renaming extracted factors in PCA2 Factor 1 had been extracted based on eight variables, namely (based on the high to low factor loading), "competitive pay and facilities" (factor loading = 0.77), "scope of balancing work and personal lives" (factor loading = 0.76), "the nature of job advertisement given by the company" (factor loading = 0.65), "moral practices of managers" (factor loading = 0.55), "working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor" (factor loading = 0.55), "scope of diversified learning" (factor loading = 0.51), "company brand" (factor loading = 0.50), and "duty hours" (factor loading = 0.43). From the communality values, it was found that factor solution has accounted for 61 % of variability in competitive pay and facilities, 55 % in scope of balancing work and personal lives, 50 % in the nature of job advertisement given by the company,

58 % in moral practices of managers, 52 % in working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor, 61 % in scope of diversified learning, 64 % in company brand, and 46 % in duty hours. Considering the relative importance of variables in mind, Factor 1, thus was renamed as "Image and Fundamental Values".

Factor 2 consisted of, based on high to low factor loadings, "information about continual training and development" (factor loading = 0.80), "job security—permanent or temporary" (factor loading = 0.67), and "challenging and interesting job details" (factor loading = 0.50). Communality values indicated that factors solution has accounted for 66 % variability in information about continual training and development, 57 % in job security—permanent or temporary, and 49 % in challenging and interesting job details. Factor 2 was renamed as "Job Structure Values".
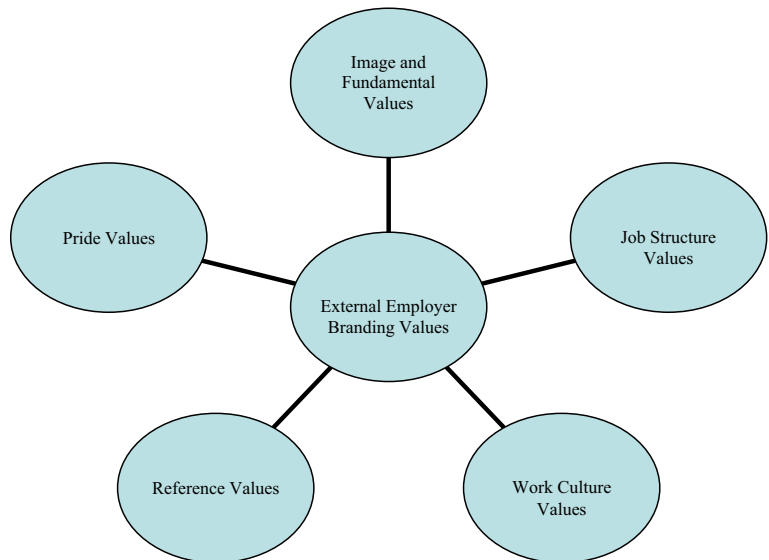
Factor 3 included, based on high to low factor loadings, "attrition rate" (factor loading = 0.84), "duration of assignment in case of project based job" (factor loading = 0.76), "quick growth" (factor loading = 0.58), and "office infrastructure" (factor loading = 0.55). Communality values reflected the variances were accounted for in variables by the factor solution 63 % in attrition rate, 59 % in duration of

Table 5 Extracted factor loadings after PROMAX rotation in PCA2 (pattern matrix)

Values	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
CPF2	0.77				
WLB2	0.76				
JA2	0.65				
MMP2	0.55				
WE2	0.55				
DL2	0.51				
CB2	0.50				
DH2	0.43				
CTD2		0.80			
JS2		0.67			
CIJ2		0.50			
AR2			0.84		
DAJ2			0.76		
QG2			0.58		
OI2			0.55		
REO2				0.91	
RST2				0.90	
LOP2				0.42	
RRP2					0.68
HP2					0.64
Variance explained (eigen value)	28.37 (5.67)	40.79 (2.48)	47.58 (1.35)	53.65 (1.21)	58.89 (1.05)

Source primary data

Fig. 2 Value proposition model for external employer branding

assignment in case of project based job, 63 % in quick growth, and 61 % in office infrastructure. Factor 3, thus, was renamed as "Work Culture Values".

Factor 4 consisted of, based on high to low factor loadings, "referred by employee of the organisation—present or past" (factor loading = 0.91), "referred by

Table 6 Value proposition framework for external employer branding in India

EEB values	Operational definition	Dimensions
Image and fundamental values	Values which fulfil basic requirements of job incumbents and create company image in their minds	Competitive pay and facilities
		Scope of balancing work and personal lives
		The nature of job advertisement given by the company
		Moral practices of managers
		Working environment—relationship with peers and supervisor
		Scope of diversified learning
		Company brand
		Duty hours
Job structure values	Values which offer scope and nature of the job itself	Information about continual training and development
		Job security—permanent or temporary
		Challenging and interesting job details
Work culture values	Values which offer long-term relationships, quick growth and comfortable work environment	Attrition rate
		Duration of assignment in case of project based job
		Quick growth
		Office infrastructure
Reference values	Values which offer reference for the job by known person	Referred by employee of the organisation—present or past
		Referred by somebody whom you trust
		Location of the posting
Pride values	Values which offer senses of being superior to others	Recognition or reward policy
		Hierarchical position

somebody whom you trust (factor loading = 0.90), and "location of the posting" (factor loading = 0.42). Communality values indicated that factor solution explained 85 % variance in referred by employee of the organisation—present or past, 82 % in referred by somebody whom you trust, and 44 % in location of the posting. Thus, factor 4 was renamed as "Reference Values".

Under Factor 5, "recognition or reward policy" (factor loading = 0.68), and "hierarchical position" (factor loading = 0.64) have been extracted. Communality values revealed that factor solution accounted for 57 % variance in recognition or reward policy, and 44 % in hierarchical position. Based on this relative importance, Factor 5 was renamed as "Pride Values".

Assessing statistical significance of findings of PCA2 Findings revealed that range of factor loadings was varied from 0.43 to 0.91 and it was found significant with $N = 302$ (Hair et al. 2011, p. 152).

Grice (2001) suggested that factor scores can be used for subsequent analysis. In the present study, regression factor scores were used for the subsequent analyses. These computed factor scores are standardised to a mean of 0 with standard deviation 1.

Research objective 2: to identify the value proposition framework as impacted by demographic variable, viz. age, gender, types of organisations, hierarchical positions, and their interaction effects

Pearson correlations were conducted to analyse the relationships of internal and external branding values with age of the individuals.

Findings (Table 7) revealed that significant correlations, although very negligible values, were found between age and IEB values such as employee engagement values, feel-good values, comfort values,

Table 7 Relationships of age with IEB and EEB values

Age	Internal employer branding				External employer branding values		
	Employee engagement values	Feel-good values	Comfort values	Esteem values	Image and fundamental values	Job structure values	Pride values
	−0.199**	0.197**	−0.133*	0.193**	−0.149*	−0.151*	−0.262**

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ (only significant values are shown in the table)

and esteem values; and with external employer branding factors such as image and fundamental values, job structure values, and pride values. The nature of relationships indicated that with age needs for feel-good values, esteem values (IEB values) got increased whereas employee engagement values, comfort values (IEB values), and image and fundamental values, job structure values, pride values (EEB values) decreased.

Two independent MANOVAs were computed to analyse the group differences between gender (male and female), types of organisations (private and public), and hierarchical positions (senior, middle, and junior managerial levels) in terms of internal and external employer branding values. MANOVA 1 was computed for IEBVs and MANOVA 2 for EEB values. Two-way between-subjects designs were also adopted in both the MANOVAs to analyse the interactional effects of independent variables on the dependent variables.

To analyse group differences, Pillai trace scores were observed in order to deal with violation of Box's M score. The multivariate effect was found significant for hierarchy which indicated significant differences exist amongst the dependent variables across hierarchical positions in terms of internal employer branding factors [$F = 2.069$, $p < 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.042$, observed power = 0.935]. Tests of between-subjects effects revealed that these significant differences were found in terms of career potential values [$F = 3.044$, $p < 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.021$, observed power = 0.586], and esteem values [$F = 4.613$, $p < 0.01$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.031$, observed power = 0.777]. From post hoc analysis, it was observed that there were no significant mean differences found in terms of career potential values, but significant result ($p < 0.05$) was noted between junior and middle level managers (mean difference = −0.375), and junior and senior level managers (mean difference = −0.434) in terms of esteem values. No significant difference was found

between middle and senior level managers in the said values. Negative sign of mean differences indicated that junior level managers have less preference for esteem values as compared to middle and senior level managers.

Further, interactional effect of gender and hierarchy on internal employer branding factors was found significant [$F = 1.775$, $p < 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.036$, observed power = 0.884]. Tests of between-subjects effects revealed that there were significant result in case of interactional effect of gender and hierarchy on feel-good values [$F = 6.931$, $p < 0.001$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.046$, observed power = 0.923]. Table 8 depicts the mean responses of one group in combination with other groups along with their SDs. From mean values it is evident that female employees working in middle management have highest positive preference ($M = 0.328$) towards feel-good values as compared to junior ($M = -0.237$) and senior ($M = -0.293$) female managers. Negative values denote the least preferences. However, male managers working in middle level management have negative preference ($M = -0.442$) towards feel-good values as compared to junior ($M = 0.367$) and senior ($M = 0.202$) categories.

Findings of MANOVA 2 reported that neither the multivariate effect nor the interactional effect of the independent variables was found significant. These indicated that no significant differences exist amongst the EEB values across gender, types of organisations, hierarchical positions, and their interactions amongst themselves.

Discussion

In the current research, attempts have been made to identify value proposition framework for internal and external employer branding in India based on individual and personal needs of Indian working people.

Table 8 Descriptive statistics (mean value) for internal employer branding values in MANOVA 1

Independent variables	Career potential values	Justice values	Employee engagement values	Feel-good values	Comfort values	Esteem values
Female						
Public						
Junior	−0.300	−0.011	−0.962	−0.210	−0.216	0.831
Middle	0.540	0.679	0.036	0.724	0.075	0.243
Senior	−0.481	−0.401	0.156	−0.472	0.456	−0.528
Private						
Junior	0.216	0.077	−0.081	−0.264	−0.285	0.191
Middle	0.081	−0.299	0.287	−0.068	0.022	−0.374
Senior	−0.010	−0.208	0.634	−0.114	−0.274	−0.093
Male						
Public						
Junior	−0.265	−0.648	−0.022	0.512	−0.191	0.199
Middle	0.066	0.026	−0.228	−0.942	0.439	0.064
Senior	0.166	−0.299	−0.011	0.015	0.033	−0.129
Private						
Junior	0.292	0.188	−0.435	0.221	−0.203	0.172
Middle	0.060	0.241	−0.110	0.057	0.336	−0.034
Senior	−0.106	−0.121	0.185	0.389	0.048	−0.040

Source primary data

Findings reveal a six-factor value proposition model for internal employer branding—career potential values, justice values, employee engagement values, feel-good values, comfort values, esteem values; and a five-factor value proposition model for external employer branding—image and fundamental values, job structure values, work culture values, reference values, and pride values.

Jiang and Iles (2011) have identified value propositions or employee-based brand equity in terms of economic value, social value, development value, interest value, and brand trust. Several other studies have focused on organisational attractiveness in this regard (Rynes et al. 1991; Aiman-Smith et al. 2001; Jiang and Iles 2011). Distinct value proposition models for internal and external employer brand as revealed in the present study have been supported by the earlier literatures (Jiang and Iles 2011; Highhouse et al. 2003). Organisations need to focus separately to increase their attractiveness to their current and potential group of employees. Turban et al. (1998) have suggested values like job characteristics (especially pay) and organisational characteristics (friendliness, competence); Chapman et al. (2005) suggested type of work and perceived environment, recruiter behaviour, applicant perceptions of the recruitment process; for Lievens et al. (2001), it was larger company, openness; and Schneider (1987) identified achievement, affiliation, and power of stability as the values of organisational attractiveness. Another eight-factor model (Herman and Gioia 2000) suggests company reputation, company culture, enlightened leadership, treatment of people, opportunity for career growth and opportunity, meaningful work, and compensation and benefits are the preferred choice of knowledge workers regarding employer of choice. Indian knowledge workers also prefer values in line with this.

From the qualitative inquiries (an inductive approach), Ambler and Barrow (1996) conceptualised employer brand in terms of functional, economic, and psychological benefits associated with employment and employing company. They considered employees associated with employment and employing companies—a bigger target group as contrast to only potential or current employees. Berthon et al. (2005),

on the other hand, preferred to follow a deductive approach to develop their employer attractiveness scale based on only potential employees. Combining these two, we have developed value proposition frameworks using deductive approach for current and potential employees separately as these two groups differ in terms of their value preferences. In terms of values, there are much similarities that exist between our models and the models offered by these two studies. Economic, developmental, psychological values are considered for value propositions in all these models. However, offering different sets of value framework for two different groups (current and potential employees) is the uniqueness of this study.

The current research reveal that potential employees have less number of value preferences (five value dimensions) as compared to current employees who have six in choice. Job scarcity in the market plays critical role here. Job seekers in Indian industry focus more on securing jobs rather than fulfil their value preferences. Also, potential employees (job seekers) may overlook the value preferences due to not possibly having full information about the company policies and other aspects related to jobs. Developmental values are also found important for both the group of employees as 'Employees do not come to work just to do a job, they expect development and an organisation that will pay them to hone their skills' (Johnson 2000). Fewer choices for employment may be the reason for it. In other Asian countries, like China, companies think belongingness and pride (esteem values) are important for retaining current employees (Bjorkman and Lu 1999). Potential employees, while choosing the company focus on moral image of the company, whether being referred by any trusted person, attrition rate or growth values to understand work culture of the company, and company brand or pay package which can give them social status. After joining the organisation, employees look for some more value preferences apart from those before joining the company, such as, career growth in terms of quick growth or recognition, nature or terms of assignment, administrative rules, and emotional connection. Furthermore, company brand and hierarchical position are preferred values from potential employers as compared to current employers. Both current and potential employees emphasise on competitive pay and facilities.

The current study finds that age has significant relationships with both internal employer branding (employee engagement values, feel-good values, comfort values, and esteem values) and external employer branding (image and fundamental values, job structure values, and pride values). Amongst these relationships, feel-good values and esteem values have only positive association with age. These indicate that older Indian knowledge workers prefer mental peace and a settled life from their current employers that may help them to earn status in the society above other values. With the age, family and self come first as compared to attachment to the company. Therefore, they feel less preference for employee engagement values and comfort values. Surprisingly, older employees look for esteem values from their current employees but pride value may not be a matter for them while applying for a new job. Similarly, they have less preference for image and fundamental values and job structure values in case of potential employers. With the age resistance to change increases which reflects in their job change decisions also. Older employees may feel very choosy before applying for a new job. Therefore, some of the important values like image and fundamental values, job structure values, and pride values do not even attract them towards potential employers.

Group differences in terms of internal and external branding factors between male and female managers (gender); junior, middle, and senior managers (hierarchical position); and managers working in private and public sector organisations (type of organisation) have also been analysed. Findings suggest that there exist group difference (with respect to hierarchical position) in career potential values and esteem values of IEB framework. Junior managers have less preference for esteem values as compared to middle and senior level managers. Value preferences vary across life stages. It is quite obvious that the more a person holds higher position in the company, more is his/her societal status. Therefore, preferences for esteem values increase with higher management cadre.

Significant results have also been found in interactional effects of gender (male and female) and hierarchy (junior, middle, and senior) IEB framework (feel-good values). Findings suggest that middle level female managers have high preference and middle level male managers have least preference for feel-good values. This is evident from Indian family

structure that female members at their mid-career need to take care of entire family and are mostly responsible for establishing peace in the family. Work-life stress influences peace in personal-life adversely. Therefore, female middle level managers are keener towards feel-good values. Male middle level managers, on the other hand, have least preference for the same values as during their mid-level career they become more career oriented and fulfilling career objectives get highest priority to them.

Findings also indicate that no significant differences exist amongst the EEB framework across gender, types of organisations, hierarchical positions, and their interactions amongst themselves. Job market scenario of India is not very lucrative to the Indian workforce as a whole in recent days because of the business volatility. Therefore, employees irrespective of gender, hierarchy, and the type of organisation they are working with have similar value preferences while looking for new jobs.

Organisational attractiveness may be increased by creating values to the individual and personal needs of the employees through several policy offerings by the organisation. Thus organisations in India may design their policy offerings on image and fundamental values, job structure values, work culture values, reference values, and pride values to attract potential employees; and career potential values, justice values, employee engagement values, feel-good values, comfort values, and esteem values for retaining current employees. Continual development in terms of sponsored education or sabbaticals, several employee engagement programmes in order to increase belongingness, ethical ways of doing business and fulfilling social responsibilities, employee referral benefits, employee alumni, performance-based promotion, well designed career planning, flexi timing, virtual office space or hi-tech office infrastructure, competitive pay package, increasing corporate reputation through corporate external branding process may be such offerings to attract potential employees. In order to retain current employees, organisations may focus on offerings like continual development in terms of experimentations and skill diversification, transparent and laid down policy matters, practicing morality, friendly and fun work environment, well designed career planning, performance reward, challenging and interesting jobs, promise less and keep it, work-life integration (family engagement programme, etc.),

competitive pay package, positional benefits, company reputation, developing emotionally connected work culture (feeling home attitude), etc. Organisations should also take distinct strategic decisions for young and aged Indian knowledge workers in terms of attracting and retaining them.

Conclusions and implications

Employer branding has emerged as an important strategic tool to the organisations to deal with talent war effectively. Present article has conceptualised employer branding in terms of internal and external employer branding which will facilitate organisations retaining current employees and attracting potential employees, respectively, in the Indian context. Individual and personal needs have got a cultural impact. Thus, a necessity has been felt to conduct a study which will explore these needs of Indian knowledge workers, such that organisations can design their value propositions accordingly. Findings suggest a six-factor value proposition model for internal employer branding and a five-factor value proposition model for external employer branding. These values have also been found to be correlated with age. Further studies related to group differences reveal that male and female middle level managers have distinct preferences in terms of internal branding factors. Findings of the present article are found quite logical in Indian context.

Value proposition models are the backbones of employer branding. Once the policy models are ready, organisations can move to the next step of employer branding process. In view of talent scarcity, organisations should take the employer branding activities to the same level of importance with corporate branding activities. The present study is a directional study for the organisations, both Indian and Multinational, which deal with Indian knowledge workers in order to design their employment offerings in the competitive talent market. Both types of organisations are facing challenges towards retaining and attracting current and potential employees. This study will show them a path towards designing talent management strategies. Considering these value proposition frameworks, MNCs may have the advantageous position in policy development in talent management for their Indian counterparts.

Future directions of the study

The current research has considered Indian organisations only to map the value preferences of Indian workforce. People working in multinationals may have different sets of value preferences because of cultural implications that should also be accounted for in the future study. Further attempt may be made to assess the fit between employee work values and value propositions as currently offered by Indian employers.

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