

# A Study to Ascertain the Relative Worth of the Alluring Employment Factors of Students Pursuing Select Professional Courses in Assam Central University

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## Abstract

In this competitive era attracting and retaining efficient employees has multi-facet importance to the employers. In order to allure efficient employees and retain them employers eventually adopted a marketing strategy 'Employer Branding'. The concept of Employer Branding got popularized during 90s' with emergence of globalization. The present study is an attempt to comprehend the perception of would-be employees regarding select employment factors that they consider vital for taking their employment decision. Thus, the study is designed in order to identify the employment factors that are capable to allure the potential employees and thereafter to gauge their relative weight. The study further tries to compare the perception of the respondents' preferred factor of employment on account of some select demographic variables. The study incorporated 61 B.Tech and B.Pharma students studying in Assam University, Silchar as sample respondents. Structured questionnaire has been used as tool for recording the perception of the respondents and used Average, Standard Deviation, Spearman's Rank Correlation for analyzing the data. Result of the study highlighted that Direct Monetary Benefit is such a factor that has maximum capacity to allure the potential employees and Welfare Facility the least.

**Keywords:** Employer Branding, Employment Decision, India, Perception-Based Study

## 1. Introduction

Employer branding is the modern word for marketers as well as for human resource management. Employer Branding is defined as "targeted long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm (Uthayasuriyan & Vijayalakshmi, 2015). This strategy can be tuned to drive recruitment, retention, and productivity management efforts in modern world for marketers. In literature Employer Brand is a rather new concept, first used in 1996 by Ambler and Barrow, created as a derivative from corporate branding and is the alignment of marketing and human resources. Employer branding aims to

provide organizational members and organizational outsiders with specific (employment) information to increase their experience with an organization and could therefore increase the organizational attractiveness. The term Employer Branding suggests the differentiation of a firm's characteristics as an employer from those of its competitors. The employment brand highlights the unique aspects of the firm's employment offerings or environment (Backhaus & Tickoo, 2004).

Most of the market economies of today's world are facing fierce competition because of internationalization of their business. Fast changing technology and customer preference, increased intervention by the concerned governments over business and use of strategic marketing are other contributing factors which have posed greater

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challenge for the manufacturers and businessmen. One of the newly found solutions for marketers towards all these challenges has been being able to recruit and retain such manpower which is the best in every respect. Till the other day the marketers used to decide about the blend of the pay packets and the fringe benefits on the basis of their past experiences assisted by their imagination. The latest techniques in social science research have turned this challenge of the marketers softer by suggesting them to consult 'would be' employees over the matter. As per this device the employers try to identify the perks and the benefits 'would be' employees may prefer.

The present study aims at not only **identifying the receivables 'would be' employees look for** but also **the relative worth of these receivables** in their eyes. Not to say that once an employer succeeds in noticing the preferences of 'would be' employees it will no more be difficult not only to reduce the cost of production but also to produce the finest quality well in time. A similar achievement is possible for those employers who are engaged in providing services of whatever kind.

The study has been conducted with the help of the perceptions of the students studying their courses of *Bachelor of Technology in Agriculture Engineering, Computer Science Engineering and Electronics and Telecommunication* along with the students studying their *Bachelor of Pharmaceutical Science* course offered by Assam University. The idea behind consulting them over the matter was that it is the B.Tech. and B.Pharma. students whom for the opportunities in the market are much more than the holders of other degrees. The competition among the employers who need to recruit the personnel having such skills to attract such talent in their favor, therefore, will naturally be more. The findings of this study, not to say, may help these employers frame their pay package studded with the cash and the fringe benefits they propose to offer in a befitting manner.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify and select the employment factors capable of alluring the students of select U.G., courses,
2. To measure the relative capability of the select employment factors capable of alluring the students pursuing the select courses offered by Assam University, Silchar, and

3. To compare the perceptions of the sample students over the capability of the select employment factors to allure them on the basis of select demographic backgrounds.

## 3. Review of Literature

Ambler, T. and Barrow, S. (1996) conducted a study on the existence of the employer branding and its components, its importance to the company and its influence over Human Resource policies and the positioning of the employer branding with the help of semi structured deep interviews with the respondents from 27 companies in a variety of industry sector, mostly services. Convenience sampling of clients and contacts were used.

Bonaiuto, M. and et. al., (2013) focused on identifying the Employer Brand attributes which were perceived as particularly relevant for attracting talented people. Three empirical studies were conducted with a sample of 493, 729 and 1605 recent graduates from Italian Universities, respectively. The results indicated that the most idealized brand attributes were related to the future employer's ability to innovate, be committed to social responsibility, be open, be a corporation that values capabilities and knowledge and finally be a place offering different career paths out of which the last three factors in particular have become more important in recent years.

Figuerska, I. and Matuska, E. (2013) found that long term job security, competitive salary and employer's financial health and pleasant working atmosphere are the three most important aspects to attract employees followed by the interesting job content, good work-life balance, career progression opportunities, flexible working hours, convenient location, good training, strong management, quality products or services, international/global career, diversity management, uses of latest technologies and concern with environment etc.

Bajaj, T. and Panchal, R. (2013) did a comparative study of Employer Brand image between ZydusCadila and Cipla company in Indian context. The research was conducted on 60 employees of these two companies holding different positions in their respective companies. For this purpose a frequency and percentage analysis tools were used. The study revealed that Cipla Company's employer provides better career opportunities and future prospects, leadership, strong corporate culture and

satisfactory level of all those receivables to their employees which they are expected to get from their employer as compared to ZydusCadila Company.

Aggarwal. S. (2015) conducted a study on the fresh students namely “Factors determining Employer Branding in India: An Empirical Study of Fresh Management students”. The study had the major objective of finding out the factors determining Employer Branding in the opinion of fresh management students and to find out the most reliable sources of information for employers to communicate the factor which determine the employer brand. Convenience sampling was done for this purpose. A sample of 250 students was targeted and 216 duly filled-in questionnaires were received and considered fit for the data analysis. The responses were captured on a five point Likert scale. Nine factors found in the study which were basic job benefit, overall status of the company, competitiveness and challenge, self-development, future opportunities, emotional judgment, relationship with peers, internal management and ethics and values. The study found that external sources have got much importance to be reliable such as existing employees and experienced people. These sources have got more value than the placement officers and teachers. Independent events and promotions have got better reliability than placement agencies, fellow students and company website.

#### 4. Methodology of the Study

The study is descriptive in nature. And in order to address the requirement of the first objective viz., to identify the factors and its components, a thorough scan of the concern literature was carried out. Keeping in mind that the above exercise of scanning the literature might not have been complete and all those factors and its components which might be at work might not have been identified, a supplementary exercise of consulting the students to be interviewed over the list of the factors and its components was carried out. Thus, it was a blend of the two exercises mentioned above, that ensured the inclusion of almost all the factors and its components in the list of the probe to be carried on.

The source of data for the study was primary in nature. The survey instrument was a structured questionnaire with **thirty two components grouped under eight factors** viz.

*Factors:*

1. ***Direct Monetary Benefits***

Its components were: Basic Pay, Dearness Allowance, Performance Based Incentives, Other allowances [Conveyance Allowance+ Incentives]

2. ***Indirect Monetary Benefits***

Its components were: Paid Vacations, Free Membership of Corporate Clubs, Life Insurance Premiums paid by the employer, Health Insurance Premiums paid by the employer

3. ***Accessibility to Workplace***

Its components were: Nearness from the native place, Conveyance facility provided by the employer, Ease of connectivity, Location of the workplace

4. ***Image of the Organization***

Its components were: Work environment in terms of Industrial Discipline, Financial soundness of the Organization, Fame of the brand of the product/service, Company Fit

5. ***Nature and Type of the Industry***

Its components were: The Nature of the Production by the Industry, Firm is engaged in (e.g., textile, coal, cement etc.), Type of ownership of the Firm (e.g., public private/cooperative), Nature of operation of the Sector, Firm belong to (e.g., manufacturing, service and trading), Reach of the Organization-Regional or National or International

6. ***Opportunities of Career Development***

Its components were: Scope for Learning and Training, Opportunities for Promotion in Short Period, Scope of Posting Abroad, Career Advancement Prospects in terms of Specialization

7. ***Employment Conditions***

Its components were: Job Related (Timings of Job, Flexi-time, Nature of hardship), Opportunity to Participate in Decision Making, Leave with Pay (privilege, casual, medical, etc.), Retirement Benefits

**8. Welfare Facilities**

Its components were: Housing Facilities, Medical Facilities and/or Reimbursement, Canteen Facilities, Recreational Facilities

The target population of the study was the students of Assam University pursuing such four select courses which are run

by four different departments of Assam University and which fall under the jurisdiction of AICTE, in addition to U.G.C. The list of the Departments under study is served in Table 1, below along with the population and the sample of 280 and 62 (with 95% confidence level and 11% confidence interval) respectively. The judgmental sampling method, which is a non-probability sampling, was adopted for the study.

**Table 1.** Size of the population and the sample

Name of the Department	Name of the Course	Duration of the course	Semester				Population	Sample
			6th		8th			
			Population	Sample	Population	Sample		
Agricultural Engineering	Four years U.G. Program Agricultural Engineering	Four years	41	10 (32.26)	41	9 (30)	82	18 (29.5)
Pharmaceutical Science	Four years U.G. Program in Pharmaceutical Science	Four Years	37	8 (25.81)	37	8 (26.6)	74	16 (26.2)
Computer Science and Engineering	Four years U.G. Program in Computer Science and engineering	Four years	39	8 (25.81)	42	9 (26.6)	81	17 (27.8)
Electronics and Communi-cation Engineering	Four Years U.G. Program in Electronics and Communication Engineering	Four years	21	5 (16.13)	22	5 (16.6)	43	10 (16.3)
<b>Total</b>			<b>138</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>61</b>

Source: Office Records

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentage to total

**Table 2.** Relative capability of the select employment factors capable of alluring the students pursuing the select courses offered by Assam University, Silchar

Factors	Mean	Rank	S. D.	Rank
Direct Monetary Benefits	4.46	1st	.89	3rd
Image of the Organization	4.23	2nd	.98	6th
Accessibility to workplace	4.16	3rd	.82	1st
Opportunities for career development	4.01	4th	.93	4th
Industry type firm belongs to	3.87	5.5th	.85	2nd
Employment Conditions	3.87	5.5th	1.02	7th
Indirect Monetary Benefits	3.74	7th	.95	5th
Welfare Facilities	3.70	8th	1.09	8th

Source: Field Survey

Note: Higher the mean score higher the rank and lower the S. D. higher the rank

The (Table 1) delineates the size of the population as well as the size of the sample drawn Department, Course and Semester-wise.

Key finding from (Table 2), out of the eight factors, in terms of degree of influence - **'Direct monetary benefits'** was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean score of 4.46; **'Image of the Organization'** was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> with mean score of 4.23; **'Accessibility to workplace'** was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> with mean score of 4.16; **'Opportunities for career development'** was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> with mean score of 4.01; **'Industry type firm belongs to'** and **'employment conditions'** both ranked 5.5<sup>th</sup>; **'Indirect monetary benefits'** ranked 7<sup>th</sup> with mean score 3.74 and lastly **'welfare facilities'** ranked 8<sup>th</sup> with mean score of 3.70.

Out of the eight factors in terms of degree of dispersion - **'accessibility to workplace'** was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with the lowest SD of 0.82; **'Industry type firm belongs to'** was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> with SD of 0.85; **'Direct monetary benefits'** ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> with SD of 0.89; **'Opportunities for career development'** ranked 4<sup>th</sup> with SD of 0.93; **'Indirect monetary benefits'** ranked 5<sup>th</sup> with SD of 0.95; **'Image of the organization'** ranked 6<sup>th</sup> with SD of 0.97; **'Employment conditions'** ranked 7<sup>th</sup> with SD of 0.95; **'Welfare facilities'** ranked 8<sup>th</sup> with SD of 1.09.

Key findings of (Table 3) are as follows:

#### **Degree of Influence in terms of mean score**

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from the Department of **Pharmaceutical Science**, the factor **'Direct Monetary Benefits'** was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean score of

4.63 which got followed by **'Image of the Organization'** (4.56) in 2<sup>nd</sup> position and lastly **'Employment Conditions'** (4.31) ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>. The factors **'Accessibility to Workplace'** (4.25) and **'Opportunities for Career Development'** (4.25) shared the same mean score and thus secured the 4.5<sup>th</sup> rank followed by **'Indirect Monetary Benefits'** (4.19). The factors **'Welfare Facilities'** and **'Industry Type Firm belongs to'** secured the last rank i.e., 7.5<sup>th</sup> with the same mean score of 3.94.

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from the Department of **Electronics and Communication and Engineering**, the factors **'Direct Monetary Benefits'** and **'Opportunities for Carrier Development'** shared the same mean score of 4.00 and, therefore, secured the 1.5<sup>th</sup> rank. Again, the factors, **'Accessibility to Workplace'** and **'Image of the Organization'**, both shared the same mean score of 3.90 and secured the 3.5<sup>th</sup> rank followed by the factor **'Industry Type Firm Belongs to'** (3.70), and **'Employment Conditions'** (3.60). The factors **'Welfare Facilities'** and **'Indirect Monetary Benefits'** secured the last rank i.e., 7.5<sup>th</sup> with the same mean score of 3.50.

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from the Department of **Computer Science and Engineering**, the factor **'Direct Monetary Benefits'** was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean score of 4.41 which got followed by **'Accessibility to Workplace'** (4.23), **'Image of the Organization'** (4.18), **'Industry Type Firm Belongs to'** (3.83), **'Opportunities for Career Development'** (3.71), **'Employment Conditions'** (3.65) and **'Indirect Monetary Benefits'** (4.41). The factor

**Table 3.** Relative capability of employment factors in being able to allure students of pharmaceutical Science, electronics and communication engineering, computer science and engineering and agricultural engineering

Factors	Pharma-ceutical Science		Electronics and communication engineering		Computer Science and Engineering		Agricultural Engineering	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Direct Monetary Benefits	4.625	1st	4.000	1.5th	4.412	1st	4.611	1st
Indirect Monetary Benefits	4.188	6th	3.500	7.5th	3.529	7th	3.667	8th
Accessibility to Workplace	4.250	4.5th	3.900	3.5th	4.235	2nd	4.167	3.5th
Image of the Organization	4.563	2nd	3.900	3.5th	4.176	3rd	4.167	3.5th
Industry Type Firm Belongs to	3.938	7.5th	3.700	5th	3.824	4th	3.944	6th
Opportunities for Career Development	4.250	4.5th	4.000	1.5th	3.706	5th	4.278	2nd
Employment Conditions	4.313	3rd	3.600	6th	3.647	6th	3.833	7th
Welfare Facilities	3.938	7.5th	3.500	7.5th	3.294	8th	4.000	5th

Source: Field Survey

Note: Higher the mean higher the rank

‘Welfare Facilities’ secured the **last rank** i.e., **8<sup>th</sup>** with a mean score of 3.29.

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from the Department of *Agricultural Engineering*, the factor ‘**Direct Monetary Benefits**’ was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean score of 4.61 which got followed by ‘Opportunities for Career Development’ (4.28). The factors ‘Accessibility to Workplace’ and ‘Image of the Organization’ shared the same rank which is 3.5<sup>th</sup> with the mean score of 4.17, followed by ‘Welfare Facilities’(4.00), ‘Industry Type Firm Belongs to’ (4.94) and ‘Employment Conditions’ (3.83). The factor ‘**Indirect Monetary Benefits**’ secured the **last rank** i.e., **8<sup>th</sup>** with a mean score of 3.67.

Key findings of (Table 4) are as follows:

***Degree of influence in terms of mean score***

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from **Kendriya Vidyalaya**, the factor ‘**Image of the Organization**’ was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean score of 4.30, followed by ‘**Accessibility to Workplace**’ (4.07) and ‘**Direct Monetary Benefits**’ (4.07), sharing the same mean score and securing the 2.5<sup>th</sup> rank, further followed by ‘**Opportunities for Career Development**’ (4.00), ‘**Industry Type Firm Belongs to**’ (3.85), ‘**Employment Conditions**’ (3.77) and ‘**Welfare**

**Facilities**’ (3.62). The factor ‘**Indirect Monetary Benefits**’ secured the **last rank** i.e., **8<sup>th</sup>** with a mean score of 3.39.

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from **Navodaya Vidyalaya**, the factors ‘**Image of the Organization**’ and ‘**Opportunities for Career Development**’ shared the same mean score of 4.33 and thus secured the 1.5<sup>th</sup> rank which got followed by ‘**Direct Monetary Benefits**’ (4.22), ‘**Employment Conditions**’ (4.00), ‘**Accessibility to Workplace**’ (3.89), ‘**Indirect Monetary Benefits**’ (3.78) and ‘**Industry Type Firm Belongs to**’ (3.44). The factor ‘**Welfare Facilities**’ secured the **last rank** i.e., **8<sup>th</sup>** with a mean score of 3.56.

Out of the eight factors, with regard to Degree of Influence, particularly the students from **Missionary Schools**, the factor ‘**Direct Monetary Benefits**’ was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean score of 4.69 which got followed by ‘Accessibility to Workplace’ (4.31). The factors ‘Image of the Organization’ (4.06) and ‘Industry Type Firm Belongs to’ (4.06) both shared the same mean score and thus secured the 3.5<sup>th</sup> rank followed by ‘Opportunities for Career Development’ (3.94), ‘Employment Conditions’ (3.87) and ‘Welfare Facilities’ (3.81). The factor ‘**Indirect Monetary Benefits**’ secured the **last rank** i.e., **8<sup>th</sup>** with a mean score of 3.62.

**Table 4.** Schooling-wise relative capability of the employment factors in being able to allure the students

Factors	Kendriya Vidyalaya		Navodaya Vidyalaya		Missionary Schools		Non-Missionary Schools		Vernacular Medium Schools	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Direct Monetary Benefits	4.077	2.5th	4.222	3rd	4.688	1st	4.563	1st	4.714	2nd
Indirect Monetary Benefits	3.385	8th	3.778	6th	3.625	8th	4.063	3rd	3.857	8th
Accessibility to Workplace	4.077	2.5th	3.889	5th	4.313	2nd	4.000	5th	4.714	2nd
Image of the Organization	4.308	1st	4.333	1.5th	4.063	3.5rd	4.063	3rd	4.714	2nd
Industry Type Firm Belongs to	3.846	5th	3.444	7th	4.063	3.5rd	3.625	8th	4.571	4th
Opportunities for Career Development	4.000	4th	4.333	1.5th	3.938	5th	4.063	3rd	4.143	7th
Employment Conditions	3.769	6th	4.000	4th	3.875	6th	3.688	7th	4.286	5th
Welfare Facilities	3.615	7th	3.556	8th	3.813	7th	3.750	6th	3.714	6th

Source: Field Survey

Note: Higher the mean higher the rank

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from **Non-Missionary Schools**, the factor '**Direct Monetary Benefits**' was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> with a mean score of 4.69 which got followed by the factors 'Indirect Monetary Benefits' (4.31), 'Opportunities for Career Development' (4.06) and 'Image of the Organization' (4.06) sharing the same rank i.e., 3<sup>rd</sup>, further followed by 'Accessibility to Workplace' (3.94), 'Welfare Facilities' (3.87) and 'Employment Conditions' (3.81). The factor '**Industry Type Firm Belongs to**' secured the last rank i.e., 8<sup>th</sup> with a mean score of 3.62.

Out of the eight factors, in view of the students from **Vernacular Medium Schools**, the factors '**Direct Monetary Benefits**', '**Accessibility to Workplace**' and '**Image of the Organization**', secured the 2<sup>nd</sup> rank as the mean score (4.71) of all the three stood same which was highest too. This got followed by the factors 'Industry Type Firm Belongs to' (4.57), 'Employment Conditions' (4.29), 'Opportunities for Career Development' (4.14) and 'Indirect Monetary Benefits' (3.86). The factor '**Welfare Facilities**' secured the last rank i.e., 8<sup>th</sup> with the mean score of 3.71.

## 5. Suggestions

In the competitive business era where all the organizations (especially private sector) are providing almost alike-natured employment conditions and incentives, it is difficult for the employers to attract potential employees and also the present employees always have the tendency to switch over to other employers who will be providing them slightly better employment condition or incentives. In this backdrop the study presented a background for the employers to highlight such employment factors that are capable of alluring the potential employees for joining as well as retaining them. The study interviewed the students of B.Tech and P.Pharm courses and found that in terms of degree of influence 'Direct Monetary Benefits' was ranked first and the factor 'Welfare Facilities' was ranked last. Thus, suggesting the employers to offer lucrative pay packages to the potential employees for luring them.

## 6. Future Scope of Study

The study could have the following future prospects:

- The present study was made on budding employees or job-seeking employees, but similar study could be conducted on those employees who are already

engaged in a particular organization and seeking employment in other organization offering them better benefits,

- The present study was focused on the students of a University only. However, similar study could be conducted on students other other colleges or Universities
- Further a study on the degree of satisfaction attained by an employee after achieving the identified employment factors included in the study could be a scope for future study.

## 7. Summary and Conclusion

In a nutshell, the study applied perception of the B.Tech and P.Pharm students studying in Assam University, Silchar to identify the factors that allure them for selecting their dream employer. Thereafter, the study ranked such factors and sub-factors on the basis of the degree they are being able to allure the students or potential employees. Finally, the study identified the factors capable of alluring the respondents on the basis of their demographic variables.

The study presented that in terms of degree of influence 'Direct Monetary Benefits' was ranked first and the factor 'Welfare Facilities' was ranked last. The study further highlighted that although the respondents consider Direct Monetary Benefits to be the top alluring factor but those respondents/students of Electronics and Communication Engineering perceives 'Opportunities for Career Development' to be equally important factor alluring them.

Lastly, the present study shows that among the respondents, those who did their schooling from Kendriya Vidyalaya and Navodaya Vidyalaya perceives 'Image of the Organization' as the most alluring factor whereas rest of the respondents considers 'Direct Monetary Benefit' to be the most preferred factor. Degree of preference about the factor 'Accessibility to Workplace' is reasonably more among the respondents who did their schooling from Kendriya Vidyalaya, Missionary Schools and Vernacular Medium compared to other respondents who did their schooling from Navodaya Vidyalaya and Non Missionary Schools.

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