

## Original Research Article

# Development of Employer Branding Model in Iranian Public Universities

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### Abstract

Today, employer branding is considered as the most important business strategy at international level. The role of this process is transforming an organization identity as an employer. In this study, researchers tried to address attracting and preserving university professors quantitatively and qualitatively through development of employer branding model within the domain of public universities. The methodology of the study was mixed (combined) method and based on Morse combined research method typology (analogue sequential mixed method design). In order to develop employer branding model, both quantitative (analysis of quantitative content) and qualitative (Delphi method or interviews with experts or specialists) approaches were utilized. Furthermore, in order to collect the data for the quantitative content analysis part, library method which is based on books and articles was used and the data for the qualitative Delphi method were collected through conducting interviews by experts and commentators. Considering data analysis in quantitative content analysis of related literature to employer branding context, theoretical model of research included five variables as compensations and benefits, environment and work condition, work-life balance, organizational culture and organization's reputation was presented. Moreover, data analysis in Delphi method part indicated that two variables of work environment and conditions have the most importance and compensations and benefits have the least importance among university professors. Finally, conceptual model of research or developed employer branding model was presented in Iran's public sector universities.

**Keywords:** Attracting and retention professors, Employer Branding, Public Universities

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## INTRODUCTION

In annual reports of organizations, typically employees, who are considered as the main resource of every firm or organizational brands, are mentioned as the most invaluable assets of a company. If both of these develop properly, the organization is able to protect itself or at least providing this attitude could be expected (Faghihipour and Faghihipour, 2015). As employer branding, it is believed that there is synergy between promotion of brands and human resources. Since first occasion of using employer branding concept by Simon Barrow and Tim Ambler in

1996 up to this date, employer branding has drawn much attention as a new method of combining branding techniques and human resource activities in both research and organizational applications (Barrow and Mosley, 2005). However, increase in levels of understanding and the applications of this concept are related to past, present and future. Nonetheless, organizations seek their own suitable candidates (it means using employer brand) and there is no other alternative (Dahlstrom, 2011). While in the past times, scarcity of competent persons was due to

economic mutations and low rates of unemployment, whereas the current shortage is the result of other factors. As current economics, two main factors influence shortages in competencies of people where there are changes in demography and sociology. From a demographic point of view, the older generations of employees enter retirement life more rapidly and thus next generations who are liable to be replaced by previous generations would become quantitatively less. As sociology, there are particular needs for researchers in technologies domains, engineering and other knowledge based grounds but unfortunately, they are not trained sufficiently. Furthermore, employees of younger generations are more interested in turnover which results in raising problems for organizations so as to preserve their key personnel (Lodberg, 2011). In particular, knowledge based organizations need their competent employees because they are considered as the most valuable assets of organization and could be evaluated as competitive advantages of organization (Ewing et al., 2002). This is confirmed completely by Mosley (2007); he believes that arisen interest in employer branding is a result of increasing competition for attracting needed capable persons to organizations in order to achieve organizational goals (Mosley, 2007) and these organizations demonstrate distinction in terms of attracting and preserving employees (Lievens, 2007). Accordingly, shortage of competent employees and organizations' necessities are combined to develop rivalry of attracting capabilities. In fact, this very rivalry has the main part in recognizing employer branding as an organizational activity. Public universities are not exceptions as well and as subset of national higher education set of institutes are based on professors and experts where in the first stage must preserve (retention) current competent professors and in the second prior stage employment (attract) competent professors within their educational system. This is in fact the same dual main applications of employer branding called attracting and preserving of competent employees. Experts and professionals generally agree with two comprehensive approaches. It means that concern in a research could be "problem oriented" or "opportunity oriented". By generalization of these two approaches to context of accessibility and preserving prime position of a public university amongst other universities, it can be implied what category of activities and responsibilities should be taken by a public university so as to achieve and preserve better position. However, these activities may be conducted within different domains where one of the most important points is emphasizing the qualifications of universities graduates and this is merely accessible through hiring knowledgeable, liable and expert professors and mentors. Overall, attracting and preserving competent and expert professors might be one of the main concerns of public universities in order to raise their position amongst other universities. Then stability and consistency of organization's brand (e.g. university brand)

need some preparations to protect that against rivals (other national and foreign universities). After looking briefly into the excellent performance of such universities as Tehran, Sharif, Tarbiat Moddaress, Aalameh and... it is inferred that achieving and preserving this position is not easy and trivial. One of the most activities included in these preparations is assessing current employer brand of university and its upgrade. As employer brand of an organization accompanied by corporate brand keeps pace to promotion and excellence of organization. Accordingly, by considering the above mentioned issues, in this study we address the qualitative and quantitative context of attracting and preserving university professors and mentors through expanding employer branding model within public universities to take effective step in preserving, consistency and reinforcement of a public university by presenting applicable strategies. Moreover, there is a main question in current study that how developed the employer branding model for Iran's public universities is? Therefore, the main objective of this study is introducing a developed employer branding model.

### **Employer branding**

As an organizational major, employer branding is considered to be a part of corporate branding besides product branding. Although employer branding has similarities to product branding, there are two differences between those to make distinction. First, employer brand is particularly related to employment experience in establishment of organizational identity as an employer and second, employer branding is accounted more complicated due to its consumers and national and foreign audience but corporate or product branding usually emphasizes foreign audience (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Primary definition was presented by Ambler and Barrow (1996) and based mainly on traditional branding schemes. They stated that employer branding is a set of functional, economic and psychological interests which provide their intended work (Barrow and Mosley, 2005). According to this definition, other distinct researchers in this domain defined employer branding as the process of developing an employer identity which is recognizable and unique and employer brand is a concept that distinguishes a company from its other rivals (Ambler and Barrow, 1996). Furthermore, Sullivan (2004) also added a strategic aspect to his definition by arguing that employer branding is a long-term strategy for a certain company in order to manage level of awareness and understanding of employees, potential employees and related shareholders of company (Sullivan, 2012).

### **Empirical history of research**

Farahi's (2014) research under title "Design and statement

of human resources brand management; a research in Ghods Razavi site" provided a model including dimensions such as organization, product, employment proposed value, communications, employees brand (Farahi, 2013). Khodami and Asanlou (2015) addressed designing model of developing employer's attraction feature based on distinct brand of employer. In their opinion, attraction of employer includes perceived social value, perceived market value, perceived economic value, perceived applicable value, perceived commitment value and desirability of work environment (Khodami and Asanloo, 2015). Rastegar et al (2015) in their process of assessing position and components of employer brand in Mellat Bank, found that average points among elements of brand is in order of corporate brand consistency feature, compensations and benefits, work-life balance, organizational culture and environment as perceived by bank's employees and also there is a significant relation among employer brand components (Rastegar et al., 2015). Rastegar et al (2016) concluded that amongst components of employer branding variable the highest points as perceived by Mellat Bank employees are in order of organizational reputation component, economic component, components of development, application and employment (Rastegar et al., 2016). Mellen (2005) confirmed some concerns such as work and private life balance, suitable career path, flexible work schedule, low overtime, compensation of competitive services, teleworking feasibility, project oriented working, job security, challenging working and task variety in employer branding context (Melin, 2005). For Mosley and Barrow (2005); spokes of employer brand's wheel are: Perspective and leadership, policies and values, fairness and cooperation, organizational personality, external reputation, communications, recruitment and admission, development, performance management, work environment, award system and also after employment phase. They also believe that mixture of employer brand includes some matters such as recruitment and admission, group management, performance evaluation, learning and development, awards and acknowledgement, work environment, protection, internal evaluation systems, social responsibility and values, senior leadership, internal communications and external reputation (Barrow and Mosley, 2005). In their opinion, Muralidharan and Shenoy (2006), framework of "good employer positioning" consisted of four variables, 1) benefits and compensations, 2) work culture and environment, 3) values and 4) work security and stability (Muralidharan and Shenoy, 2006). Dawn and Biswas (2010) considered components of employer brand to be work – life balance, organization's culture and environment, power of organization/product brand, benefits and awards and work environment (Dawn and Biswas, 2010). Kuzmenkova et al (2012) in direction to attracting and preserving employees; recognizes proposed value of employer to embrace external communications, reputation, work

conditions, culture and commitment (Kuzmenkova et al., 2012). In a conducted research by Brostrom and Farahvashi (2012), employer branding model is indicated to embrace 5 main levels (work environment, organizational culture, product sustainability, work-life balance, compensations and benefits) (Broström and Farahvashi, 2012). Bendarowisen (2014) considered aspects of organizational attractiveness to comprise of organizational culture, confidence, teamwork, academic environment, strategic management, compensations and benefits, training and development, work-life balance and work conditions (Bendaraviciene et al., 2014).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research method in the present study is mixed (combined) and based on Morse combined research method typology and of analogue sequential mixed design. According to this design and in order to develop an employer branding model, both quantitative (analysis of quantitative content) and qualitative (Delphi method or interviews with experts or specialists) approaches were utilized. Furthermore, in order to collect data for the quantitative content analysis part, library method which is based on books and articles was used and data for the qualitative Delphi method were collected through conducting interviews with experts and commentators. Statistical population of quantitative content analysis part's data included books, articles and doctoral and master degree dissertations and the data for the qualitative Delphi method were collected through conducting interviews with academic experts and commentators. For this purpose, all university professors having full professor or associated professor rank and being employees of four public universities of Tehran city (Tehran university, Tarbiat Moddarress university, Kharazmi university and AalammeH Tabatabaei university) during period of 2011 to 2016 by considering list of "Iran's research universities and institutes ranking" that was provided by Ministry of Science, Research and Technology during 2011 to 2016 who have management titles ( e.g. university president, faculty deans, department managers, vice chancellor for research of university and faculty, vice chancellor for academic affairs of university and faculty) were considered statistical population. The sample size in the quantitative content analysis part was determined by theoretical saturation method. It means that searching for matter was conducted up to the saturation point where there were not any new articles, books or dissertations left to be reviewed. In data analysis in qualitative Delphi method part, sample the size was determined through judgement sampling method and comments of 20 experts were collected but ultimately 19 interviews were preceded to researchers. In the current study, the duration of accomplishment was adapted to time range and located within 2015 to 2016 range, sampling tool used for the quantitative content

**Table 1.** Derived variables in fourth step of quantitative content analysis part

R	Variables	R	Variables	R	Variables
1	Compensations and Benefits	12	Training and Development	23	Organization Profile
2	Work Environment	13	Working Conditions	24	Strategic Vision
3	Work-Life balance	14	Job Attributes	25	Organizational Reputation
4	Organizational Culture	15	Public Opinion	26	Employment Conditions
5	Brand Strength	16	Progress Opportunities	27	Organizational Success
6	Fairness and trust	17	Job Security and stable	28	Employer Credibility
7	Teamwork	18	Values	29	Psychological Contract
8	Academic Environment	19	Recruitment process and	30	Organizational Image
9	Strategic Management	20	Employment	31	Internal Communication
10	Job Satisfaction	21	employees / people		
11	Supervisor Relationship	22	Organizational procedures		
			Work		

**Table 2.** Main variables and their related components

R	Variables	Dimensions
1	Compensations and Benefits	Salary (base pay); External Equity; Internal Equity; Bonus; Stock Options; Retirement Contributions; Health Benefits; Perks; Flexibility; Recognition; Benefits Packages;
2	Work Environment	Manager Quality; Co-worker Quality; Empowerment; Work Challenge; Role Clarity; Business Travel; Flex Time; Childcare; Work Hours; Vacation; Telecommunication;
3	Work-Life balance	Ethics and Integrity; Work-Life Balance; Safety; Quality Workplace; Mutual Respect.
4	Organizational Culture	Senior Team Quality; Development Reputation; Technology Level; Risk Taking Environment; Company Fit; Company Size; Trust; Communication; Structure; Strategy; Working climate; Social Responsibility.
5	Working Conditions	Cooperation; Training and Development;
6	Progress Opportunities	Employability; Tailored Training; Learning Accounts; Cross-Functional.
7	employees / people	Skilled and Able; Relationships; Common values; Common Goals; Inclusive Leadership;
8	procedures	Partnerships; Communication; Involvement; Organizational Integration.
9	Work	Feedback; Partnerships; Flexibility; Meaningful; Fun.

analysis data also included scientific resources and collected data of qualitative Delphi method embraced questionnaires along with interviews.

**Data analysis within quantitative content analysis part**

In this section of study, it is tried to consider articles through finding access to related scientific resources, doctoral and master degree dissertations on employer branding. To fulfill this purpose, 733 scientific resources were searched whereas 373 of these were unrelated to subject of this study and 360 were related. Hence, scientific resources decrease to 360 files in first step. In second step, after reviewing researched scientific resources for second time, researchers classified 360 files of first step including issues such as scientific resources with conceptual model (135 files), scientific resources without conceptual model (161 files), unrelated scientific resources (64 files). Therefore, 296 scientific resources of total number of 360 derived files of first step were used. In the third step, 135 scientific resources holding conceptual model were examined by researchers. In this step and

ultimately, 23 scientific resources were selected. Then in the fourth step, researchers scrutinized 23 selected scientific resources of third step accurately and 31 variables of mentioned scientific resources in compliance with Table 1 were derived.

Frequencies of above variables indicate some variables such as compensations and benefits, work environment, work-life balance, organizational culture, career path development and training, progress opportunities, values and organizational reputation as well have highest emphasize. In fifth step, above mentioned 31 variables were examined and ultimately in order to summarize variables and regarding their frequencies and interrelationships 9 variables as main ones were determined in order of: compensations and benefits, work environment, work-life balance, organizational culture, work conditions, progress opportunities, employees, procedures and Work. As a matter of fact, other variables (21 variables) are included in subsets of these 9 main variables. Regarding available literature and 23 selected articles, components of these 9 main variables also derived. In following, components of nine main variables are provided in Table 2.

**Table 3.** Final 5 Main variables and their related components (After revision)

R	Variables	Dimensions
1	Compensations and Benefits	Salary (base pay); Benefits Packages; Perks; Health Benefits; Retirement Contributions; Stock Options; External Equity; Internal Equity; Reward.
2	Environment and Working Conditions	Manager Quality; Co-worker Quality; Work Challenge; Empowerment; Role Clarity; Cooperation; Training and Development; Job Security and Development; Progress Opportunities; procedures; work / Job Attributes; Quality Workplace; Safety; Mutual Respect; employees / people; Psychological Contract; Job Satisfaction.
3	Work-Life balance	Business Travel; Flex Time; Childcare; Work Hours; Vacation; Ethics and Integrity.
4	Organizational Culture	Senior Team Quality; Technology Level; values; Risk Taking Environment; Company Size; Company Fit; Fairness and Trust; Teamwork; Internal Communication; Organizational Structure; Strategy (Strategic Vision-Strategic Management); Working climate; Social Responsibility.
5	Organizational Reputation	Organizational Identity; Organizational Image; Public Opinion; Employer Credibility; Organizational Success.

**Figure 1.** Research theoretical model (Derived from quantitative content analysis of related literature to employer branding context).

In the sixth step, above 9 variables along with their derived components were reviewed. This resulted in determining 5 main variables ultimately. In fact, 9 main variables were reduced to 5 variables and presented in this step along with their components.

Referring to the presented variables and components of Table 3, theoretical model of study that is derived from quantitative content analysis of related literature to employer branding context is developed according to Figure 1.

In next section, procedure of using Delphi method (Questioning experts and commentators) by utilizing

derived model of this section is going to be described. Variables and their related components of Table 5 are indeed used as basic data to conduct Delphi method.

### Data analysis in Delphi method part

#### Expert's questionnaire nature

Considering conducted research in literature of employer branding context and derived theoretical model of previous section as well (Quantitative content analysis), to obtain

**Table 4.** Experts' questionnaire descriptive statistics

R	Variables	Median (0-5)	Percent	Rank
1	Environment and Working Conditions	4.42	22%	First
2	Organizational Reputation	4.11	21%	Second
3	Organizational Culture	4.00	20%	Third
4	Work-Life balance	6.89	19%	Fourth
5	Compensations and Benefits	3.84	18%	Fifth

**Table 5.** Results of the correlation test for compensations and benefits variable and its related components

R	Dimensions	Average	Correlation
1	Salary (base pay)	4.16	0.748**
2	Benefits Packages	3.47	0.738**
3	Perks	3.74	0.612**
4	Health Benefits	4.16	0.202
5	Retirement Contributions	4.21	0.667**
6	Stock Options	3.11	0.732**
7	External Equity	3.68	0.769**
8	Internal Equity	3.58	0.846**
9	Reward	3.74	0.729**

**Table 6.** Results of the correlation test for work environment and conditions variable and its related components

R	Dimensions	Average	Correlation
1	Manager Quality	4.53	0.509*
2	Co-worker Quality	4.05	0.746**
3	Work Challenge	3.68	0.439
4	Empowerment	4.00	0.100
5	Role Clarity	4.32	0.063
6	Cooperation	4.00	0.477*
7	Training and Development	4.32	0.338
8	Job Security and Stability	4.63	0.135
9	Progress	4.37	0.564**
10	Opportunities(carrier)	4.37	0.564**
11	Organizational procedures	3.68	0.773**
12	work / Job Attributes	3.84	0.653**
13	Quality Workplace	3.84	0.727**
14	Safety	3.29	0.404
15	Mutual Respect	3.89	0.832**
16	employees / people	3.47	0.801**
17	Psychological Contract	3.37	0.765**
18	Job Satisfaction	4.32	0.405

views of experts and academic specialists, a questionnaire was developed and distributed amongst experts and specialists in the form of interview. Researchers addressed two questions as open ended and one as closed ended question in this questionnaire as well as research issue description, providing a definition for employer branding and inserting research theoretical model. The close ended questions included compensations and benefits variable (9 components), variable of work environment and conditions (17 components), work- life balance variable (6 components), organizational culture variable (17 components), variable

of organizational reputation (9 components). In the open-ended questions, commentators actually were asked to add or omit a variable or component from questionnaire as required or they determine.

#### Experts' questionnaire distribution procedure

Considering conducted assessments and taking list of "Iran's research universities and institutes ranking" of 2011 to 2016 which has been published by Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, four universities of Tehran

**Table 7.** Results of the correlation test for work-life balance variable and its related components

R	Dimensions	Average	Correlation
1	Business Travel	2.95	0.881**
2	Flex Time	3.47	0.374
3	Childcare	2.84	0.615**
4	Work Hours	3.74	0.441
5	Vacation	3.42	0.884**
6	Ethics	4.05	0.357

**Table 8.** Results of the correlation test for organizational culture variable and its related components

R	Dimensions	Average	Correlation	
1	Senior Team Quality	University president	4.42	0.205
		faculty dean	4.63	0.410
		Group Manager	4.16	0.629**
2	Technology Level	4.33	0.092	
3	values	3.63	0.593**	
4	Risk Taking Environment	3.47	0.817**	
5	Company Size	3.67	0.670**	
6	Fairness and Trust	3.78	0.654**	
7	Teamwork	4.11	0.629**	
8	Internal Communication	3.63	0.567*	
9	Structure	3.74	0.469*	
10	Strategy	Strategic Vision	3.68	0.633**
		Strategic Management	3.58	0.717**
11	Working climate	3.72	0.820**	
12	Social Responsibility	4.05	0.764**	
13	Opinions	3.32	0.624**	
14	Norms	3.32	0.624**	

university, Tarbiat Moddarrass university, Kharazmi university and Aalammeh Tabatabaei university were considered as target universities of this part of research and questionnaires were distributed among those professors who had practical experiences such as universities presidents, faculty deans, department managers, vice chancellor for research of university and faculty, vice chancellor for academic affairs of university and faculty. In this approach, 19 questionnaires were surrendered to researchers so as to analysis.

#### Analysis of experts' questionnaires data

After distribution and experts questionnaires, related data to closed questions have been entered Excel file and analyzed by SPSS software as followings. Cronbach's alpha of questionnaire for determining its reliability was calculated and reported 0.947 where referring to George and Mallery rules of thumb (2003) this figure indicates that reliability of questionnaire is at excellent level. Average variable importance for 5 variables was calculated through descriptive statistics and its results are brought into Table 4.

It is deduced from Table 4 that variable of work environment and conditions has highest importance and variable of compensations and benefits has lowest importance within employer branding context. However, averages of work-life variable and variable of compensations and benefits were very near. Results of correlation test amongst variables and components are as mentioned in following table.

Interpretations and summarization of the above mentioned Tables that are provided regarding the analysis of research variables and components correlation are as followings.

#### Compensations and benefits variable

As a component, health and medical benefits has not correlation with compensations and benefits variable, it would be omitted. Component of retirement benefits has greatest average point (4.21) and component of share options has least average point (3.11). Internal equity component has correlation coefficient of 0.846 and highest correlation with compensations and benefits variable. Component of granting special benefits has 0.612 as

**Table 9.** Results of the correlation test for organizational reputation variable and its related components.

R	Dimensions	Average	Correlation	
1	Organizational Identity	University Name	3.63	0.731**
		University Logo	3.16	0.610**
		quality level of university	4.58	0.311
2	Organizational Image	level of recognition	3.89	0.794**
		Publicity of university	3.79	0.636**
		history and records of university	4.32	0.240
3	Public Opinion	3.32	0.654**	
4	Employer Credibility	4.32	0.275	
5	Organizational Success	4.16	0.239	

**Table 10.** Results of open ended questions of experts' questionnaire analysis

Questionnaire	Provided indices by experts	Variable	Dimensions
1	working within career domain	Environment and Working Conditions	Job Attributes
	lack of financial and accommodation concerns	Compensations and Benefits	Salary and Bonus
	respect to professors	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect
	research funding resources	Environment and Working Conditions	assigning suitable research budget
3	respect to professor	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect
	exploiting professors' ideas in university activities	Environment and Working Conditions	sharing management style
4	degree of freedom in career	Environment and Working Conditions	professors' degree of freedom
	Comments	Environment and Working Conditions	sharing management style
6	assign value to professors	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect
	high respect to professors	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect
8	utilizing professors' ideas	Environment and Working Conditions	sharing management style
	lack of financial concern	Compensations and Benefits	Salary and Bonus
	respect to professor	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect
	financial provisions	Environment and Working Conditions	assigning suitable research budget
9	using collective ideas in university management	Environment and Working Conditions	sharing management style
	separation of ideological and political ideas from teaching context	Environment and Working Conditions	Quality Workplace
	lack of curiosity in personal relationships	Environment and Working Conditions	Management Quality and Co-worker Quality
	preventing political decision making in university	Environment and Working Conditions	Management Quality
	preserving human respectfulness	Environment and Working Conditions	Management Quality
10	economic conditions	Compensations and Benefits	Salary and Bonus
	respect to professors	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect



Table 10. Continue

	value professors	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect
11	developing revolutionary atmosphere in university	Environment and Working Conditions	Quality Workplace
	sex separation	Environment and Working Conditions	Quality Workplace
13	higher degree of freedom for elites and professors in university	Environment and Working Conditions	professors' degree of freedom
	research affairs budget increase	Environment and Working Conditions	assigning suitable research budget
16	competitive and suitable management	Environment and Working Conditions	Management Quality
	lack of inquisition and freedom of expression for professors inside classrooms	Environment and Working Conditions	Management Quality
17	developing decision making commissions of professors	Environment and Working Conditions	sharing management style
	exit of administrative bureaucracy	Environment and Working Conditions	Structure
18	exploiting professors' ideas in university policy making	Environment and Working Conditions	sharing management style
	exit of administrative bureaucracy	Organizational Culture	Structure
19	fulfillment of financial affairs	Environment and Working Conditions	assigning suitable research budget
	value personality and knowledge of professors	Environment and Working Conditions	Mutual Respect
	preparing suitable work environment	Environment and Working Conditions	Quality Workplace

correlation coefficient and lowest correlation with compensations and benefits variable.

#### Work environment and conditions variable

Component of challenging work, empowerment, role transparency, training and development, job security and stability and also job satisfaction have not any correlation with work environment and conditions variable, thus these components are omitted. Quality of managers as a component has greatest average point (4.53). Psychological contract component has lowest average point (3.37). Individuals / employees as a component has 0.801 correlation coefficient and greatest correlation with work environment and conditions variable. Cooperation component with correlation coefficient of 0.477 has lowest correlation with work environment and conditions variable.

#### Work-life balance variable

Components of flexible time, work hours and morality have not correlations with work-life balance variable, thus those are omitted. Vacations as component has greatest average point (3.42). The component of baby care has the lowest average point (2.84). Vacations component with

correlation coefficient of 0.884 has greatest correlation with work-life balance variable. Baby care component with a correlation coefficient of 0.615 has the lowest correlation with work-life balance variable.

#### Organizational culture variable

Components of organization's senior management quality (University president, faculty dean) and level of technology have not any correlation with organizational culture variable, thus those are omitted. Component of organization's senior management (Group manager) has greatest average point (4.16). Norms and beliefs as two components have the lowest average point (3.32). Component of work atmosphere has greatest correlation with organizational culture variable and correlation coefficient of 0.820. Component of structure with correlation coefficient of 0.469 has least correlation with organizational culture variable.

#### Organizational reputation variable

Components of quality level of university (Organizational identity), history and records of university (Organizational image), employer credibility (University) and

**Table 11.** Summarization of data analysis related to experts' questionnaire (Delphi method)

R	Variable	Dimensions
1	Compensations and Benefits	granting suitable base salary, granting suitable benefits, granting suitable job bonuses , granting suitable retirement benefits, granting company shares to professors, proportional salary and benefits comparing to other universities (External equity), proportional salary and benefits comparing to other professors of Tehran university (Internal equity).
2	Environment and Working Conditions	university management career quality, colleagues career quality in university, level of cooperation amongst university professors, progress opportunities (Career path) inside executive and scientific domains, organizational procedures quality, career features, workplace quality, respect to professors by university managers, quality of university employees, effective application of psychological contract (Unwritten implicit and mutual expectations between university and professors), shared management style (Exploiting ideas and experiences of professors in university management sphere), degree of freedom for professors inside scientific domains, assigning proper and suitable research budget for professors.
3	Work-Life balance	Assigning professors to missions and career trips throughout country and abroad, establishing utilities for baby care for professors' families, suitable vacations for professors.
4	Organizational Culture	quality of group manager performance, availability of desired organizational values, risk prone environment inside university, university size, trust and fairness amongst university professors, teamwork feelings amongst university professors, availability of internal effective and positive communications, existence of suitable organizational structure, strategic vision in university, utilizing strategic management in university, existence of desired career atmosphere inside university, social responsibility of university managers against community, existence of desired beliefs amongst university employees, availability of desired norms amongst university employees.
5	Organizational Reputation	suitable name for university (Organizational identity), suitable logo for university (Organizational identity), level of recognition of university inside community (Organizational image), level of university fame (Organizational image), general belief regarding university, level of credibility of university inside community.

**Table 12.** Research conceptual model, development of employer branding model in Iran's public universities (Derived from Delphi method).

Compensations and Benefits	Work-Life Balance	Organizational Culture	Organizational Reputation	Environment and Working Conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary (base pay);</li> <li>• Bonus;</li> <li>• Reward;</li> <li>• Retirement;</li> <li>• Stock Options;</li> <li>• External Equity;</li> <li>• Internal Equity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Travel;</li> <li>• Childcare;</li> <li>• Work Vacation.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Employee level:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teamwork;</li> <li>• Internal Communication;</li> <li>• Opinions;</li> <li>• Norms.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) Managers level:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Quality;</li> <li>• Fairness and Trust;</li> <li>• Working climate.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3) Organizational level:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational values;</li> <li>• Risk Taking Environment;</li> <li>• Company Size;</li> <li>• Structure;</li> <li>• Strategic vision and Management;</li> <li>• Social Responsibility.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational Identity;</li> <li>• Organizational Image;</li> <li>• Public Opinion;</li> <li>• Organization Credibility</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Individual level:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respect to professors by managers;</li> <li>• Degree of freedom for professors.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2) Co-workers level:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colleagues career quality;</li> <li>• Cooperation amongst professors;</li> <li>• Quality of university employees.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3) Managers level:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers career quality;</li> <li>• Shared management style.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4) Organizational levels:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Workplace;</li> <li>• Progress Opportunities;</li> <li>• Organizational procedures;</li> <li>• Job Attributes;</li> <li>• Psychological Contract;</li> <li>• Suitable research budget.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

organizational success have not any correlation with organizational reputation variable, then those are omitted.

University level of recognition component (Organizational image) has greatest average point (3.89). Logo of

university as a component (Organizational identity) has least average point (3.16). University level of recognition component (Organizational image) has a correlation coefficient of 0.794, greatest correlation with organizational reputation variable. Logo of university component (Organizational identity) with correlation coefficient of 0.610 has lowest correlation with organizational reputation variable. Importance of organizational image was evaluated higher than organizational identity. Moreover, results of open ended questions of the expert questionnaire analysis are as mentioned in Table 12. In this open-ended question, experts are asked to add or omit some variables/components if required to the theoretical model.

The analysis of the mentioned data in Table 12 indicates that some components such as sharing management style, professors' degree of freedom and assigning suitable research budget must be added to variable of work environment and conditions. On other hand, it can be deduced that main and important concerns of professors are management quality, mutual respect, and work place quality. In continuation of Delphi method process and by considering results of related data to open ended and close questions of experts' questionnaire, adjustment of variables/components included in theoretical model of research was accomplished, then summarization of this review was presented in Table 12.

In table 12, research conceptual model with emphasize on employer branding model development in Iran 'Diagram public universities is presented. It is tried that components of each variable be included into a separate category (Refer to Table 12).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, by development of employer branding model within Iran's public universities domain; authors tried to respond to the question of which variables of a public university must be emphasized in order to attract and preserve competent and elite professors. To answer this this question by using mixed approach; both methods of quantitative content analysis and qualitative Delphi methods were applied. Theoretical model of research including five variables of compensations and benefits, work environment and conditions, work-life balance, organizational culture, organizational reputation was presented after data analysis of quantitative content part of related literature to employer branding. Furthermore, data analysis in Delphi method part indicated that importance ranking of variables from first to fifth in compliance to university professors view is work environment and conditions, organizational culture, work-life balance, compensations and benefits. Results of Rastegar et al. (2015), in a research of position and

components of employer branding in Mellat Bank indicated that order of corporate brand consistency (Organizational reputation), compensations and benefits, work-life balance, organizational culture and environment had greatest average points under employees' views. Results of the research variables and components of variables correlation analysis indicated that amongst components of compensations and benefits, "retirement benefits" has greatest average point and component of "shares options" has the lowest average point. Amongst components of work environment and conditions; components of "managers' quality" and "psychological contract" have greatest and least average point, respectively. Regarding work-life variable, components of "vacations" and "baby care" have greatest and least average point respectively. In organizational culture variable, component of "organization's senior manager (Group manager)" has greatest average point and components of "beliefs" and "norms" have least average point. In organizational reputation variable, component of "level of university recognition (organizational image)" has the greatest average point and component of "university logo" has least the average point.

Results of related data to open ended question of experts' questionnaire showed that components such as shared management style, professors' degree of freedom and research budget assigning must be added to work environment and conditions. On the other hand, it can be deduced that main and important concerns of professors are management quality, mutual respect and quality of workplace. Finally, results of Delphi method lead to presenting developed employer branding model based on five variables and their related components.

## Work environment and conditions

This variable includes components such as university management career quality, colleagues career quality in university, level of cooperation amongst university professors, progress opportunities (Career path) inside executive and scientific domains, organizational procedures quality, career features, workplace quality, respect to professors by university managers, quality of university employees, effective application of psychological contract (Unwritten implicit and mutual expectations between university and professors), shared management style (Exploiting ideas and experiences of professors in university management sphere), degree of freedom for professors inside scientific domains, assigning proper and suitable research budget for professors. Research of Khodammi and Assanlou (2015), Rastegar et al (2015), Barrow and Mosely (2005), Muralidharan and Shenoy (2006), Dawn and Biswas (2010), Kauzuncova et al (2012), Brostrom and Farahvashi (2012), Bendarowisen (2014) also emphasize on this variable.

### Organizational culture

This variable includes components such as quality of group manager performance, availability of desired organizational values, risk prone environment inside university, university size, trust and fairness amongst university professors, teamwork feelings amongst university professors, availability of internal effective and positive communications, existence of suitable organizational structure, strategic perspective in university, utilizing strategic management in university, existence of desired career atmosphere inside university, social responsibility of university managers against community, existence of desired beliefs amongst university employees, availability of desired norms amongst university employees. Research of Rastegar et al (2015), Muralidharan and Shenoy (2006), Dawn and Biswas (2010), Kauzmuncova et al (2012), Brostrom and Farahvashi (2012), Bendarowisen (2014) also emphasize on this variable.

### Organizational reputation

This variable includes components such as suitable name for university (Organizational identity), suitable logo for university (Organizational identity), level of recognition of university inside community (Organizational image), level of university fame (Organizational image), general belief regarding university, level of credibility of university inside community. Research of Rastegar et al (2015), Rastegar et al (2016), Barrow and Mosely (2005), Dawn and Biswas (2010), Kauzmuncova et al (2012), Brostrom and Farahvashi (2012) also emphasize on this variable.

### Work-life balance

This variable includes components such as assigning professors to missions and career trips throughout country and abroad, establishing utilities for baby care for professors' families, suitable vacations for professors. Research of Rastegar et al (2015), Mellen (2005), Dawn and Biswas (2010), Brostrom and Farahvashi (2012) and Bendarowisen (2014) also emphasize on this variable.

### Compensations and benefits

This variable includes components such as granting suitable base salary, granting suitable benefits, granting suitable job bonuses, granting suitable retirement benefits, granting company shares to professors, proportional salary and benefits comparing to other universities (External equity), proportional salary and

benefits comparing to other professors of Tehran university (Internal equity), Research of Rastegar et al (2015), Mellen (2005), Muralidharan and Shenoy (2006), Dawn and Biswas (2010), Brostrom and Farahvashi (2012) and Bendarowisen (2014) also emphasize on this variable. At the end, we propose to senior managers and policy makers of Iran's public universities to address employer branding context by concentrating on five variables of compensations and benefits, work environment and conditions, work-life balance, organizational culture and organizational reputation and their related components so as to success in attracting and preserving competent and elite professors by obtaining a strong and unique employer brand.

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