

EMPLOYER BRANDING: A STUDY OF PSU'S

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ABSTRACT

Employer branding involves efforts on the part of employer to promote self on the grounds of its uniqueness and desirability as an employer, both within and outside the firm. Employer branding has gained immense popularity amongst practicing managers in recent years. Therefore, the quest was to study the relationship of Employer Branding with the two very strategically important constructs, i.e., Motivation and Intention to Stay. Development of questionnaire was carried out with the help of standardized scale and was utilized to measure the perception of employees from four public sector undertakings (PSU), namely, State Bank of India (SBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), and Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC). The sample size was of 120 respondents which included the employees from top level, middle level, and junior level management. The statistical tests employed for this research investigation were Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). It was found that Employee Motivation explains Employer Branding to the tune of 85%, whereas Employer Branding is further explaining "Intention to Stay" to the extent of 25%. Research limitations/implications: Being based on the primary data, the accuracy of the study is dependent on the reliability of the responses given by the respondents. The outcomes of the study would be useful for the PSU's to strategize their priorities in order to create a good Employer Brand by motivating employees and thereby retaining employees. The linkage between motivation of employees, Intention to Stay, and Employer Branding has been explored in this study, and this could be probably showcasing the importance of motivating the employees to usher in a good image for the organization. The researchers have also developed a unique model which could be followed by the organizations to curb attrition.

Keywords: Employer Branding, Motivation, Intention to Stay.

Paper type: Empirical Research paper

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1. INTRODUCTION

Meeting the needs of customers is viewed as the basic belief of marketing, and thus identification and response to such needs is defined as marketing management (Doyle and Stern, 2006). Apart from understanding the needs, it is equally imperative for companies to go in for effective brand management in the era of competition wherein basic products can be easily imitated by competitors.

Attention towards the phrase 'Employer Brand' was first drawn during early 1990s wherein importance of organization's reputation as an employer was highlighted. Attraction, engagement and retention of initiatives directed towards enhancement of company's employer brand are considered as the art and science of employer branding (Minchington, 2005). To develop the image of an organization as a 'great place to work' in the mind of existing employees and key external stakeholders is what defines Employer Brand.

The concept of product branding helps in better understanding the term Employer Branding as product branding reflects the impact of brand perceptions and outlook of the brand experience on consumer's purchase decisions. On parallel grounds, employer branding by enhancing business name for fairness, inclusion and prospects for everyone and boosting level of motivation, efficiency and effectiveness in the company, helps in recuperating the brand image of the company. Marketing concepts assist employer branding in highlighting a prominent position of a company being an employer. Although the customers mentioned herein are representation of employees/potential employees, the rationale is to attract potential customers and retain the current ones. Just like consumer branding, employer branding focuses on emotional and rational benefits provided to employees by their respective employers. Yet Employer branding is considered to be different with corporate branding and product branding. Employer branding involves application of human resource activities by means of principles of marketing, precisely "science of branding" to existing and new employees. Existing and new employees serve as objectives for employer branding whereas corporate branding is primarily concerned with representation of organization to external stakeholders and lastly, product branding is more focused on product manifestation to customers.

To discover the association of employer branding with intention to stay of employees in their respective organizations is the primary purpose of current study. In addition, affect of employer branding on level of motivation has also been asserted.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Employer branding as defined by Ambler and Barrow (1996) includes provision of functional, economic and psychological benefits by employment that can be exclusively recognized with the employing company (p. 187). It can be also viewed as the efforts undertaken by the company to correspond to its current and forthcoming employees that the company is a enviable place for employment (Lloyd, 2002).

Just as established brand seeks to create competitive advantage for organizations by differentiating amongst products; Employer Branding incorporates recognition and creation of company's brand image with the help of application of marketing principles in order to attain a position of preferable employer (Sutherland et al., 2002). Apart from transmitting the message related to the identity of an organization as a preferable organization, employer branding also adapts the tools and techniques used to inspire and engage employees (Barrow and Mosley, 2005). Dawn and Biswas (2010) describe that just like consumer brand, employer branding is the emotional relationship that is shared between an employer and employee.

Organizations now-a-days have a dual aspects of charming potential employees and preserving the prevailing ones. Singh (2002) asserted that apart from spending amount for retaining the employees, retirement benefits are provided to employees to look after their retirement. Further, he explained that apart from employee's intention to continue in the company, the aim of the company to retain its staff is equally imperative. On these grounds, the role of employment advertising and employment branding is vital in companies (Berthon et al., 2005). Employer branding seeks to enhance retention by creating distinctive employment brand superior to that of competitors (Taylor, 2002). The key focus lies on retaining the talent that adds to the organization's success (Buenger, 2006). Augmented sales growth and enhanced employee morale are primarily positive impacts of retention of employees along with the profitability and increased market value of the organization (Allen et al., 2010). Organizations characterized by strong culture, and experience have satisfied and committed workforce as well as increased retention of employees.

Singh and Kumar (2014) recommend through their 'Employee Engagement' model that engaged employees can go a long way in curbing the imminent problem of attrition. Retaining talent within the organizations has become major challenge since the last decade. Morgan (2008) stated that companies should go in for frequent analysis of what best can be done to retain top talent. Saunders et al. (2007) recommended investigating whether retention would be affected by employer branding efforts in order

to comprehend the associations between employer branding and intention of employees to stay in the organization.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives:

1. To study whether Motivation is an antecedent to Employer Branding.
2. To find out the impact of Employer Branding on intention to stay of employees of PSU's in India.
3. To develop a comprehensive model of Employer Branding with antecedents and consequences.

Based on the objectives mentioned above, hypotheses for the study are here under:

Hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no impact of Motivation on Employer Branding in the PSU's in India.

H₀₂: There is no impact of Employer Branding on intention to stay of employees of PSU's in India.

Questionnaire

Survey method was used to collect the primary data, in which questionnaire was used. The stratified random sampling method was used to collect the sample for the research. Scales of Borgohain (2010), Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2008) and Nigel Wright Recruitment (2008) was used to develop the items in the variable of Employer Branding. Scale of Masroor and Fakir (2009) was used to develop the items in the variable of Intention to Stay. Study of Lin (2007) was used for the variable of motivation. Questionnaire contains 102 statements on the basis of 5-point Likert scale. 9 statements were reverse coded out of these 102 statements.

The instrument's reliability was assessed with the help Cronbach's alpha. Broadly, when the alpha's value comes out to be 0.7 or above, then the reliability and acceptability of instrument used stands valid. In current study, before applying factor analysis, the value of Cronbach's alpha arrived at 0.957 for Employer Branding. For 'Intention to Stay' and 'Motivation', the value came out to be 0.955 and 0.976, respectively. On employer branding and level of motivation, factor analysis was applied, after this the alpha scores were 0.947 and 0.970, respectively. As the alpha's values are greater than 0.7 in all the three cases, the instrument used is believed to be reliable.

Sample

Employer branding is fundamentally the perception of employees - current and prospective about the brand image of the organizations, thereby the respondents chosen for the study were those employees who were positioned in each level of hierarchy of the company. Research design of this study was focused upon the service sector, where the survey was conducted on four Public Sector Undertakings (PSU's), namely, State Bank of India (SBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), and Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC). Stratified random sampling was employed as the sampling technique. 120 respondents filled up the questionnaire set. In all, thirty questionnaires were collected from each of the organization. Among these 120 respondents, 87 were males and 33 were females.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Factor analysis

As a statistical technique factor analysis replaces huge number of variables with a lesser number of 'factors' that reflect what sets of variables share commonality with each another. It describes variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. To confirm sample adequacy, KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's Test were applied prior to factor analysis. By demonstrating the proportion of variance in the variables that may be caused by underlying factors, the KMO is used to measure the sample adequacy. When KMO value is closer to 1, it depicts usefulness of factor analysis with the data. However, value lesser than 0.5 is perhaps indicative of the unusable/ineffective results of factor analysis. By testing the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, Bartlett's test of sphericity portrays that the variables are unrelated and thus inappropriate for structure detection. Factor analysis is considered useful with the data when Bartlett's Test value is less than 0.05 of the significance level.

In this study, factor analysis test on 'Employer Branding' and 'Motivation' was applied. On assessment, the KMO came out to 0.781, and it was also found that the Bartlett's test of sphericity reached its significance, thereby depicting identity matrix. The results of KMO and Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated that factor analysis can be applied on the collected data. While conducting factor analysis, 'principal component analysis' method of extraction was employed wherein 'Varimax' was used as the rotation technique. Principal component analysis refers to the principal components model, in which items are assumed to be exact linear combinations of factors, and 'Varimax' rotates the axis such that the two vertices remain 90 degrees (perpendicular) to each other. Initially, 10 factors were extracted,

whose Eigen value came out to be more than 1, however on account of poor face validity the factor structure was not considered. Thereafter, factor analysis was conducted again, on the basis of five fixed number of factors, whose Eigen values were greater than 1. At 0.4 cut-off point the small coefficients were suppressed. The extracted five factors collectively accounted for around 79% variability in the variables. Those extracted 5 factors were named according to nomological and face validity. Subsequent are the factors extracted along with the factor names:

1. MANAGEMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION (MO)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	I rely on this organization to solve employee problems.	0.831
2.	This organization is interested in my satisfaction.	0.807
3.	This organization never disappoints me.	0.746
4.	This organization would be willing to solve a problem I might have with the work.	0.729
5.	This organization is honest and sincere in addressing my concerns.	0.718
6.	If this organization makes a claim or promise to me, it is probably true.	0.717
7.	When compared with other organizations, my organization provides better employees benefits.	0.609
8.	Creating a transparent work culture, employees participation in management, organization climate and brand image are the cornerstone of the retention strategy of the organization.	0.599
9.	Management provides excellent incentives and rewards at all levels for service quality, not just productivity.	0.583
10.	There is a supportive, open, and approachable management style among line managers in this organization.	0.573
11.	My organisation fulfils my needs.	0.571
12.	I have the opportunities to do what I do best in my work and I wish to continue with the job and remain loyal to the organization.	0.533
13.	I am very satisfied with the manager's efforts to plan, coordinate, set goals, and establish routines for giving good service.	0.531
14.	The organization empowers employees to take their own decision on matters pertaining to their jobs.	0.527
15.	I have a great feeling about contributing worthwhile for the organization and facilitating thereby towards creation of organization's image.	0.521
16.	The organization's current brand image communicates the USP that helps differentiate it from its competitors.	0.488

2. IMAGE OF ORGANIZATION (IO)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	This organisation is considered one of the best in its sector.	0.770
2.	People in my community think highly of this organisation.	0.754
3.	It is considered prestigious in my community to work for this organisation.	0.751
4.	The organization is to be considered as an 'employer by choice' amongst enterprises in India.	0.745
5.	This organization has a good reputation with the customers.	0.735
6.	Customers perceive the people who work in this organization are high calibre people.	0.726
7.	Customers perceive the people who work in this organization are high calibre people.	0.613
8.	Employees would like to associate themselves with the organization as it demonstrates a brand of success, unique leadership quality, employees' engagement initiatives that instil a deep sense of pride and commitment.	0.535

3. MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (MP)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	Company recruitment brochures or web site gave me detailed information about their job opportunities.	0.802
2.	Job postings gave me detailed information about openings for which this organization is recruiting.	0.768
3.	The employees and management all endeavour to "live the brand", " thrive the brand"and "survive the brand" and facilitate in creation of a unique enterprise.	0.712
4.	Every employee in this organization receives training that enhances his/her ability to deliver high quality service.	0.641
5.	This organization keeps the employees well informed.	0.572
6.	Management provides excellent leadership.	0.492
7.	The organization's website contains all relevant information pertaining to its business operations, future plans and projects a good public image.	0.465
8.	The organization's dealings with public are transparent and it maintains effective public relations.	0.454

4. SATISFACTION WITH THE JOB (SJ)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	The retention rate of employees is high due to job security, service benefits, social security measures, and employer's brand image.	0.735
2.	This organization is convenient for me as a place to work.	0.713
3.	My organisation is a good overall match for me.	0.559
4.	I am very satisfied with the organization's recruiting and selection of employees to have the right people for the right job.	0.528
5.	Management in this organization provides freedom and authority to employees to act independently in order to provide excellent service.	0.508
6.	Employees consider their job more attractive than similar jobs elsewhere and intend to work as hard as necessary and continue with the organization.	0.463
7.	I have the flexibility in organizing my work and can take time off from work whenever it is necessary.	0.448
8.	My work challenges me to do creative work.	0.435

5. PERCEPTION OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION (PO)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	When other organisations are recruiting new staff, they would not want staff from this organisation.	0.776
2.	This organisation does not have a good reputation in my community.	0.726
3.	People from other organisations look down at this organisation.	0.719

Factor analysis on Motivation

Principal Component Analysis method was applied wherein varimax rotation was used for conducting factor analysis on the motivation. The KMO value was 0.738 and also, Bartlett's Test of sphericity value was reported as significant. Initially, 9 factors were extracted, whose Eigen value was found to be more than 1, but because of face validity the aforesaid factor structure could not be justified. Then, four fixed numbers of factors whose Eigen values were more than one were extracted. At 0.5 cut-off point, the small coefficients were suppressed. Because of this suppression, we had to remove 16 items. After eliminating 16 statements, KMO value was reported as 0.837. These 4 factors jointly account for 78% of the variability. The factors extracted along with the names are as follows:

1. SUPERVISOR-SUBORDINATE RELATIONSHIP (SSR)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	My immediate supervisor accepts mistake I make in the process of trying new things.	0.831
2.	My immediate supervisor accepts comments.	0.807
3.	My immediate supervisor cares about me as an individual.	0.746
4.	My immediate supervisor gives me feedback that helps me in improving my performance.	0.729
5.	I receive coaching and training from my immediate supervisor.	0.718
6.	I am satisfied with my immediate supervisor as a positive role model.	0.717
7.	My immediate supervisor takes time to meet and listen to me.	0.609
8.	My immediate supervisor trains me whenever necessary.	0.599
9.	My immediate supervisor is usually available for consultation.	0.583
10.	My immediate supervisor understands the problem I face at work.	0.573
11.	The department I am working in is an enjoyable place to work.	0.571
12.	I receive informal praise and appreciation on my work performance.	0.533
13.	I am satisfied with the empowerment I have to influence the quality of my work.	0.531
14.	I have the support and authority to make decisions necessary to accomplish the assigned tasks.	0.527
15.	My immediate supervisor concerns about my personal needs and problems.	0.521
16.	Managers seem willing to invest in the development of new team members.	0.488
17.	I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for my accomplishment.	0.542
18.	My immediate supervisor is willing to promote me.	0.538
19.	I am satisfied with the team spirit in my work environment.	0.530
20.	I feel that my job performance is fairly evaluated.	0.527
21.	I am encouraged and motivated to come up with new and better ideas of doing things.	0.523

2. SATISFACTION WITH THE WORK (SWW)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	Company leadership has made changes which are positive for me.	0.772
2.	The training I have is enough to perform my tasks required.	0.695
3.	I am satisfied with the company as a place to work.	0.681
4.	This is the type of job in which I can feel a sense of accomplishment.	0.584
5.	The work I do makes a difference here.	0.539

3. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENTS (OC)

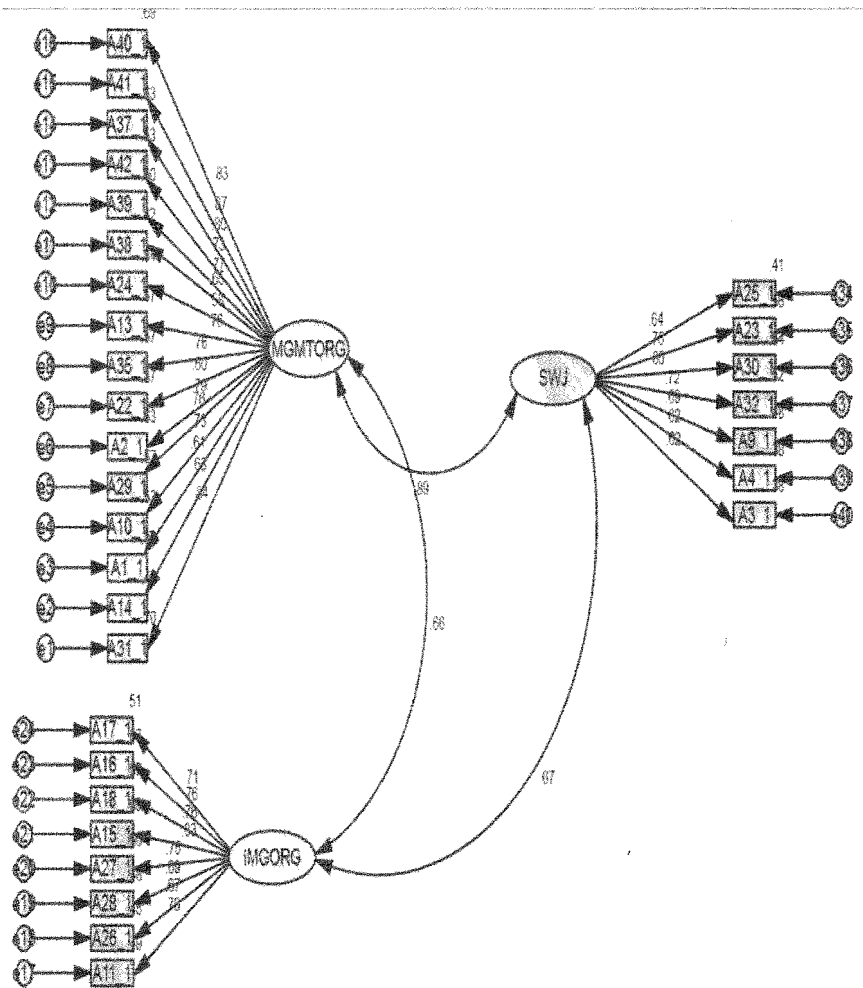
S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	I understand the company's mission statement, vision, and values.	0.807
2.	The company supports frequent contests, celebrations, and team building activities.	0.802
3.	The company holds monthly or yearly social events.	0.763
4.	The company holds celebrations for success.	0.748
5.	Diverse perspectives are valued within my department.	0.566
6.	My department holds regular team meetings.	0.543

4. AWARENESS ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION (AAO)

S. No.	Statements	Factor Loading
1.	I understand how my work contributes to the company's overall goals and strategies.	0.723
2.	I am aware of the promotions, demotions, turnover in the company.	0.685
3.	My immediate supervisor has reasonable expectations from my work.	0.663
4.	I am committed to the changes being implemented in the company.	0.656
5.	My job requirements are clear.	0.566

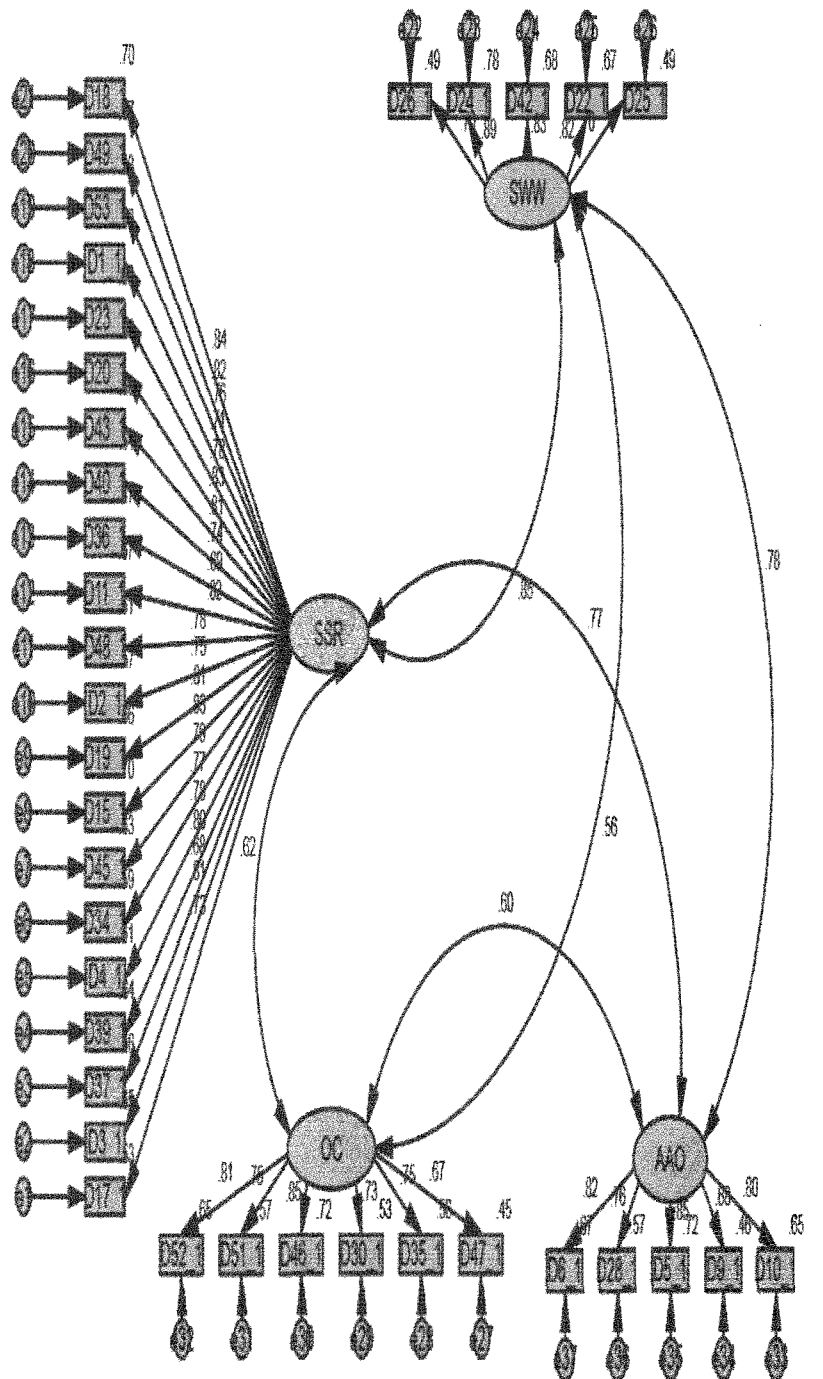
Once Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted, the next step was to go for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). CFA is conducted in order to determine the construct validity. EFA is generally data driven which is dependent on a number of subjective decisions to be taken by the researcher. By employing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the researchers can cross validate the factor structure in an appropriate way (Byrne, 1989; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1989; Pedhazur&Schmelkin, 1991). On conducting the CFA, two factors could not pass the test of validity and were thus dropped.

FIGURE 1 : CFA OF EMPLOYER BRANDING



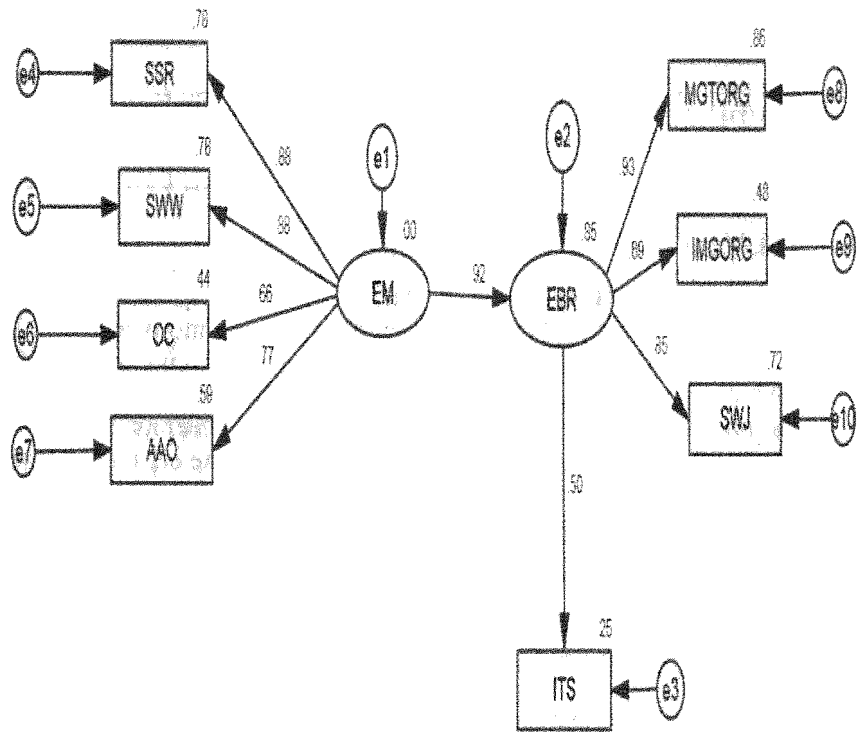
MGMTORG- Management of the Organization, IMGORG- Image of the organization, SWJ- satisfaction with the job

FIGURE 2 : CFA of Motivation



SSR- Supervisor-Subordinate Relationship, SWW- Satisfaction With The Work, OC-Organizational Commitment, AAO-Awareness About the Organization

FIGURE 3 : STRUCTURALEQUATION MODELLING (SEM)



EBR- Employer Branding, MGMTORG- Management of the Organization, IMGORG- Image of the organization, SWJ- satisfaction with the job, EM- Employee Motivation, SSR- Supervisor-Subordinate Relationship, SWW- Satisfaction With The Work, OC- Organizational Commitment, AAO-Awareness About the Organization, ITS- Intention to Stay.

The model explains the causal relationship of 'Employer Branding' with 'Motivation', and 'Intention to Stay' of the employees in the organization. The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) which was applied earlier was then tested with Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). SEM provides a suitable outline for statistical analysis which contains a number of traditional multivariate techniques, such as factor analysis, regression analysis, discriminant analysis (Hox & Bechger, 1998). SEM is often envisioned by the path analysis.

In SEM analysis, latent variable was 'Employee Motivation' along with its

four factors which were explored in EFA earlier, Employer Branding was also observed through the factors identified in the CFA stage. 'Intention To Stay' was analysed as observed variable in the scheme of the model so tested. From the model it can be assessed that 'Employee Motivation' explains 'Employer Branding' to a level of 85%. Also, 'Intention To Stay' is being explained by Employer Branding to the tune of 25%.

CMIN/DF	GFI	CFI	NFI	RMSEA
3.177	0.886	0.936	0.910	0.085

5. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- It was found that employer brand is explained by motivation of employees, which means when employees get motivated in the organization then it leads to stronger employer brand image. The motivation process is driven by the ambivalent superior-subordinate relationship, deriving satisfaction from the work, feeling a sense of commitment with the organization, being aware of the organization the employee is working in. These motivators help the organization to develop a culture of belongingness.
- Employer branding is driven by factors like effective and efficient management of the organization, how the people in community perceive about the organization, how the employees perceive the organization on the grounds of superior management practices.
- Also, employer branding explains intention to stay explaining that improved brand image of the organization leads to higher retention rate in the organizations.

It is suggested for the PSU's, that retention of its employees would be a tough task in the days to come. The PSU's therefore, should focus more on motivating their employees which would have an impact on the retention level of employees.

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