

Master Thesis U.S.E.



**The Digital Age of Employer Branding: Analyzing Job Seekers'
Perceptions of Employer Social Media Content¹**

Wade J. Wu (8679444)

j.wu11@students.uu.nl

U.S.E., Utrecht University

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Jeroen de Jong

Co-reader: Dr. Milande Busquet

June 2024

¹ The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. The author is responsible for its contents and opinions expressed in the thesis. U.S.E. is only responsible for the academic coaching and supervision and cannot be held liable for the content.

Abstract

In the digital age, employers increasingly use social media content to connect with stakeholders. This paper explores the role of social media in employer branding and its impact on job seekers' perceptions. The research question addresses how employers' social media content influences job seekers' perceptions of employer brands. A qualitative approach involved semi-structured interviews with 20 master's students and triangulated insights with one corporate manager. The main finding indicates that employer brand attributes, such as person-job fit, job security, salary and benefits, brand image and reputation, directly influence job seekers with limited conveyance through social media. The study introduces the concept of 'Employer Brand Posts,' with categorization of 9 types of posts, products and service, innovative projects, knowledge sharing and industry insights, employee posts, corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate culture, work environment, learning and growth, and job posting, This research providing a framework for companies to strategically apply social media to their employer branding strategies, thereby enhancing their attractiveness to potential talent.

Keywords: Social Media, Employer Branding, Employer Brand Posts, Job Seeker

JEL-Codes: M31 J24 C83

Acknowledgments

This research was my final piece of the Master of Business Development and Entrepreneurship at Utrecht University.

I want to thank my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Jeroen de Jong, and co-reader, Dr. Milande Busquet, for their invaluable guidance and support throughout this research.

I also extend my gratitude to my classmates for their participation, time, and insights.

I am equally grateful to Ms. Marlou Arts, a corporate manager interviewed in this research, for her professional advice, high-quality insights, and warm support.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	2
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	2
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 MOTIVATION	4
1.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM STATEMENT	4
1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE.....	5
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 CONCEPTUAL MODEL INTRODUCTION	6
2.2 EMPLOYER BRAND ATTRIBUTES	7
2.3 BRAND POSTS.....	9
3. METHODOLOGY:	11
3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	11
3.2 SAMPLE SELECTION AND DATA COLLECTION	11
3.3 ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES	12
4. FINDINGS	13
4.1 EMPLOYER BRAND ATTRIBUTES (LIMITED SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE)	13
4.1.1 <i>Person-job Fit</i>	14
4.1.2 <i>Job Security</i>	15
4.1.3 <i>Salary and Benefits</i>	15
4.1.4 <i>Brand Image and Reputation</i>	16
4.2 EMPLOYER BRAND POSTS	16
4.2.1 <i>Products and Service</i>	18
4.2.2 <i>Innovative Projects</i>	19
4.2.3 <i>Knowledge Sharing and Industry Insights</i>	19
4.2.4 <i>Employee Posts</i>	20
4.2.5 <i>Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)</i>	21
4.2.6 <i>Corporate Culture</i>	23
4.2.7 <i>Work Environment</i>	23
4.2.8 <i>Learning and Growth</i>	24
4.2.9 <i>Job Posting</i>	25
4.3 CONTENT DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY	26
5. DISCUSSION	28
5.1 CONCLUSION	28
5.2 IMPLICATIONS.....	29
5.3 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	29
6. REFERENCE	31
7. APPENDICES	36
7.1 INTERVIEW GUIDE	36
7.2 INTERVIEW STATEMENT:.....	37
7.3 DATA STORAGE.....	38
7.4 CODING SCHEME	38

1. Introduction

1.1 Motivation

The rise of social media has provided employers with a new communication channel for delivering job-related information, strengthening their employer image, and engaging potential candidates in the early stages of the employment process (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015). Social media platforms are the choice of 92% of employers when seeking potential candidates (Reiners B, 2022). The ongoing 'Talent War' (Hadi & Ahmed, 2018; Behrends et al., 2020) has compelled businesses to develop robust employer brands to project a positive image that attracts highly qualified job applicants (Bahri-Ammari et al., 2022; Newburry et al., 2014). Attracting high-performing applicants is critical for talent selection and organizational success (Chapman et al., 2005). Employers increasingly use social media content to connect with stakeholders, projecting their employer brand strategy to shape perceptions and attract job seekers (Mukul & Itam, 2023).

The development of social media is also changing job seekers' perceptions of employers. Social media has become a fundamental tool for job seekers, with 79% relying on it in their job search (Jendriks, 2023). A leading digital marketing agency reports that 70% of individuals have read a corporate blog, 67% have watched brand videos on YouTube, 65% have engaged in a branded online game, and more than 30% of the global population (exceeding 2.2 billion people) has an active social media account (VanMeter et al., 2018). These data indicate not only the frequency of social media usage but also the diverse platform selection, which could also be a factor in job seekers' behavior. Understanding job seekers' perceptions and behavior is the key to improving employer branding strategy.

Realizing the significance of this trend, companies acknowledge that social media is—and will continue to be—a key channel, necessitating their proactive engagement (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011) and making it an increasingly important component of an organization's media matrix (Peters et al., 2013). Academic scholars suggest that future research should analyze certain recruitment and employer branding strategies that have the potential to influence employer knowledge, applicant attraction, and applicant behavior in social media's rising background (Baum & Kabst, 2014). Therefore, this study was motivated by the need to explore the specific impact of social media content on an employer branding approach to attract potential job applicants.

1.2 Introduction to the Problem Statement

Over the past three decades, scholarly interest in employer branding has strongly increased (Theurer et al., 2018). Employer Brand (EB) is a concept introduced by Ambler & Barrow (1996) that merges HR management and brand marketing. It is defined as “the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company” (P.187). Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) presents a conceptual framework for understanding employer branding,

creates two principal assets – brand associations and brand loyalty. Berthon et al. (2005) identify the components of employer attractiveness from the perspective of potential employees. Employer branding has become an essential tool for organizations to attract and retain skilled employees in the highly competitive business landscape of the present era (Azhar et al., 2024). So far, EB attributes have been well-established through decades of research.

The development of social media presents new challenges and opportunities. Social media, as defined by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), is “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (P.61). Priyadarshini et al. (2017) examines employers' extensive use of social media as a source of recruitment and selection and its influence on overall employer attractiveness (ease of information; navigational usability and user-friendliness; person-job fit and person-organization fit; reliability and timeliness; positive and cost-effective marketing; value creation for employers; and privacy concern). Employers' use of social media is a positive factor in attracting job seekers (Sivertzen et al., 2013).

Social media is no longer a unique value proposition since 92% of employers have already used social media platforms (Nagle & Pope, 2013). In social media marketing, categorizing content into themes such as product showcases, customer stories, educational posts, and interactive polls provides a structured approach to creating a consistent stream of engaging content necessary for daily customer interaction on social media (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). Specific types of social media content, such as employee testimonials, behind-the-scenes videos, and company culture highlights, have significantly enhanced employer brand perception (Joglekar & Tan, 2022). Research has shown that job-related posts, including job openings and career opportunities, receive significantly more comments and engagement than organization-related posts, such as those highlighting company achievements or general corporate news (Lee et al., 2020). However, a lack of studies has focused on how different types of posts as an instrument to convey EB attributes on social media impact potential applicants. Job seekers' perceptions of the types of EB posts remain incomplete. A comprehensive understanding of how different categories of employers' social media content influence job seekers' perceptions and application decisions is lacking.

1.3 Research Objective

This study seeks to address the existing gap by focusing on the perspectives of job seekers, investigating the types of employer-generated content that most significantly motivate their application intentions. By exploring the variety of content on social media, this research aims to uncover what types of content on social media influence job applicants most and how they prioritize such content, as well as their perception of the employer's social media content. It provides practical insights for organizations striving to optimize their social media strategies and employer branding strategies, enhancing their attractiveness as employers in a competitive talent market. Given the significant role of social media in shaping job

seekers' perceptions and the identified gaps in understanding the specific impact of employers' social media content, the study aims to address the following research question:

➤ *How does employers' social media content influence job seekers' perceptions of employer brand?*

This question explores classifications of content employers share on social media platforms and its effect on job seekers' perceptions, motivations, and intention to pursue employment opportunities. Additionally, how these social media contents are connected to EB's attributes will also be examined in this research. By focusing on this aspect, our research intends to fill the existing literature gap, providing insights that could guide organizations in leveraging the wide use of social media to attract high-quality talent. Furthermore, it guides organizations to enhance their employer brand to be competitive in the labor market.

2. Literature Review

After a literature review, we applied a conceptual framework to further analyze our research question. To introduce this model, we involved concepts from Employer Branding and Brand post categorization. We then delve into each attribute and post type to thoroughly understand how these elements influence job seekers' perceptions and intentions.

2.1 Conceptual Model Introduction

Figure 1 shows a first conceptual model of relevant social media content, that we derived from the extant literature. We seek to understand job seekers' perceptions of employers from two perspectives: how they generally perceive the EB attributes and how they perceive EB in different types of social media posts. Employers' social media content refers to what employers post on social media platforms; research so far does not uncover which posts matter to develop a positive employer brand from a job seeker's perspective. This model seeks to combine both sides to discuss further what attributes enhance EB and how it affects job seekers' intentions, as well as what type of posts attract them.

EB attributes are the level of attractiveness attributed to employment in an organization, which appears to be crucial to attracting potential employees (Špoljarić & Ozretić Došen, 2023). The current literature suggests nine factors that are helpful in building a positive employer brand. The general theoretical framework is based on (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014) and Berthon et al (2005). Other scholars also discuss and examine these factors, which are brand image, organizational culture, corporate reputation, corporate social responsibility (CSR), interest value, social value, economic value, development value, and application value.

From the literature on (Tafesse & Wien, 2017) , we can identify numerous types of brand posts that are helpful in developing a strong employer brand. If brand posts can effectively influence consumers by shaping their perceptions and driving their engagement(Hamzah et al., 2021), it is reasonable to assume that similar types of posts focused on employer branding (EB) would influence job seekers in analogous ways. These brand posts differ from the aforementioned employer branding attributes because they directly involve employees in shaping the employer's image, utilizing social media platforms to showcase the company culture and values in a more authentic and engaging manner(Wolf et al., 2015). The five types of posts we can derive from the literature are: emotional brand posts, functional brand posts, educational brand posts, employee posts, and workplace community posts.

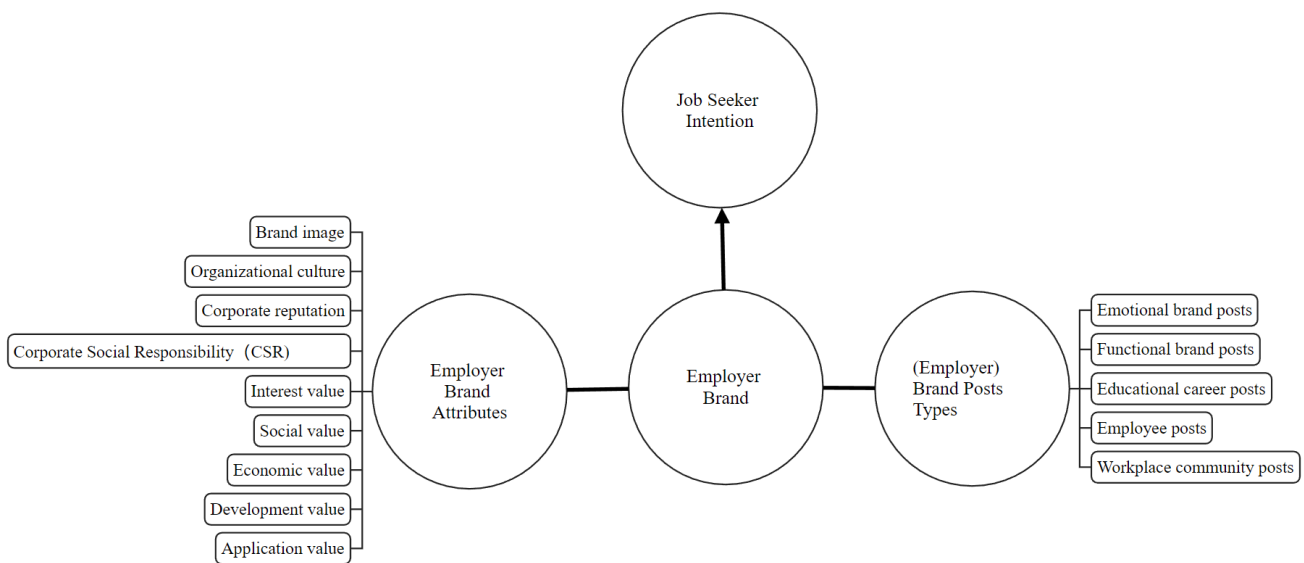


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

2.2 Employer Brand Attributes

Brand image is a construct with a longstanding definition in the marketing literature(Lievens & Highhouse, 2003), refers to the thoughts and ideas that a brand name evokes in the minds of consumers(Myrden & Kelloway, 2015). A positive brand image will make a company an attractive employer(Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Successful employer brands are characterized as being “known” and “noticeable”, which could benefit from the well-building of brand image(Valentina Della Corte et al., 2011). Employer brand is also like brand image associated with products and services, containing both instrumental and symbolic information(Nolan et al., 2013). Clear brand images in the job seekers’ minds and subsequently reduce the perceived risk of joining a company, which ultimately increases employer attractiveness(Wilden et al., 2010).

Organizational culture refers to “a set of key values, beliefs and understanding that is shared by the members of an organization” (Kumar H, 1999, p.54). A well-established employer brand can be achieved once it ensures a favorable organizational culture(Huseynova & Matošková, 2022). (Backhaus & Tikoo,

2004) also points out organizational culture is one of the three vital assets to create the employer brand. Therefore, a strong culture can create an emotional connection with the brand, leading to increased commitment and performance(Weyland, 2011). Kontoghiorghes (2016) found talent attraction to be highly associated with the organization is perceived to have a change-driven, quality-driven, and technology-driven culture, and characterized by support for creativity, open communications, effective knowledge management, and the core values of respect and integrity. In the long run, building positive organizational culture enhance employer brand and gives it a competitive edge to attract potential employees(Szymańska A. et al., 2014).

Corporate reputation is a set of attributes credited to a firm, inferred from the firm's past actions(Weigelt & Camerer, 1988), an intangible asset that builds up over time and represents value and trust(de Marcellis-Warin N. & Teodoresco S., 2012). As an EB attribute, evidence suggests that corporate reputation plays a role in enhancing employer attractiveness(Archer, 2006). Corporate reputation can provide it with a competitive advantage by attracting more applicants as well as higher quality(Turban & Cable, 2003). Job seekers use reputation as a signal about employer brand attributes, and reputation affects the pride that job seekers expect from the company they intend to work for(M. K. Biswas & Suar, 2016; Cable & Turban, 2003; Edwards, 2009).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is “the process by which managers within an organization think about and discuss relationships with stakeholders as well as their roles in relation to the common good, along with their behavioral disposition with respect to the fulfilment and achievement of these roles and Relationships”(Basu & Palazzo, 2008, p.124). Companies increasingly draw on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in their employer branding to improve attractiveness, engage current and potential employees, and ensure consistency in their brand image(Carlini et al., 2019). Job seekers can assess the communication on CSR according to their own positive or negative beliefs and attitudes toward CSR(Klimkiewicz & Oltra, 2017). Therefore, signaling corporate social responsibility (e.g. advertising and public relations conveying information about CSR activity) to create a positive employer brand will attract talent with values that align with the corporate values(Carlini et al., 2019).

The following five-value structure identified by Berthon et al. (2005) is essentially a refinement and extension of the three dimensions proposed by Ambler and Barrow (1996). These are attributes of the more general concept of employer brand (Berthon et al., 2005) and related to the creation of employer branding(Kumari et al., 2020). Besides the four attributes we introduced, these five values capture more “psychological benefits”, “functional benefits” and “economic benefits” respectively to the job seekers(Berthon et al., 2005).

Interest value, “provides an exciting work environment, novel work practices and that makes use of its

employee's creativity to produce high-quality, innovative products and services”(Berthon et al., 2005, p.159). According to the result of the present study, organisations are better off focusing on the innovation, as well as a good environment for learning and application of skills rather than investing in their employer branding activities (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Chi et al. (2018) found that job seekers hold values that one should work for interest rather than working just for work's sake.

Social value, “provides a working environment that is fun, happy, provides good collegial relationships and a team atmosphere” (Berthon et al., 2005, p.159). Potential employees may also get an insight into the degree of social value at the company itself during the recruiting process (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Santiago (2019) validates that there is a positive relationship between social value and intention to submit a job application to the organisation.

Economic value, “provides above-average salary, compensation package, job security and promotional opportunities” (Berthon et al., 2005, p.159). Economic value is the most influential factors of job engagement, influencing the perception of employees towards employer brand (Bhasin et al., 2019). However, M. Biswas & Suar (2013) argues that economic value is not so important for job seekers to choose a job, as an important saying, “Money is not everything in life”. In addition, Chi et al. (2018) claims that salary has a positive relationship with the employer brand, and a high salary can strengthen the relationship between the employer brand and willingness to apply.

Development value, “provides recognition, self-worth and confidence, coupled with a career-enhancing experience and a spring-board to future employment” (Berthon et al., 2005, p.162). Companies also use development value (training programs, career development opportunities, personal development, etc.) to enhance employer brand and address employees' negative emotions (Minh Ha et al., 2021). Gupta & Saini (2020) suggests that career growth influences job seekers' intention to apply. On the contrary, when the talent cannot get what they have been promised during the interview, they will look for other ‘solutions’ (Ibrahim et al., 2018).

Application value, “provides an opportunity for the employee to apply what they have learned and to teach others, in an environment that is both customer orientated and humanitarian” (Berthon et al., 2005, p.162). The more the company satisfies the application value of potential and present employees, the higher its employer brand (M. Biswas & Suar, 2013).

2.3 Brand Posts

Brand posts are “concise and recurrent updates created by brands and sent out to their followers on social media” (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). Companies can place brand posts (containing videos, messages, quizzes,

information, and other material) on their social media brand pages, customers as well as potential applicants can become fans of these brand pages, and subsequently indicate that they like the brand post or comment on it (De Vries et al., 2012). We aim to research and categorize the concept of employer brand posts on top of general brand posts with a specific focus on employer brand direction. The following six types of posts we derive from Tafesse & Wien (2017) are highly related to EB.

Emotional brand posts are “brand posts that are intended to evoke consumers’ emotions. Emotional brand posts employ emotion-laden language, inspiring stories or humor and trivia to derive affective responses from consumers” (Tafesse & Wien, 2017, p.10). Emotional brand posts has a greater effect on positive behaviors such as positive word of mouth (Ahmadi et al., 2023) to enhance EB and higher online engagement to draw attention from job seekers.

Functional brand posts are “brand posts that highlight the functional attributes of products and services. Functional brand posts typically promote the benefits of company products and services according to performance, quality, affordability, efficiency and style criteria” (Tafesse & Wien, 2017, p.11). Banerjee et al. (2020) suggests that a strong product brand positively affects the employer brand dimensions and subsequently influences the job seeker’s intention to apply.

Educational brand posts are brand posts that seek to educate and inform consumers on a variety of topics. The main purpose of educational brand posts is to help consumers acquire new skills about product and service applications, or learn about substantive issues involving broader industry developments (Tafesse & Wien, 2017, p.12).

Employee posts, as the name implies, cover various topics, such as employees’ technical expertise, their managerial philosophies, or their personal interests, hobbies, and worldviews (Tafesse & Wien, 2017). (Crişan & Boţun, (2017) conducted research and the results showed that job seekers had more positive words to describe the company after viewing the stories from employees than commercial communication.

Workplace community posts, refined from the definition “brand community posts (Tafesse & Wien, 2017)” aimed at promoting and strengthening the working style or company club activities to show their internal community style. A company’s efforts in various directions such as the workplace diversity, and employee relations, would make employees feel proud to work for that company and to belong to an employer that makes a significant contribution to society(Alshathry et al., 2017).

In summary, this literature review highlights the key attributes of EB and selects the relevant brand posts related to EB. We can clearly observe a research gap regarding which EB attributes are key content

carried by social media brand posts to consider as employer brand posts and which are difficult to spread as independent attributes from social media.

3. Methodology:

3.1 Research Design

To answer our research question, we employed qualitative research, which is great for addressing “how” questions (Pratt, 2009). This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the opinions and experience of job seekers regarding employer brand on social media. We aim to understand what information they obtain from social media posts, and what else attracts them as an employer. Grounded theory is used to develop a theoretical account inductively by systematically analyzing qualitative data (Jørgensen U., 2001). This method is well-suited for capturing the complexity and diversity of job seekers' perception of employer brands, allowing themes to emerge naturally from the data.

3.2 Sample Selection and Data Collection

In order to gain better insight into employer brand posts on social media, semi-structured interviews were conducted with master students and managers. The criteria for inclusion were:

- Students who currently searching for a job or expect to do so within six months from now.
- Working as an employer brand manager or HR recruitment manager.

We conducted 21 interviews with master's students and an employer brand manager from 11 different countries. Of these, 25% were local students. The participants were evenly distributed in terms of gender, with an equal split between female and male. Most interviews, 19 in total, were conducted in person, while 2 took place through Teams Meetings. Each interview lasted, on average, 30 minutes. Considering the difficulty of inviting managers to participate in this research, only one manager accepted our invitation out of nearly 40 contacted via cold messaging on LinkedIn. We incorporated this employer manager's responses into our coding scheme due to the similarity in the interview guidelines.

Interview guidelines can be used to develop a guide that adds structure to the interview process, while at the same time allows flexibility within the interview process (Roberts, 2020). Before the interview, all interviewees are asked to search two companies in contrast ways to discuss what they like or dislike in their social media accounts. Comparison is an explicit research tool exploring how the reasons for, or explanations of, phenomena, or their different impacts and consequences (Palmberger M. & Gingrich A., 2014). Details of interview guidelines could be found in Appendix 7.1. The guideline includes four sections:

- Section 1 is about the cases they prepare and the general behaviour of interviewees when searching

for information about their potential employers.

- Section 2 is about how interviewees compare these two companies' social media information and their preferences. The part most discussed is employer brand attributes, what attracts or does not attract them as an employer.
- Section 3 demonstrates how they browse the employer's social media page, such as what tabs they would find and a specific focus on the posts of these employers' accounts.
- Section 4, I show them the literature findings in my original conceptual model to further discuss their perceptions. This section is set as a reminder to encourage interviews discussing more, because a phenomenon was found in the pilot interviews, that most interviewees would narrow down to the point they have prepared.

Considering the interviewees' privacy, an Interview Statement (Appendix 7.2) was sent by email to inform them and obtain consent to recording, along with interview guidelines for her to prepare. The interview was recorded using a voice recorder and Teams. The transcripts were transcribed through *atter.ai* or directly from Teams. The texts relevant to the research have been manually checked. All data, including audio files, transcripts, and a list of interviewees with details, is saved in Google Drive (Appendix 7.3).

3.3 Analytical Techniques

Following data collection, the research used a grounded theory approach for data analysis. Grounded theory is an inductive theory that allows us to develop a theoretical account of the general features of a topic while simultaneously grounding the account in empirical observations or data (Martin & Turner, 1986).

We employed substantive coding, working directly with the data, fracturing and analyzing it, initially through open coding to identify a core elements or related concepts (Holton J.A., 2010). Open codes were noted in an Excel tab sheet, together with source citations and interviewee names. We read through each transcript and highlighted key words and phrases that captured key elements or ideas.

Next, axial coding was done to combine first-order codes into more general categories, and collected data were refined and categorized to create distinct thematic categories (Williams & Moser, 2019) to identify factors influencing job seekers' perceptions of employer branding on social media. Codes were clustered together according to similarity and regularity (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). For example, "sustainability" and "CSR initiative" were clustered into "CSR". New categories were later compared with relevant theories to validate further ideas for the analysis, a process known as theoretical triangulation (Skjott Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019).

After axial coding, we proceeded to selective coding to integrate and refine the categories at a higher level of abstraction (Williams & Moser, 2019). This step is crucial for developing a coherent and systematic understanding of the research findings. We created a tab sheet and added four columns to label each category in axial coding with yes or no based on the following questions:

- Does this category represent a key aspect of employer branding?
- Is this category directly related to the content on social media platforms?
- Does this category influence job seekers' perceptions of the employer?
- Can this category be integrated into a broader theme

These questions were used to filter and validate the categories related to our research questions. Selective coding involved labeling different types and deriving new themes. Detailed coding schemes can be found in Appendix 7.4. The use of Microsoft Excel for qualitative data coding and analysis is an effective and easily accessible method that ensures rigor and validity in qualitative research (Bree & Gallagher, 2016).

4. Findings

In our analysis, distinct patterns and themes emerged, offering new insights into how various employer brand attributes influence job seekers' perceptions and attractiveness. We will describe three key themes: “employer brand attributes (limited social media influence),” “employer brand posts,” and “content distribution strategy.”

In each section, we will first present exemplar quotations to illustrate the findings, followed by a detailed description of the categories identified during the interviews. To provide a comprehensive understanding, we will validate our findings with relevant literature, arguing their significance.

4.1 Employer Brand Attributes (Limited Social Media Influence)

In examining the aspects of employer brand attributes that do not rely heavily on social media yet still influence job seekers, our interviews revealed several key factors: person-job fit, job security, salary and benefits, brand image and reputation. In Table 1, we provided a quotation to validate our categorization. Following that, we will elaborate on each attribute in detail. Additionally, we will explain why certain employer brand attributes have a limited impact on job seekers.

Exemplar quotations:	Employer Brand Attributes (Limited Social Media Influence)
Second order codes	Exemplar quotations:
Job-Person Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So the first thing you are considering is like the industry (0513a) • If it suits you what are the skills required? And what kind of people they want? I think it's it's a better way to know, if it is a job that suits you (0515c)

Job Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have specific interests in mind of within a job and they need to fit that interest.(0524) • A guarantee from the company itself from the employer itself, for example,if they request you to work overtime,better write it down in a contract.(0513b) • if I work for this company, my contract like long enough to support my career (0611)
Salary and Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate offers good salary,they have a lot of benefits like flexibility, remote working, and things that align with what I need. (0515a) • I appreciate companies provide more transparency with the actual numbers, rather than saying we have a competitive salary. (0527a) • People find it more important to work, for example, hybrid (0611)
Brand image and Reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't specifically focus on information that they pose on social media the information that affects my decision is their overall reputation.(0515c) • I think brand image will relate to how the company represents itself, So, Brian image, it's important to kind of know, when you look at your employer to be like (0515a)

Table 4.1 Exemplar quotations: Employer Brand Attributes (Limited Social Media Influence)

4.1.1 Person-job Fit

A type of employer brand attribute that impacts job seekers' perceptions and influences their application intentions is labeled as 'Person-job Fit'. This refers to the extent to which a job seeker perceives the applied position as matching their skills, interests, and values, including the job responsibilities and the industry they are interested in.

Person-job Fit outlined two basic fits, the demands-abilities fit and supplies–values fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). A good fit between employees has been known to have a subsequent positive impact on employees' attitudes and behaviors for years(Li & Hung, 2010). For job seekers, achieving fit is critical for increasing job satisfaction, reducing stress, improving work effectiveness, and enhancing personal growth throughout their career (Jeffrey R. Edwards, 2006). As an interviewee mentioned, "Feeling like you belong at work makes a huge difference in job satisfaction." Fit is critical for organizations to attract and retain talented employees, utilize employee skills appropriately and efficiently, and, in general, achieve the best use of human resources (Jeffrey R. Edwards, 2006).

Nevertheless, the Job-Person Fit category is difficult to fully capture through social media posts. Person-job fit is an internal, personalized experience that is difficult to convey accurately through external presentations. As 0524 mentioned, "*Does the job fit with your own qualities or personalities? They don't really have that with a general description in job posts.*". It would not be effective if job seekers do not identify this job with their own characters (Huang et al., 2019). Research by (Cable & DeRue, 2002)

also shows that the subjective fit perception significantly impacts employees' career satisfaction and performance. This fit needs to be achieved through multifaceted contact and experience. Therefore, while person-job fit is important, its authenticity and depth are difficult to convey fully through social media presentation alone.

4.1.2 Job Security

The second employer attribute is labeled 'Job Security'. It is described as the probability that an individual will keep their job stable from being dismissed and that their legitimate rights are protected by an employment contract. The interview records show that job seekers attach great importance to the company's working conditions and security.

Job security has already been examined as one factor that is attractive to potential employees in (Berthon et al., 2005) research. It is also regarded as a traditional form of assurance for workers and a concept that has dominated employment relations until recently (Zekic, 2016). According to (Zacher & Frese, 2007) The security and stability of the position significantly impact employees' mental health and job satisfaction. Job security is more significant than promotional opportunities to applicant attraction (Hauswald et al., 2016).

Despite that, few companies show job security on social media. This is because the employment contract terms usually involve the company's confidence and employees' privacy, which are considered sensitive and unsuitable for public release. Additionally, "security" is a subjective characteristic, and a change in employees' subjective assessment of their job security (Neumark D., 2000). Job insecurity has a significant impact on employees' work attitudes, work adaptation, and organizational withdrawal behavior, and this complexity and depth are difficult to fully display on social media (Jeanne M. Brett & Fritz Drasgow, 2002).

4.1.3 Salary and Benefits

Another employer brand attributes labeled as 'Salary and Benefits' refer to information about the company's salary level, compensation benefits, and hybrid working style. This type aligns with the economic value defined by (Berthon et al., 2005) and adds a new trend of hybrid working. Hybrid working is the "combination of working both from an office and from home wherever the roles will allow and wherever they work best" (Ateeq, 2022).

From an employer's perspective, companies often hesitate to display this information on social media publicly. Firstly, salary information is highly sensitive and competitive (Cullen & Perez-Truglia, 2023). Publicizing it can lead to internal dissatisfaction and comparisons, affecting employee satisfaction (Card D. et al., 2012). Secondly, revealing salary and benefits can complicate recruitment and market

competition. Competitors might use this information to poach top talent, increasing the risk of talent loss. Additionally, significant variations in salaries across different positions and regions can lead to misunderstandings if uniformly displayed. Finally, salary details are typically discussed during recruitment interviews and internal communications, not through brief social media posts.

From job seekers' perspective, they have higher expectations for salary transparency, as 0515 complained, "It's kind of weird to me that they don't show the salary on the vacancy." 0523 also called for salary transparency in job ads, "*you just have to be transparent*". Job seekers tend to avoid situations with high ambiguity because it negatively impacts their trust in the organization and leads to unrealistic expectations about salary offers (Kuhn, 2024). Integrating salary transparency into job posts may help employers attract job seekers who prioritize economic value.

4.1.4 Brand Image and Reputation

The EB attributes labeled 'Brand Image and Reputation' are merged from the initial model 'Brand Image' and 'Corporate Reputation'. Although brand image and reputation are two different concepts, we merged these attributes because they are both recognized as valuable intangible assets that manifest themselves in a corporation's operations (Ettenson R. & Knowles J., 2008). This type of content usually includes information about the company's brand image, market reputation, and public perception of the company.

We have explained the importance of how brand image and reputation attract job seekers in Chapter 2.1. Here, we argue that companies must be cautious when displaying this information on social media. According to Davies and Chun (2002), brand image and reputation are the result of a company's long-term efforts and require continuous maintenance and positive publicity. The perception of the brand image and reputation is influenced by the organization's strategy in a market-oriented approach (Urde & Greyser, 2016). Companies can showcase their brand image and reputation by issuing press releases, organizing events, and publishing positive customer testimonials, rather than just relying on short social media posts.

4.2 Employer Brand Posts

Looking at the types of posts that employers should do on their social media, in order to develop a strong employer brand and be attractive to job seekers, our interviews revealed 9 types of posts: products and service, innovative projects, knowledge sharing and industry insights, employee posts, corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate culture, work environment, learning and growth, and job posting. We will elaborate on each post type hereafter, including figures demonstrating each type of post observed and discussed in the interviews. Additionally, we will also address the negative content within some employer brand post types, as observed by the interviewees.

Exemplar quotations:	Employer Brand Posts
Second order codes	Exemplar quotations:
Products and Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I got a an ad for sunglass brand. And they created a filter on Instagram where you can see their designs on your face. So you can see how they look before you buy them. And that is very smartly done.(0515b) • That attract my attention, such as, because I use this product before so I was more interested in and I'm gonna see what is so there's the it achievement about this even more. (0515c)
Innovative Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was really interested in because they they're very innovative projects (0513a) • I really value if they can really create value in creative sectors or in like, if they can bring something new, something innovative (0522a)
Knowledge Sharing and Industry Insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I really liked here was this kind of things, which gives me new information that I cannot really access easily. So it's maybe some of the knowledge that they're sharing something that they've researched.(0515a) • I really want to reach out information about the sector analysis or something, those companies are creating really good reports. So that's nice.(0522a)
Employee Posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They show their team members, and the employee,Oh, maybe this is our analyst, this is our CEO or whatever. And he's great, because he's doing these these these design tasks.Like seeing that they really value the team that work for the company. (0514b) • So definitely employee posts like they're more impactful if it's personalized and not just the generic (0527a)
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If they would have attended a charity event or like a sustainability event, that would be good (0515b) • The corporate social responsibility is is way more important than a few years ago (0611)
Company Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company culture that he's leading in his department might be very pleasant to work in.(0522c) • I would say there's value where you try to share your company values like company values post, that's something (0528)
Work Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to know more about how does the day to day life look like or look like or kind of the work environment that they have (0515a) • I would really take a look at that and see if there's a nice work environment or it's really stressful or toxic (0522b)
Learning and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel like I'm learning also, or I feel like I'm that aligns very much with my interests (0524) • learning and growth and career opportunities that are the most important things. So yeah, we see that on social media also when we look at the competitors (0611) • It is important to me that there's an opportunity for growth.(0515b)
Job Post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually I go to the job section. And. And when and I look at the job offering (0514b) • Mostly I will go to Instagram, well see all the posts about job offerings, job alert (0517)

Table 4.2 Exemplar quotations: Employer Brand Posts

4.2.1 Products and Service

The first type of post labeled as ‘Products and Services’ is a type of social media update that showcases the products or services offered by a company, often highlighting new releases, partnerships, or significant achievements related to these offerings. For example, in Figure 4.2.1, Tony's Choclonely is announcing its launch at Walmart, the largest retailer worldwide.

This type of post aligns with the initial model factor, ‘Functional Brand Posts’, which aims to inform and excite followers about the availability of their product in a major retail outlet, thus potentially increasing brand visibility and encouraging purchases. According to Backhaus & Tikoo (2004), employer brand building requires "external marketing" to attract target groups and support and enhance product or company brands. Products and services posts comprehensively contain a company's latest techniques, leading market position, and adherence to marketing trends. All of this information builds up a strong employer brand through the product brand (Banerjee et al., 2020b). However, when the posts contain a higher proposition of commercial information, as 0517 highlighted, “*The one is like, chocolates. chocolates are more commercial, It's crazy about chocolate*” it will negatively impact job seekers, causing them to stop browsing the company's social media..



Figure 4.1.1 Products and Service Demo

4.2.2 Innovative Projects

A second type of post that helps to build a strong employer brand and track job seekers' attention is labeled as 'innovative projects'. This refers to the extent to which companies signal their innovativeness, and embeddedness in a creative and catchy industry environment. For example, the figure 4.1.2 demonstrates bunq, showcasing their activity to create the future of AI. It aims to highlight the company's commitment to innovative projects and a dynamic, collaborative environment.

The innovativeness also aligns with initial model the factor contained in 'interest value'. According to Berthon et al. (2005), interest value includes exciting work, creative drive and innovative products, directly reflecting the company's innovation advantages. Lievens and Highhouse (2003) also emphasized that symbolic brand attributes, such as innovation are important factors for companies to attract and retain talent. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) pointed out that employer brand building needs to attract and retain top talents by demonstrating the company's unique value and innovation capabilities.

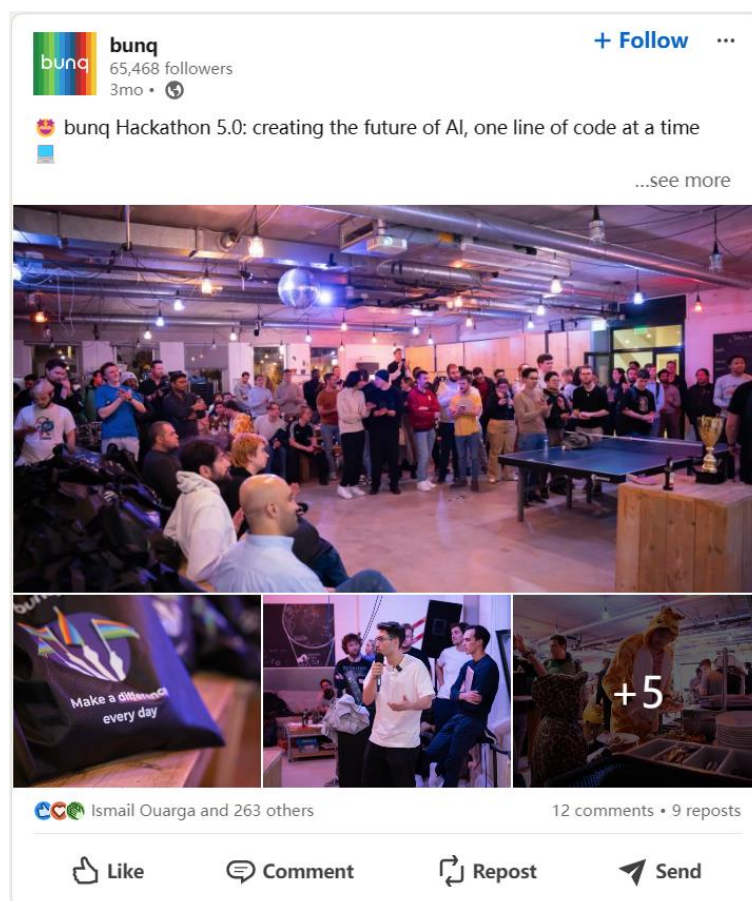


Figure 4.1.2 Innovative Projects Demo

4.2.3 Knowledge Sharing and Industry Insights

The third type of post labeled as 'Knowledge Sharing and Industry Insights' refers to educational posts that provide educational content (e.g., tutorials, guides, case studies) and market trends (e.g., industry

news, market analysis, new technology introductions), designed to enhance the company's professional image and the audience's knowledge level by providing valuable information and insights. For example, Figure 4.2.3 demonstrates a KPMG post that provides information on building resilient digital ecosystems through the power of digital trust. Its purpose is to share industry insights on cyber resilience, enhancing the company's professional image and providing valuable knowledge to the audience.

This post type also partly aligns with the initial model factor, 'Educational Brand Posts'. According to Tafesse and Wien (2017), educational brand posts are intended to educate consumers by providing information about skills or broader industry developments in product and service applications. These posts help job seekers acquire new skills and expose them to broader industry trends and developments, increasing their perception and interest in the company.



Figure 4.1.4 Knowledge Sharing and Industry Insights Demo

4.2.4 Employee Posts

The fourth type of post, labeled 'Employee Posts,' usually includes displaying employee achievements, profiles, testimonials, and activity updates such as rewards or promotions. For example, the figure shows

three generations of aircraft engineers in a family, highlighting their passion and dedication to the profession. This post aims to celebrate employee contributions and personal stories, fostering a sense of community and loyalty within the company.

We labeled this post type exactly the same as the initial model. According to Tafesse and Wien (2017), employee posts can enhance the company's transparency and authenticity by showing employees' achievements, profiles, and dynamics and increase job seekers' trust and identification with the company. Potential applicants were more attracted when the posts provided information about individual employees than about the organization (Van Hove & Lievens, 2007) 0611 also validated this point: "Because *it's authentic, it's a real person's story, telling about his journey attracts new candidates.*"



Figure 4.1.5 Employee Posts Demo

4.2.5 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The fifth type of post, labeled 'Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR),' provides information about sustainability and CSR initiatives to demonstrate the company's commitment to social responsibility. For example, Figure 4.2.5 shows Tesla's integrated ecosystem to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy. This post highlights Tesla's dedication to creating a sustainable future through innovative solutions in various areas, including solar energy, energy storage, electric vehicles, and more.

CSR is a key EB attribute now commonly posted on social media. Therefore, we consider it as a type of employer brand post. Almost every interviewee covered this topic during the interview, From employer

perspective, an employer brand manager also testifies that *“the corporate social responsibility is way more important than a few years ago.”* CSR activities can not only enhance the company’s brand image by showing the company’s contributions to society and the environment but also attract more job seekers who pay attention to social responsibility(Andruszkiewicz et al., 2024). By showing its social responsibility and values, companies can enhance trust and identification with job seekers and further enhance the attractiveness of their employer brand. In the research by Berthon et al. (2005), CSR activities significantly contribute to the economic value dimension, including job security and career development opportunities, which are key factors that job seekers pay attention to.

Nevertheless, companies should avoid greenwashing, defined as *“the intersection of two firm behaviors: poor environmental performance and positive communication about environmental performance”* (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). There is evidence that greenwashing evokes impressions of hypocrisy and insincerity(Carlini et al., 2019). In our interview, 0527 also remarked, *“There are many companies right now using things like greenwashing just to promote products in the market. What is happening to me with this? I'm saturated. Like, I don't believe it anymore.”*

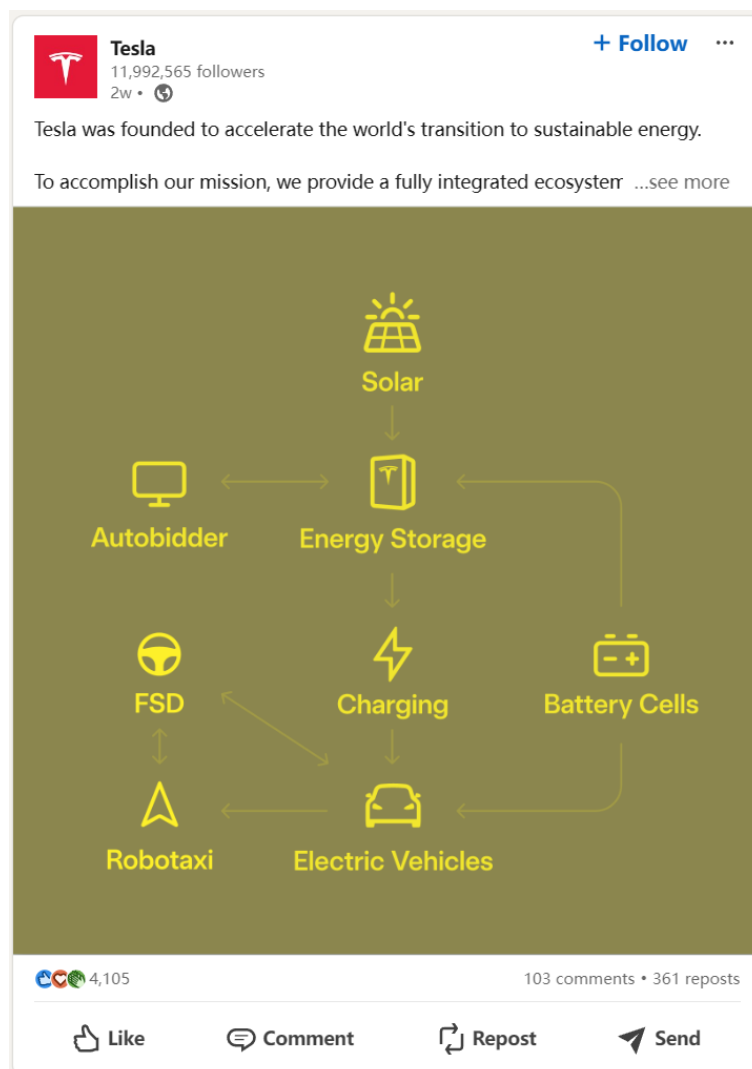


Figure 4.1.6 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Demo

4.2.6 Corporate Culture

The sixth post type, ‘Corporate Culture,’ discusses the shared values, beliefs, and behaviors that shape how employees interact and work together within an organization. For example, Figure 4.2.6 showcases Nike's "Coach the Dream" event, highlighting their commitment to inspiring and supporting youth coaches. This post reflects Nike's corporate values of passion, teamwork, and belief in potential.

This post type conveys the same employer brand attribute ‘culture’ introduced in the initial model, which we have refined to ‘corporate culture’ based on interviewees' terminology. According to Schein (1990), corporate culture is a set of shared assumptions that are formed by employees when solving internal and external problems in the company. Company culture is an important factor affecting employee behavior and company performance. In addition, Chatman & O’Reilly (2016) discussed the importance of cultural fit in employee selection, indicating that job seekers are more inclined to choose companies that match their values. Despite that, communication about culture should be careful to avoid off-putting effects. 0527 remarked that “It's a red flag to campaign culture like ‘we are family’, the company and family comparison. It's like they want you to do everything, such as overtime hours.”

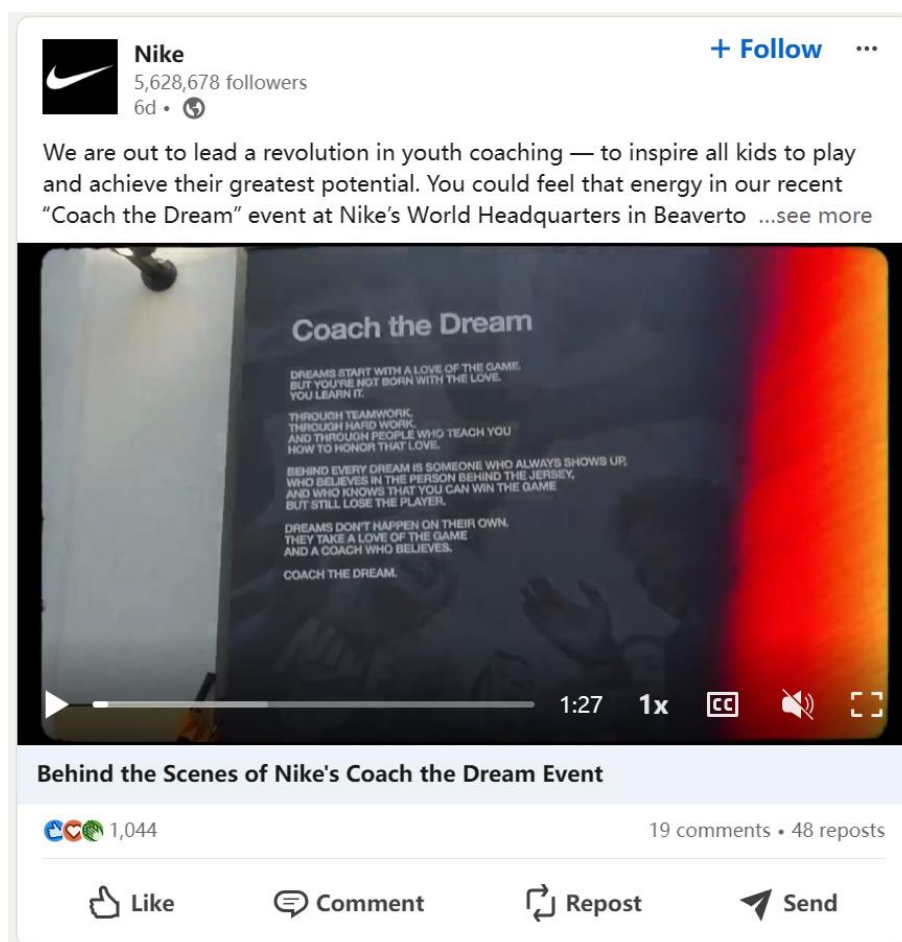


Figure 4.1.7 Company Culture Demo

4.2.7 Work Environment

The seventh post type we labeled ‘Work Environment’ refers to the physical and psychological

conditions in which employees perform their job duties, including the office facilities, work tools, and overall atmosphere. For example, Figure 4.2.7 showcases Google's post about Accessibility Awareness Month, highlighting its efforts to support its employees and emphasizing Google's commitment to creating an inclusive work environment. This illustrates the company's focus on the well-being of its workforce.

This post type partly aligns with the 'company life post' from the initial model. The physical work environment have a direct impact on employees' job satisfaction and productivity (Kamarulzaman et al., 2011). By showcasing its superior office environment and facilities, a company can enhance job seekers' trust and identification with the company, further increasing the attractiveness of its employer brand (Vischer, 2008). 0515b noted, "The physical infrastructure of the company or the office, how the office looks from the inside, I want equipment, the beauty. I want it to look like professional but also approachable."



Figure 4.1.8 Work Environment Demo

4.2.8 Learning and Growth

The eighth post type, labeled 'Learning and Growth,' refers to the posts about career growth opportunities, professional experiences, and future prospects within the company. Figure 4.2.8 showcases Unilever's post about its upcoming masterclass and highlights opportunities for career development and professional growth within the company.

This type conveys the employer brand attribute ‘development value’ in the initial model. Career development opportunities have an important impact on employees' job satisfaction and long-term career success (Noe et al., 2014). By showing their learning and growth opportunities, companies can enhance job seekers' attraction and identification with the company and further enhance the competitiveness of their employer brand. The ‘learning and growth’ posts are more career-oriented rather than the ‘knowledge sharing and industry insights’ posts, which focus on the company’s expertise and marketing trends.



Figure 4.1.9 Learning and Growth Demo

4.2.9 Job Posting

The last type of post we found, labeled ‘Job Posting,’ refers to job openings and ads that inform job seekers about available positions. Figure 4.2.9 showcases Pon Power's post advertising for a Technical Trainer. The image communicates job opportunities and the company's commitment to professional development.

According to research by Dineen & Allen (2016), effective job postings and recruitment advertisements can significantly increase job seekers' interest in the company and willingness to apply. Job seekers respond more to cultural information in job postings when alternative sources of information about firm culture are less available (Pacelli et al., 2022). Therefore, well-crafted job postings that highlight both

job specifics and cultural aspects can greatly enhance the employer's attractiveness to potential applicants.



Figure 4.1.10 Job Post Demo

4.3 Content Distribution Strategy

Throughout the interview process, in addition to the aforementioned findings, we observed that the interviewees also mentioned platform selection, post format, and the language used in the posts. We noticed that these factors also impact job seekers' perceptions of an employer brand. In the selective coding phase, we named this “content distribution strategy,” which illustrates how an employer strategically plans to distribute their social media posts. Hereafter, we will explain each component and how it influences job seekers' intentions with a table of exemplar quotations.

In terms of ‘platform selection’, most respondents mentioned that LinkedIn would be the first priority for job information screening, as it is easier to interact directly with employers and the information content is more complete. In addition, many people mentioned that they would go to the company's official website to find information before LinkedIn. Since the official website is not a social platform, it is not within the scope of this research. Some respondents also mentioned that young users may give

priority to Instagram because it is used more frequently in daily life. Many brands have better brand personality display on Instagram. Although this brand image is more general and not specific for employer brands, it is still proved to make a positive impact to job seekers.

Job seekers prioritize 'content format' in the following order: video, pictures, text. Short videos and reels are the most attractive and garner the highest views. For graphic information, an eye-catching theme and the inclusion of a person's image increase engagement. Text information, such as articles, is the least preferred, but an attractive or relevant theme can still draw interest.

People from different countries have different views on posting 'language'. Local students do not have an intuitive feeling about this because they are able to speak Dutch and English. However, when international students see information in Dutch, they will feel distant from such employers. On the one hand, they may feel that the employer has language requirements for the corresponding position, and on the other hand, they may think that such a company is not international enough.

Exemplar quotations:	Content distributaion strategy
Second order codes	Exemplar quotations:
Platforms Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel like LinkedIn is more details, more professional, maybe also different audience.(0513a) • I would definitely look up on Instagram, because they have a super big profile that they post, like, daily. I think that people from my age and younger would first look on Instagram.(0515b) • I think Instagram is one of the most popular ones out there (0522c) • if it's a company that is really active on LinkedIn, to me, it's really positive.(0514b)
Post Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like video contents more or for just these general posts (0524) • I like the videos better than pictures, in my opinion (0515b) • I would like to see this title on a picture and then it would probably grab my attention more rather than reading something like this, too many texts (0521) • I would look at that often see that they are sharing mostly articles trying to promote themselves, which is not something I would look at.(0523)
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if I'm gonna speak Dutch at the job I would like it to be in Dutch if I'm more international I would like it to be in English okay, depends on the fact. But both are fine for me I guess not really an issue (0522b) • The problem about this company is they're only sharing posts in Dutch. That's kind of sad(0522a) • If I see Dutch. Switch.(0521)

Table 4.3 Exemplar quotations: Content Distributaion Strategy

5. Discussion

5.1 Conclusion

In this research, we sought to explain how employers' social media content influences job seekers' perceptions of employer brand. The extant literature suggested that employer branding attributes and social media engagement influence the strength of an employer's brand and help it be attractive to job seekers. Based on 21 interviews, we conclude that the most important elements of employer branding attributes directly impact job seekers are the following: job-person fit, job security, salary and benefits, and brand image and reputation. At the same time, social media serves as a medium, conveying EB attributes through employer brand posts to job seekers. Regarding employer brand posts, the important posts are products and services, innovative projects, knowledge sharing and industry insights, employee posts, corporate social responsibility (CSR), corporate culture, work environment, learning and growth, and job posting. On top of this, we inductively derived from our interviews that it is also important to consider platform selection, post format, and language usage in content distribution strategy to influence job seeker intention more effectively. In Figure 5.1, we provide an updated conceptual model that summarizes our insights about social media posts' direct and indirect impacts on job seekers.

Moreover, we introduce a new concept, "employer brand posts," which combines the principles of employer brand and brand posts. Therefore, employer brand posts are defined as concise and recurrent social media updates created by employers to convey their key employment features, aiming to attract, engage, and retain potential job seekers by highlighting key aspects of their employment offerings and organizational culture. This new concept helps to understand and categorize the specific types of social media content that effectively enhance an employer's attractiveness to job seekers.

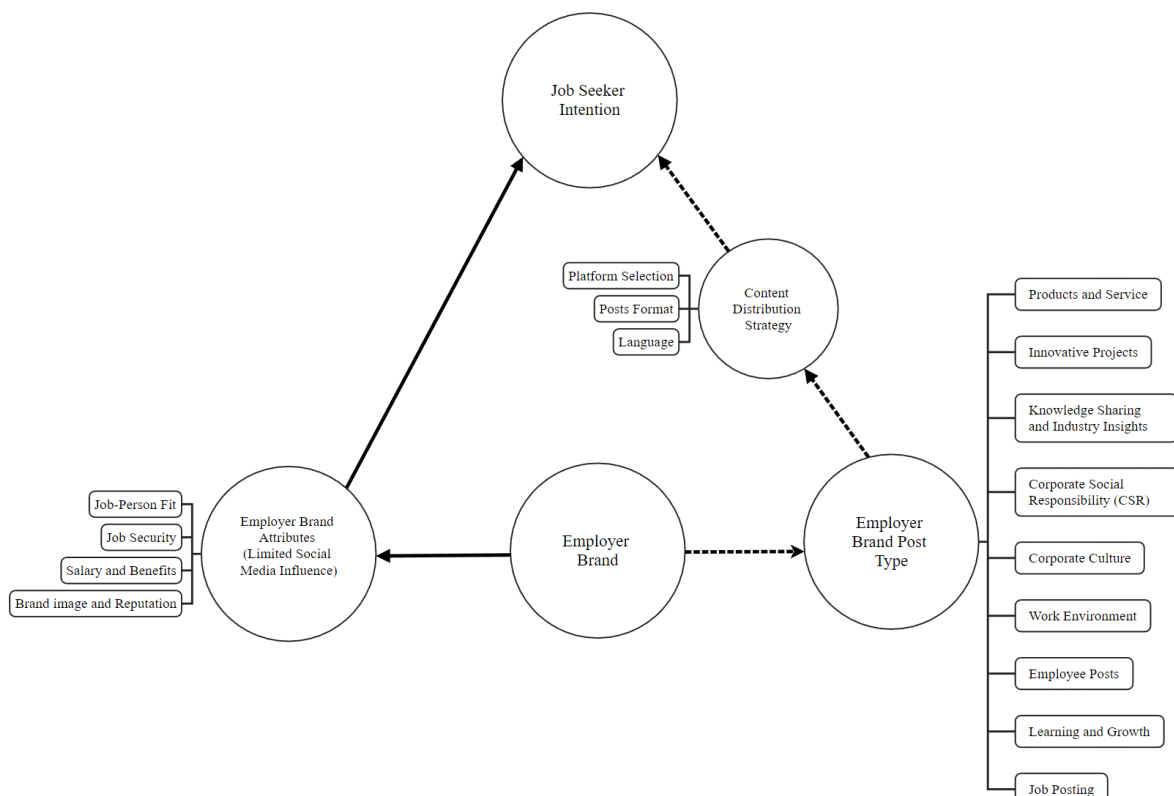


Figure 5.1 Conceptual Model From Findings

5.2 Implications

By exploring EB attributes, this research contributes to the literature by providing different viewpoints from job seekers. It marks a significant advancement in employer branding (EB) research in the direction of digital marketing. At first, we had limited knowledge about how brand posts on social media contribute to employer branding from a content perspective. After research, it is clear that EB attributes are at the core of influencing job seekers. We study how to apply marketing strategies to social media to present EB attributes efficiently to potential talent. Prior research has not defined this before, and we propose the new concept of Employer Brand Posts to define this content intuitively. Our research provides a practical definition and a research-based framework, enriching this academic field and guiding future research.

Practically, this thesis provides employers with a theoretical basis for developing employer brand strategies from job seekers' perceptions and insights for making their content marketing strategies. Additionally, employer brand positions in corporate involve brand marketing, content marketing, HR management, recruitment, and collaboration across various roles. This segmentation framework helps companies formulate a clear division of labor and set quantitative indicators. Furthermore, for EB attributes difficult to communicate via social media, companies can find creative ways to communicate, pilot test merging different types of posts, and attract more potential talents with a balanced combination.

Additionally, it offers a comprehensive guide for job seekers on how to search and evaluate employer content on social media. This article helps job seekers learn about an employer's full image during their job search. It provides detailed guidance on how to browse different employer content on social media, distinguish between promotional information and genuine posts, and assess inclusiveness and openness through company culture posts. After reading, job seekers will have a deeper understanding of each post type and its significance.

5.3 Limitations and Suggestions

Regarding limitations, firstly, our sample was diverse in nationality and gender but limited to master students aged 22-28, which may cause biases. For example, job seekers with different academic qualifications may be concerned with a different EB post type. Secondly, differences in social media usage habits, such as a preference for LinkedIn over Instagram while searching for job information, might make our findings more relevant to LinkedIn than other platforms. Additionally, the limited insights from corporate professionals due to interview challenges may have affected our depth of understanding from the employer's perspective.

For future research, a quantitative approach could prioritize the effectiveness of various EB post types, including the impact of comprehensive posts that merge multiple types. Additionally, it would be valuable to investigate which types of EB posts and keywords deter job seekers and to explore which formats (video, text, image, article) are most effective. Examining which EB post types positively influence current employees' loyalty and retention can offer new insights. Developing clear content differentiation strategies across various platforms will maximize employer branding effectiveness. Finally, ongoing research and adaptation will be essential for employers to stay competitive in attracting and retaining top talent in a dynamic digital landscape.

6. Reference

- Ahmadi, A., Taghipour, A., Fetscherin, M., & Ieamson, S. (2023). Analyzing the influence of celebrities' emotional and rational brand posts. *Spanish Journal of Marketing - ESIC*, 27(1), 117–136. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJME-12-2021-0238>
- Alshathry, S., Clarke, M., & Goodman, S. (2017). The role of employer brand equity in employee attraction and retention: a unified framework. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 25(3), 413–431. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-05-2016-1025>
- Ambler, T., & Barrow, S. (1996). The employer brand. *Journal of Brand Management*, 4(3), 185–206. <https://doi.org/10.1057/bm.1996.42>
- Andruszkiewicz, K., Wierzejski, T., & Siemiński, M. (2024). The Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development Practices on Employer Branding—A Case Study of an International Corporation Operating in Poland. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 16(7). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16072654>
- Archer, C. (2006). *The Role of Corporate Reputation Versus Relationships in Building Employer Brand Equity: the case of a Major Private Hospital*.
- Ateeq, K. (2022). Hybrid Working Method: An Integrative Review. *2022 International Conference on Business Analytics for Technology and Security, ICBATS 2022*. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICBATS54253.2022.9759041>
- Azhar, A., Rehman, N., Majeed, N., & Bano, S. (2024). Employer branding: A strategy to enhance organizational performance. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 116. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2023.103618>
- Backhaus, K., & Tikoo, S. (2004). Conceptualizing and researching employer branding. *Career Development International*, 9(5), 501–517. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13620430410550754>
- Bahri-Ammari, N., Soliman, M., & Salah, O. Ben. (2022). The Impact of Employer Brand on Job Seekers' Attitudes and Intentions: The Moderating Role of Value Congruence and Social Media. *Corporate Reputation Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41299-022-00154-8>
- Banerjee, P., Saini, G. K., & Kalyanaram, G. (2020a). The role of brands in recruitment: mediating role of employer brand equity. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 58(2), 173–196. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12209>
- Banerjee, P., Saini, G. K., & Kalyanaram, G. (2020b). The role of brands in recruitment: mediating role of employer brand equity. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 58(2), 173–196. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1744-7941.12209>
- Basu, K., & Palazzo, G. (2008). Corporate Social Responsibility: A Process Model of Sensemaking. In *Source: The Academy of Management Review* (Vol. 33, Issue 1). <https://about.jstor.org/terms>
- Baum, M., & Kabst, R. (2014). The effectiveness of recruitment advertisements and recruitment websites: Indirect and interactive effects on applicant attraction. *Human Resource Management*, 53(3), 353–378. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21571>
- Behrends, T., Baur, M., & Zierke, L. (2020). Much Ado About Little: A Critical Review of the Employer Branding Concept. *Source: Management Review*, 31(1), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.2307/26996599>
- Berthon, P., Ewing, M., & Lian Hah, L. (2005). Captivating company: dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding. *International Journal of Advertising*, 24(2), 151–172. www.warc.com
- Bhasin, J., Mushtaq, S., & Gupta, S. (2019). Engaging Employees Through Employer Brand: An Empirical Evidence. *Management and Labour Studies*, 44(4), 417–432. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0258042X19870322>
- Biswas, M. K., & Suar, D. (2016). Antecedents and Consequences of Employer Branding. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 136(1), 57–72. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2502-3>
- Biswas, M., & Suar, D. (2013). Which Employees' Values Matter Most in the Creation of Employer Branding? *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 7(1), 93–102.
- Bree, R., & Gallagher, G. (2016). *Using Microsoft Excel to code and thematically analyse qualitative data: a simple, cost-effective approach*. 8(2). [http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/\[281\]](http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/[281])
- Cable, D. M., & DeRue, D. S. (2002). The convergent and discriminant validity of subjective fit perceptions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(5), 875–884. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.5.875>

- Cable, D. M., & Turban, D. B. (2003). The Value of Organizational Reputation in the Recruitment Context: A Brand-Equity Perspective. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 33*(11), 2244–2266. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2003.tb01883.x>
- Card D., Alexandre M., Enrico M., & Emmanuel S. (2012). Inequality at work: The effect of peer salaries on job satisfaction. *American Economic Review, 102*(6), 2981–3003. www.sacbee.com/statepay
- Carlini, J., Grace, D., France, C., & Lo Iacono, J. (2019). The corporate social responsibility (CSR) employer brand process: integrative review and comprehensive model. *Journal of Marketing Management, 35*(1–2), 182–205. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2019.1569549>
- Chapman, D. S., Uggerslev, K. L., Carroll, S. A., Piasentin, K. A., & Jones, D. A. (2005). Applicant attraction to organizations and job choice: A meta-analytic review of the correlates of recruiting outcomes. In *Journal of Applied Psychology* (Vol. 90, Issue 5, pp. 928–944). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.90.5.928>
- Chatman, J. A., & O'Reilly, C. A. (2016). Paradigm lost: Reinvigorating the study of organizational culture. In *Research in Organizational Behavior* (Vol. 36, pp. 199–224). JAI Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2016.11.004>
- Chhabra, N. L., & Sharma, S. (2014). Employer branding: Strategy for improving employer attractiveness. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 22*(1), 48–60. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-09-2011-0513>
- Chi, H., Yeh, H., & Guo, T. (2018). Salary or job interest? How salary and job interest moderates the willingness to apply for a job. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration, 10*(1), 64–78. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJBA-09-2017-0086>
- Crişan, C., & Boştun, D. (2017). Digital Storytelling and Employer Branding. An Exploratory Connection. *Management Dynamics in the Knowledge Economy, 5*(2), 273–287. <https://doi.org/10.25019/mdke/5.2.06>
- Cullen, Z., & Perez-Truglia, R. (2023). The salary taboo privacy norms and the diffusion of information. *Journal of Public Economics, 222*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2023.104890>
- de Marcellis-Warin N., & Teodoresco S. (2012). *Corporate Reputation: Is Your Most Strategic Asset at Risk?*
- De Vries, L., Gensler, S., & LeeFlang, P. S. H. (2012). Popularity of Brand Posts on Brand Fan Pages: An Investigation of the Effects of Social Media Marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing, 26*(2), 83–91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2012.01.003>
- Delmas, M. A., & Burbano, V. C. (2011). The Drivers of Greenwashing. *California Management Review, 54*(1), 64–87.
- Dineen, B. R., & Allen, D. G. (2016). Third party employment branding: Human capital inflows and outflows following 'best places to work' certifications. *Academy of Management Journal, 59*(1), 90–112. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.1091>
- Edwards, M. R. (2009). An integrative review of employer branding and OB theory. In *Personnel Review* (Vol. 39, Issue 1, pp. 5–23). <https://doi.org/10.1108/00483481011012809>
- Ettenson R., & Knowles J. (2008). Dont confuse reputation with brand. *MIT Sloan Management Review, 49*(2), 19–21.
- Gupta, S., & Saini, G. K. (2020). Information Source Credibility and Job Seekers' Intention to Apply: The Mediating Role of Brands. *Global Business Review, 21*(3), 743–762. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150918778910>
- Hadi, N. U., & Ahmed, S. (2018). Role of employer branding dimensions on employee retention: Evidence from educational sector. *Administrative Sciences, 8*(3). <https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci8030044>
- Hamzah, Z. L., Abdul Wahab, H., & Waqas, M. (2021). Unveiling drivers and brand relationship implications of consumer engagement with social media brand posts. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing, 15*(2), 336–358. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-05-2020-0113>
- Hauswald, H., Hack, A., Kellermanns, F. W., & Patzelt, H. (2016). Attracting New Talent to Family Firms: Who Is Attracted and Under What Conditions? *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice, 40*(5), 963–989. <https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12153>
- Holton J.A. (2010). The Coding Process and Its Challenges. *The Grounded Theory Review, 9*(1), 21–38.
- Huang, W., Yuan, C., & Li, M. (2019). Person-job fit and innovation behavior: Roles of job involvement and career commitment. *Frontiers in Psychology, 10*(MAY). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01134>

- Huseynova, A., & Matošková, J. (2022). Sustainable HRM Practices for a Stronger Employer Brand: Leveraging Organizational Culture. *Scientific Papers of the University of Pardubice, Series D: Faculty of Economics and Administration*, 30(3). <https://doi.org/10.46585/sp30031605>
- Ibrahim, N. S., Hashim, J., & Rahman, R. A. (2018). The Impact of Employer Branding and Career Growth on Talent Retention: The Mediating Role of Recruitment Practices in the Malaysian Public Sector. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(6). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v8-i6/4300>
- Jeanne M. Brett, & Fritz Drasgow. (2002). *The Psychology of Work Theoretically Based Empirical Research*.
- Jeffrey R. Edwards. (2006). *Person-Job Fit: A Self-Assessment Exercise Username: Submit Faculty Register Buy Case Now*.
- Jendriks, T. (2023). *200 Recruitment Statistics: Trends, Problems, and Strategies*. <https://flair.hr/en/blog/recruitment-statistics/#social-media-recruiting-statistics>
- Joglekar, J., & Tan, C. S. L. (2022). The impact of LinkedIn posts on employer brand perception and the mediating effects of employer attractiveness and corporate reputation. *Journal of Advances in Management Research*, 19(4), 624–650. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JAMR-10-2021-0343>
- Jørgensen U. (2001). Grounded Theory: Methodology and Theory Construction. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 6396–6399.
- Kamarulzaman, N., Saleh, A. A., Hashim, S. Z., Hashim, H., & Abdul-Ghani, A. A. (2011). An overview of the influence of physical office environments towards employees. *Procedia Engineering*, 20, 262–268. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proeng.2011.11.164>
- Kissel, P., & Buttgen, M. (2015). Using social media to communicate employer brand identity: The impact on corporate image and employer attractiveness. *Journal of Brand Management*, 22(9), 755–777. <https://doi.org/10.1057/bm.2015.42>
- Klimkiewicz, K., & Oltra, V. (2017). Does CSR Enhance Employer Attractiveness? The Role of Millennial Job Seekers' Attitudes. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 24(5), 449–463. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1419>
- Kontoghiorghes, C. (2016). Linking high performance organizational culture and talent management: satisfaction/motivation and organizational commitment as mediators. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(16), 1833–1853. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1075572>
- Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: A meta-analysis of person-job, person-organization, person-group, and person-supervisor FIT. In *Personnel Psychology* (Vol. 58, Issue 2, pp. 281–342). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2005.00672.x>
- Kuhn, K. M. (2024). Ambiguity in advertised compensation_ Recruiting implications of nominal compliance with pay transparency legislation_. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 109(4), 599–609.
- Kumar H. (1999). Organizational Culture in Action. *Paradigm*, 3(1), 53–62.
- Kumari, P., Dutta, M., & Bhagat, M. (2020). Employer Branding and its Role in Effective Recruitment. *AIMS International Journal of Management*, 14(2), 89–100. <https://doi.org/10.26573/2020.14.2.2>
- Lee, Y., Cho, S. Y., Sun, R., & Li, C. (2020). Public responses to employee posts on social media: the effects of message valence, message content, and employer reputation. *Internet Research*, 31(3), 1040–1060. <https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-05-2020-0240>
- Li, C. K., & Hung, C. H. (2010). An examination of the mediating role of person-job fit in relations between information literacy and work outcomes. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 22(5), 306–318. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13665621011053217>
- Lievens, F., & Highhouse, S. (2003). The relation of instrumental and symbolic attributes to a company's attractiveness as an employer. *Personnel Psychology*, 56(1), 75–102. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2003.tb00144.x>
- Martin, P. Y., & Turner, B. A. (1986). Grounded Theory and Organizational Research. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 22(2), 141–157. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002188638602200207>
- Minh Ha, N., Vinh Luan, N., & Minh Trung, N. (2021). Employer attractiveness: Measurement scale development and validation. *Chi Minh City Open University Journal of Science*, 11(1), 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.46223/HCMCOUJS>
- Mukul, K., & Itam, U. J. (2023). Leveraging Social Media to Build Online Social Capital and Employer Brand. *NHRD Network Journal*, 16(3), 292–302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/26314541231170445>

- Myrden, S. E., & Kelloway, K. (2015). Young workers' perception of brand image: main and moderating effects. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness*, 2(3), 267–281. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2014-0055>
- Nagle, T., & Pope, A. (2013). Understanding social media business value, a prerequisite for social media selection. *Journal of Decision Systems*, 22(4), 283–297. <https://doi.org/10.1080/12460125.2014.846543>
- Neumark D. (2000). *Changes in job stability and job security: A collective effort to untangle, reconcile, and interpret the evidence*.
- Newbury, W., Gardberg, N. A., & Sanchez, J. I. (2014). Employer attractiveness in latin america: The association among foreignness, internationalization and talent recruitment. *Journal of International Management*, 20(3), 327–344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intman.2014.01.001>
- Noe, R. A., Clarke, A. D. M., & Klein, H. J. (2014). Learning in the Twenty-First-Century Workplace. In *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* (Vol. 1, pp. 245–275). Annual Reviews Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091321>
- Nolan, K. P., Gohlke, M., Gilmore, J., & Rosiello, R. (2013). Examining how corporations use online job ads to communicate employer brand image information. In *Corporate Reputation Review* (Vol. 16, Issue 4, pp. 300–312). <https://doi.org/10.1057/crr.2013.19>
- Pacelli, J., Shi, T., & Zou, Z. (2022). *Communicating Corporate Culture in Labor Markets: Evidence from Job Postings*. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4235342>
- Palmberger M., & Gingrich A. (2014). *Qualitative comparative practices: Dimensions, cases and strategies*.
- Pratt, M. G. (2009). For the Lack of a Boilerplate: Tips on Writing up (and Reviewing) Qualitative Research. *Academy Of Management Journal*, 52(5), 856–862.
- Priyadarshini, C., Kumar, Y. L. N., & Jha, R. R. (2017). Employer attractiveness through social media: A phenomenological study. *Qualitative Report*, 22(4), 969–983. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2017.2663>
- Reiners B. (2022). *Social Media Recruiting: A Complete Guide (With Examples)*. Built In.
- Roberts, R. E. (2020). Qualitative interview questions: Guidance for novice researchers. In *Qualitative Report* (Vol. 25, Issue 9, pp. 3185–3203). Peace and Conflict Studies. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4640>
- Santiago, J. (2019). The relationship between brand attractiveness and the intent to apply for a job: A millennials' perspective. *European Journal of Management and Business Economics*, 28(2), 142–157. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJMBE-12-2018-0136>
- Sivertzen, A. M., Nilsen, E. R., & Olafsen, A. H. (2013). Employer branding: Employer attractiveness and the use of social media. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 22(7), 473–483. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-09-2013-0393>
- Skjott Linneberg, M., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: a synthesis guiding the novice. In *Qualitative Research Journal* (Vol. 19, Issue 3, pp. 259–270). Emerald Group Holdings Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012>
- Špoljarić, A., & Ozretić Došen, Đ. (2023). Employer brand and international employer brand: literature review. In *Corporate Communications* (Vol. 28, Issue 4, pp. 671–682). Emerald Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CCIJ-11-2022-0141>
- Szymańska A., Zarządzenia K., & Wrocławiu W. (2014). *THE IMPACT OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE ON EMPLOYER BRANDING*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338954403>
- Tafesse, W., & Wien, A. (2017). A framework for categorizing social media posts. *Cogent Business and Management*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2017.1284390>
- Theurer, C. P., Tumasjan, A., Welpe, I. M., & Lievens, F. (2018). Employer Branding: A Brand Equity-based Literature Review and Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 20(1), 155–179. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12121>
- Turban, D. B., & Cable, D. M. (2003). Firm reputation and applicant pool characteristics. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 24(6), 733–751. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.215>
- Urde, M., & Greyser, S. A. (2016). The Corporate Brand Identity and Reputation Matrix - The case of the Nobel Prize. *Journal of Brand Management*, 23(1), 89–117. <https://doi.org/10.1057/bm.2015.49>
- Valentina Della Corte, Gianluigi Mangia, Roberto Micera, & Giuseppina Zamparelli. (2011). Strategic Employer Branding: Brand and Image Management as a Tool of Attractiveness for Talented Capital. *China-USA Business Review*, 10(12), 1231–1252.

- Van Hoye, G., & Lievens, F. (2007). Investigating Web-based recruitment sources: Employee testimonials vs word-of-mouth. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 15(4), 372–382. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2389.2007.00396.x>
- VanMeter, R., Syrdal, H. A., Powell-Mantel, S., Grisaffe, D. B., & Nesson, E. T. (2018). Don't Just "Like" Me, Promote Me: How Attachment and Attitude Influence Brand Related Behaviors on Social Media. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 43, 83–97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2018.03.003>
- Vischer, J. C. (2008). Towards an environmental psychology of workspace: How people are affected by environments for work. *Architectural Science Review*, 51(2), 97–108. <https://doi.org/10.3763/asre.2008.5114>
- Weigelt, K., & Camerer, C. (1988). Reputation and Corporate Strategy: A Review of Recent Theory and Applications. In *Management Journal* (Vol. 9, Issue 5).
- Weyland, A. (2011). How to attract people who are in sync with your culture: ... and so improve productivity, commitment and organizational performance. *Human Resource Management International Digest*, 19(4), 29–31. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09670731111140739>
- Wilden, R., Gudergan, S., & Lings, I. (2010). Employer branding: Strategic implications for staff recruitment. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 26(1–2), 56–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02672570903577091>
- Williams, M., & Moser, T. (2019). The Art of Coding and Thematic Exploration in Qualitative Research. In *International Management Review* (Vol. 15, Issue 1).
- Wolf, M., Sims, Julian, & Yang. (2015). *LOOK WHO'S CO-CREATING: WEB 2.0 TECHNOLOGIES EFFECTS ON EMPLOYER BRANDING*. <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/policies.html>
- Zacher, H., & Frese, M. (2007). *Remaining Time and Opportunities at Work: Relationships Between Age, Work Characteristics, and Occupational Future Time Perspective*.
- Zekic, N. (2016). Job Security or Employment Security: What's in a Name? *European Labour Law Journal*, 7(4), 548–575.

7. Appendices

7.1 Interview Guide

A) Interview Questions (Job Seekers) - 60 mins

Preparation (20 mins):

Before the interview, please research online (especially their social media posts). Identify two contrasting companies. The first company is a potential employer. The second company is one you initially considered, but it seems less attractive after exploration. Later, you will be asked why you intend to apply to these companies, what attracts you, what you have observed on their social media accounts, and what you like and dislike.

Section 1: Discussion about online findings (10 mins)

- Which two companies were you searching for?
- Why do you find this employer (un)attractive?
- What would you do if you wanted to search for more information about this employer?
- Will you search their social media for further information?
- Which information are you looking for, what platform will you use, what else, and why?

Section 2: Discussion about EB attributes (10 mins)

- How do you compare the employer brands of the two companies based on their social media presence?
- Explain why you like their social media and remain interested in their job opportunity and what information you consider most matters to you.
- Explain why you do not like their social media, and what information you think is irrelevant and does not engage you.
- What else information are you looking for that is not mentioned on their social media?

Section 3: Browsing together and discussing the types of social media posts (10 mins)

- Would you show me how you browse the social media of the companies you prepare?
- Which app or platform will you go to first and why?
- Which part would you look at first, and how does it matter to you?
- What types of posts attracts you most? And why?
- Shall we go to the other case? Which types of posts do not interest you, and why?
- Compared to the case you are interested in, which posts do you think are missing in the case you do not prefer?
- Is there any other type of post you think they should post, but they don't?

Section 4: Discussion about the literature findings (10 mins)

- This model is what I found in the literature; the left side is about what attracts you as an employer, and the right side is about the different types of posts. (With definition explanation)
- On the left side, which factors matter to you most? If all issues, do you have priority, from most to least?

- Which factors do you think are least relevant, meaning “I don’t care” when considering an employer or a job?
- Beyond this list, is there any other factor you mentioned that also matters to you?
- On the right side, there are all these types of posts. Which of them have you already observed during your case preparation?
- Which types of posts attract you most and why?
- Which types of posts do you think are irrelevant, or you don’t care?
- Is there any other post type you have seen that we didn’t mention?

Demonstration: Figure 1. Conceptual Model with definition description.

B) Interview Questions (Employer Branding Manager/HR Manager) – 30 mins

Section 1: Recruitment (3 mins)

- How do you recruit new employees?
- Through which channels do you usually post job vacancies or collect applicants' CV?

Section 2: Social Media Posts (10 mins)

- How do you use social media?
- What factors do you think are essential for job seekers to consider your company as an excellent employer?
- What information (employer brand attributes) is included (or avoided) in the posts? Why?
- Which types of posts do you use to engage job seekers, and how do you assess their impact?
- How does your social media content strategy align with your employer branding objectives?

Section 3: Job-related posts vs Generic posts (10 mins)

- How do you balance job-related posts and generic posts on your social media platforms? What factors influence this balance?
- Can you provide examples of job-related posts that draw significant attention or engagement compared to generic posts? What do you think contributed to this difference in response?

Section 4: Conceptual model discussion (7mins)

- Here are some insights gathered from job seeker interviews. Which elements have you already applied?
- Which elements do you think you haven't paid attention to before but now find interesting and worth trying?

7.2 Interview Statement:

This interview is conducted solely for research purposes. The interview process may be recorded, and the content will only be used for research. All answers and personal information provided will not be used for any commercial purposes or disclosed to external parties.

7.3 Data Storage

All data is stored in Google Drive with Original Audio, Transcribed scripts and Interview record.

[Thesis Data - Google Drive](#)

7.4 Coding Scheme

